



# **Rudston Primary School**

## **Handwriting Policy**

**Date: September 2018**

**This policy and all school policies are produced in accordance to guidance set out in our school legislation and guidance policy.**

**Approved By Governors: September 2018**

**Review Autumn Term 2019**

## **Our Mission Statement:**

To develop a love of learning,  
enabling all children  
to reach their full potential.

\* Respect \* Resilience \*  
\* Responsibility \* Enjoyment \*  
\* Challenge \*

## **Safeguarding Statement:**

“Rudston Primary school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.”

## **Introduction**

### The importance of handwriting to the curriculum

Handwriting is concerned with individual expression and the conveying of meaning through fluent composition. The principal aim is that handwriting becomes an automatic process which frees pupils to focus on the content of the writing. In order for this to occur, handwriting is taught in ways that enhance fluency, legibility, purposefulness and the opportunity for creative expression.

## **Strategy for implementation**

### Entitlement and curriculum provision

Handwriting is taught regularly through basic skills lessons (more frequently at Key Stage 1). Shared and guided writing provide many opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting. There are times at both key stages when this aspect of writing is a focus for attention and more time is devoted to the objectives relating to handwriting and presentation.

### Teaching and Learning

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important. Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed and the models provided is the key to effective learning. A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching may be planned.

All members of staff (including Learning Support Practitioners, supply teachers, students) are provided with appropriate handwriting models and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style.

### The role of the teacher/ Learning Support Practitioner

- To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting;
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling;

- To provide resources and an environment which promotes good handwriting;
- To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development.

### Continuity and Progression

Our scheme currently in use is *Collins Primary Focus: Handwriting*. This is a comprehensive programme designed to support teachers and children through the stages of learning a clear, fluent, legible and fast style of joined writing from the early stages to the top of the Primary phase. Linked to National Curriculum levels and the Primary National Strategy, the programme encourages a pre cursive and then a cursive style from the early stages of learning.

The scheme aims for the development of joined handwriting as soon as individual pre cursive letterforms have been mastered. Specific letterforms are selected to meet the following criteria:

- they should help children's handwriting to be clear, fluent, legible and fast
- each individual lower case letter chosen begins from the main writing line
- each lower case letter is taught with both a lead-in and a lead-out stroke. This is to help avoid confusion in young children about whether to begin a letter at the top or the bottom. It has also proved to be beneficial for children with poor hand control and for dyslexic children.
- The joined lower case letters should, where possible, resemble closely their printed counterparts.
- Letters, such as 's' should have the same form wherever they occur in a word, thus reducing the amount that children need to relearn.
- It is possible to join all lower case letters. One letter ('f') changes from the precursive to the cursive stage. While it is felt that the 'f' used in Book B will be familiar to young children learning to form the precursive letters, the cursive 'f' is used from Book 1A to encourage a more fluent hand.
- The pencil or pen should need to be lifted from the page as little as possible when linking lower case letters in words, thus reinforcing the patterning of joined movements within letter strings as an aid to memorising phonic and spelling patterns.

**Precursive Upright (Book B)**

A B C D E F G H I J K L M  
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
a b c d e f g h i j k l m  
n o p q r s t u v w x y z  
The quick brown fox jumps  
over the lazy dog.

**Cursive Upright (Books 1A-1B)**

A B C D E F G H I J K L M  
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
a b c d e f g h i j k l m  
n o p q r s t u v w x y z  
The quick brown fox jumps  
over the lazy dog.

**Cursive Slanted (Books 2-6)**

A B C D E F G H I J K L M  
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
a b c d e f g h i j k l m  
n o p q r s t u v w x y z  
The quick brown fox jumps  
over the lazy dog.

The following letter styles have been chosen to meet the preceding list of criteria:

<b>Specific letter style options</b>	
The reasoning behind each cursive letter style option chosen for use in <i>Collins Primary Focus: Handwriting</i> was discussed with several Literacy and SpLD (Dyslexic) practitioners who agreed with the choices.	
	Chosen because, looped from the back, it is easiest to link to all other letters, always joining the same way and thus more fluent.
	Chosen because it joins in the same way whether it is at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of a word, thus making it fluent and meaning there is less for children to learn.
	Chosen because it is more legible, most like the printed 'v' and less likely to be confused with the letter 'u'.
	Chosen because it is more legible, most like the printed 'w' and less likely to be confused with the letter 'u'.
	This is the only small letter that requires the pencil/pen to be lifted from the paper. This style was chosen because it will join and because it is most like its precursive counterpart.  A curved 'x' can often be confused for the letters 'sc'; this is particularly so for dyslexic and less able readers.
	Chosen because it is more legible, most like the printed 'y' and doesn't involve taking the pencil/pen off the paper.
	Chosen because it will join and because it is most like its precursive counterpart.

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The emphasis at this stage is with movement rather than neatness. Letter formation (starting at the right entry point and then moving in the right direction) learned at this early stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility. To aid movement, close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space.

Teachers are vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not become ingrained and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils (for example, additional tracking and tracing of letters at the pre-writing stage) and those with special educational needs are met. In the pre-communicative stage pupils play with writing and these experiments are recognised and praised as an important stage in the child's understanding that marks on paper convey meaning. Pupils are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements; a multi-sensory approach is used to help pupils feel the movement in the hand. Dough gym activities are regularly practised.

## Key Stage 1

Building on the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a legible style. This is achieved by developing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and by practising handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing. Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion are taught in line with the school's handwriting style. In Year 1 the basic handwriting joins are introduced, as research shows that if these skills are introduced at an earlier age, children are less likely to 'reverse' letters as the letters flow from left to right (e.g. b / d, p /q). In addition, a cursive style of handwriting is recommended by the British Dyslexia Association.

## Key Stage 2

### *Years 3 and 4*

In Year 3 the pupils consolidate their use of the basic handwriting joins, ensuring consistency in size, proportion and spacing of letters. Handwriting speed, fluency and legibility are built up through

practice. By Year 4 joined handwriting is encouraged at all times unless other specific forms are required, e.g. printing on a map, a fast script for notes. During Year 3 some children who are deemed ready may be moved from writing in pencil to writing in pen.

### *Years 5 and 6*

Years 5 and 6 are used to consolidate learning for those pupils who have not yet achieved a fluent and legible joined script. Those who have will develop an individual style based on the principles of good handwriting taught in previous years. Children are encouraged to increase speed whilst maintaining legibility. A black inkpen or fine-nibbed rollerball pen will be used for handwriting, with the exception of those children who are not ready for this stage.

### Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and will receive additional support and opportunity to practise through teacher / LSP support in class and possible additional home activities. Triangular pencils and pencil grips are available for children who need them.

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision. Paper should be positioned to the left for right-handed pupils and to the right for left handed pupils, and slanted to suit the individual in either case. Pencils and pens should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision. Pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side; left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.

### The Role of Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are introduced to the school's handwriting style through written information, the Reception Reading & Phonics Workshop and other meetings. The Reception teacher plays an important role in communicating this at an early stage, to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to children by using only capital letters for the beginning of their names, practising drawing patterns together, and playing joining-up games which encourage left to right directionality, for example. Handwriting in homework tasks is expected to be consistent with the

school's handwriting style, and of the same standard as work written at school. Pencil or pen should be used as appropriate for the year group.