

Handwriting Policy

Introduction

This policy has been written as a response to changes in the teaching of Handwriting through the New Primary Curriculum 2014.

It is a statement of the aims, principles and the teaching and learning of Handwriting at John T. Rice Infant School.

At John T. Rice Infant School we have high expectations of children's work and celebrate children's achievements, fostering self-esteem and confidence.

Aims and objectives

The overarching aim for Handwriting in the national curriculum is within the English objectives. Children need to be taught to:-

- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences

We believe that a flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with speed, confidence and creativity.

Handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of sequential growth. There are five main stages:

1. Readiness for handwriting; gross and fine motor skills leading to letter formation

This involves:

- Developing fine motor control.
- Having the correct posture and paper position.
- Holding the pencil with a tripod grip (froggy fingers)
- Writing from left to right and from top to bottom.
- Starting and finishing letters correctly.
- Forming letters in the correct size
- Using regular spaces and being able to form upper and lower case letters.

2. Beginning to join

This involves using the language of ascenders and descenders and knowing how letters link together.

3. Securing the joins

This involves drawing on all previous experience and securing the joins so that each letter is correctly joined.

4. Practising speed and fluency

This involves the children becoming much more independent. They will use the knowledge that they have about joins and become quicker writers so that composition does not take as long.

5. Presentation skills

This will be the stage where the children refine their handwriting.

Teaching & Learning

Our Curriculum

At John T. Rice we follow the Learning Challenge Curriculum. The ethos that underpins the Learning Challenge approach requires teachers to check on what children already know and then inspire them through an initial key question and subsequent questions to investigate. Each Learning Challenge has a 'wow' to begin each half term and its own reflection at the close. By using these there is a more complete level of challenge for the pupils.

Planning

Our long term planning is based on a two year planning cycle with a different Learning Challenge each half term and a planned in 'wow'.

Key Stage teams meet half termly to complete the medium term planning. To ensure that the Learning Challenges provide adequate coverage and progression through Years 1 & 2, the school will highlight the intended objectives on the National Curriculum document.

Class teachers have responsibility for creating their own weekly planning based on the needs of the children using assessment for learning.

Teaching

Handwriting will be taught in ten minute sessions throughout the week. Pupils revise and practise the correct letter formation frequently. The children from Foundation through to Key stage 1 are all taught to write the cursive style as soon as they are ready to form letters. By the end of Key Stage 1 it is a requirement that children are able to write in a joined and legible style.

Children will also be taught which letters belong to which handwriting families.

Caterpillar letters	<i>c o a d g q s f e</i>
Ladder letters	<i>l i t u j y</i>
One armed robot letters	<i>r b n h m k p</i>
Zig Zag monster letters	<i>v w x z</i>

It is also an expectation that staff must be role models at all times and demonstrate the correct style when they teach and mark work

Non-negotiables

Non-negotiables are a clear map of the basic skills to be taught in each year group. These are essential for children to unlock their learning and make progress. Opportunities to teach these skills are interwoven through the English curriculum.

Monitoring & Assessment

Children are informally assessed during lessons, through questioning and performance which will be used formatively to inform planning. Summative assessments are used at the end of each half-term through Classroom Monitor, to show progression throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

Work scrutinises will be completed half termly (with either the SLT or teaching staff) to monitor the quality and consistency of Handwriting. Termly planning scrutinises will take place to monitor coverage and progression of Handwriting across the key stage. Due to the cross curricular nature of the Learning Challenge approach, Teaching & Learning observations will be conducted termly and used to monitor a range of subject areas.

Assessment of Handwriting is an on-going process and will take place formally and informally during the regular, focussed handwriting sessions and across other curriculum areas. Teachers will use on-going assessment to identify which letters, groups of letters or joins require additional practice.

Equal Opportunities

At John T. Rice Infant School we are aware of the need for equality of access for all children. Our staff believe strongly in creating equal opportunities for all children and work to this aim. We introduce and build upon the children's awareness of equal opportunities including the development of respect and understanding of multi-cultural, gender and S.E.N. issues.

E-Safety

Whilst using a wide range of technologies to teach Handwriting, we need to ensure children are safeguarded. E-Safety encompasses Internet technologies and electronic communications such as mobile phones as well as collaboration tools and personal publishing. It highlights the need to educate pupils about the benefits and risks of using technology and provides safeguards and awareness for users to enable them to control their online experience.

E-Safety depends on effective practice at a number of levels:

- Responsible ICT use by all staff and pupils; encouraged by education.
- Sound implementation of e-safety policy in both administration and curriculum, including secure school network design and use.

This policy was agreed by staff in Autumn 2017 and has been approved by the Governing Body. This policy will be reviewed in Autumn 2017.