



Pioneer Federation

Handwriting

Policy

This policy was adopted September 2019

This policy was reviewed in September 2020

This policy was reviewed in September 2022

This policy is due a review again in September 2024

Handwriting

Throughout the Pioneer Federation, good presentation is emphasised at all times and through all forms of writing. We recognise a strong link between good handwriting and good spelling. Developing a flowing style means a child is more likely to become a good speller. Wherever possible, we use handwriting practice to support spelling.

Objectives

All children should be given the opportunity to develop an effective cursive style of writing. In order to do this, they should be taught:

- how to hold a pencil/pen using the correct and comfortable grip
- to form letters properly: where to start and where to finish
- to form letters of regular size and shape
- use the correct terminology of ascenders and descenders, and flick
- to form upper and lower case letters
- to write from left to right and top to bottom of the page
- to put regular spaces between letters and words
- how to join letters
- to be fully aware of the importance of neat and clear presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
- to write legibly with cursive handwriting with increasing fluency and speed

Guidelines for good handwriting

Position of the writer

Children should sit comfortably with their feet flat on the floor and their body upright, leaning forward slightly. The non-writing hand should rest on the paper, supporting the upper body, facing slightly to the dominant side. The eyes should be approximately 30-40 centimetres away from the paper. If copying from the whiteboard, children should be facing it, where possible.

Grip

When teaching the children to grip, care should be taken that the children do not grip the pencil too tightly as they will tire easily and not develop free flowing movement. They should hold the pencil between the thumb and the forefinger, with the pencil resting on the third finger. The thumb and forefinger should be able to move slightly so that the very fine movements required for writing are possible. Pencil grip is of paramount importance as it is very hard to undo once established.

Left-handed children

These children are noted and given guidance to ease the process of writing by implementing these strategies:

They are seated on the left of a right-handed child, so their arms do not clash.

Their paper needs to be to the left side of the mid-point of their body and tilted to about 30 degrees clockwise so they can see what they have written.

To avoid smudging their work, they are encouraged to position their fingers about 1.5 centimetres from the end of the writing implement.

Additional support

Motor skills intervention programmes (such as Jump Ahead) will be made available to children who need further support in developing gross and fine motor skills to enable their handwriting to develop with fluency and control. In some cases, children with SEND may not be required to use cursive handwriting. Reasonable adjustments and individual targets will be set, and this will be indicated in the individual plans for that child.

Pre-writing skills in Foundation stage (Reception) will be developed and strengthened through gross motor skills, especially muscles in the shoulder, arm, wrist and hand. Fine motor control will be developed by incorporating a range of multi-sensory activities, for example: threading, tracing, colouring, painting, scissor use, experimenting with a range of implements, malleable materials and finger and counting rhymes. Formal writing in Reception is started when practitioners feel that the children have a specific amount of pencil control and established hand preference. Parents will be given a copy of the correct letter formation sheets for left and right-handed children.

Progression in handwriting through the school

Reception

- To practise correct letter formation
- To develop a conventional tripod pencil grip
- To rehearse letter writing in the air (whilst teacher demonstrates and gives verbal instructions)
- To write letters using the correct sequence of movements
- To space and regulate letters and words
- To write from left to right and top to bottom of the page
- By the end of EYFS, children should be able to form non-joined letters correctly

KS1 (building on from Reception)

- To consolidate size, proportion, spacing and legibility
- To practise the four basic handwriting joins:
- Diagonal letter joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ai, ar, un
- Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ou, vi, wi
- Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ab, ul, it
- Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ol, wh, ot
- To practice handwriting in conjunction with phonic and spelling patterns
- By the end of KS1, children should be able to join their handwriting correctly and use this in most writing.

Lower KS2 (building on from KS1)

- To use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required
- To practise correct formation of basic joins from KS1
- To continue to demonstrate, rehearse and verbalise as in KS1
- To consolidate consistency in size, proportion, fluency and spacing between letters and words
- To build up handwriting speed, fluency and legibility through practice
- A clear, neat hand for finished presented work
- To use a range of presentational skills e.g. print script for captions, sub headings, and labels; capital letters for posters, title pages and headings
- Children will be awarded a 'pen license' (black or blue pen provided by school) when they are consistently completing these skills.

Upper KS2 (building on from Lower KS2)

- To use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required, most of this writing should be in black or blue pen.
- To consolidate and develop individual fluent and legible style
- To learn to write in differing scripts e.g. italic
- To use scripts appropriately for different purposes
- To continue to progress in joining by observing different features affecting neatness
- By Year Six, the expectation is that all children should be using pen, unless a special need has been noted in which case an intervention program will be in place.



Pen Licence

Congratulations to _____

for earning your pen licence!

Well done!

Date _____ Signed _____

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Appendix 2 – Cursive Letter Formation

[Word mat and Handwriting display banner](#)