



Handwriting Policy

Reviewed: Sept 2022

Next Review: Autumn 2024

Appendices Included:

- 1: Funky finger Progression Grid**
- 2. Letter Formation**
- 3: Order of introduction of letters**
- 4 Casey the Caterpillar Handwriting Language.**

Modifications 2022:

Updated information about school processes.

Added Casey the Caterpillar scheme now used to support handwriting across the school

Introduction:

Writing has a very long history. It began as simple pictographs drawn on a rock, which were then combined to represent ideas and developed into more abstract symbols. Just like our writing today, early symbols were used to store information and communicate it to others.

In recent years, modern technology has dramatically changed the way we communicate through writing. However, despite the increased use of computers for writing, the skill of handwriting remains important in education, employment and in everyday life.

Time devoted to the teaching and learning of letter formation in the early years will pay off. Legible writing that can be produced comfortably, at speed and with little conscious effort allows a child to attend to the higher-level aspects of writing composition and content. This is important when assessments are based on written work, particularly in time-limited written examinations, which remain as a major form of assessment for many formal qualifications. Without fast and legible handwriting, children may miss out on learning opportunities and under-achieve academically.

Beyond formal education, most employment situations will involve at least some handwriting and any require the communication of critical information (e.g. medical notes, prescriptions).

Thus, handwriting with pencil and paper still has an important role from early childhood through our adult lives. Although, many personal computers now have handwriting recognition capability so that handwriting as means of interacting with computers is becoming more pervasive, even in this modern age, handwriting remains an important skill for communication.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of handwriting at Bedgrove Infant School.

Aims

We aim for our children to:

- achieve a neat, legible and comfortable style of handwriting with correctly formed letters and correct joins (when appropriate)
- develop fluency and speed as writers
- produce correctly formed letters automatically in their independent writing
- develop confidence in the technical ability to write so that the brain is free for creative content
- become confident and creative writers

The Process

Handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of sequential growth. We have identified 5 stages that form organisational structure of our handwriting scheme.

- **Readiness for handwriting; gross and fine motor skills leading to pattern and mark making**
- **Letter formation (how each letter is written)**
- **Letter orientation (how each letter is positioned in relation to the line)**
- **Beginning to join**
- **Securing the joins**
- **Practising speed and fluency**
- **Presentational skills**

Children will progress at different rates; some children will need more practice than others. Handwriting must be actively taught for example, in association with phonics and spelling. Learning to associate the kinesthetic movement with the visual letter pattern and the aural phoneme will help the children with learning to spell. We have adopted a multi-sensory approach to teaching handwriting. We believe by using a variety of mediums our method of teaching handwriting will motivate children and ensure we are meeting the needs of the individual.

Teaching and Learning

- Handwriting is taught regularly in classes, groups and individually.
- Initially, patterns are used to practise early writing skills. Our EYFS children write with a variety of tools and multisensory methods to help free-flowing hand motions e.g. Squiggle Whilst you Wiggle Pattern work and mark making are encouraged both indoors and out.
- Correct pencil hold and letter formation are taught from the beginning and handwriting skills are often taught through phonics and spelling sessions.
- When marking or writing comments, members of staff use correctly formed handwriting as role models.
- Display writing throughout the school includes a mixture of cursive writing, print and computer-generated writing using a variety of fonts.
- Correct body posture is essential as it affects the quality of handwriting produced.

Children should:

- Sit square at the table
- Sit with legs together, with feet resting on the floor
- Have both arms resting on the table
- Use the tripod grip: relaxed grip with fingers clear of the nib and the hand resting on the table
- Slant their paper slightly
- Use the free hand to secure the paper
- Left-handed children are encouraged to sit to the left of right-handed children, so their elbows do not bump. They are encouraged to find a comfortable orientation for their paper, usually slightly to the left of centre of their body, and to have their fingers about 1.5cm from the point of their pencil. Left-handed handwriting guides are available to use in each class.

Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. If they have difficulty, this will limit fluency and inhibit the quality and quantity of their work. Children are taught to form individual letters appropriately and accurately first and are only taught to join their handwriting if teachers feel that they are developmentally ready. As a school, we feel that a cursive script for some children might impede their creative flow.

Handwriting skills are taught regularly, usually through phonics and spelling sessions. In Key Stage 1 teachers use the **Casey the Caterpillar Scheme** as a guide and framework for planning (see below). Our approach is very much centered around being in an infant school environment where we work on developing the marking making and patterns from EYFS, helping the children to progress onto forming specific shapes that make the different letters of the alphabet. Casey The Caterpillar uses a story to introduce shapes to the children and then develop them into letters. Before joining in Key Stage 1, children are taught to use a lead in (whoosh) for each letter, preparing them for early joined up handwriting practice.

Timing for teaching handwriting

Handwriting is a regular part of the school curriculum. Timetabling these sessions is the responsibility of each ~~Year Group Leader~~ Lead Teacher. Sessions are monitored on a regular basis by the ~~Phase Leaders and English Leader~~ the Opportunities and Outcomes Team.

Special Educational Needs

Children with specific learning difficulties are supported with their individual needs and encouraged to develop a neat and comfortable printed script. ~~If children have core weakness, the school operates several intervention strategies including setting by current stage of development in Funky Fingers sessions, Raindrops and Rainbow Road.~~ We support all children with their specific area of need so if a child has a difficulty in their handwriting development, reasonable adjustments and additional provision will be implemented. The school will ask for advice and support from external agencies if the appropriate progress is not made. Writing slopes, pencil grips and other tools are made available for children who need additional support with their pencil grip and fine motor skills.

How handwriting is taught throughout the school:

Early Year Foundations Stage Curriculum expectations.

3-4 years

Use some of their print and letter knowledge in their early writing. For example: writing a pretend shopping list that starts at the top of the page; writing 'm' for mummy.

- Write some or all of their name
- Write some letters accurately

Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils.

- Show a preference for a dominant hand.

Use large-muscle movements to wave flags and streamers, paint and make marks.

4-5 years

Form lower-case and capital letters correctly

Spell words by identifying the sounds and then writing the sound with letter/s.

Write short sentences with words with known letter-sound correspondences using a capital letter and full stop.

Develop the foundations of a handwriting style which is fast, accurate and efficient.

Early Learning Goal

Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.

Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases

Early Years Foundation Stage

The emphasis at the early stages 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 children (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, children play with writing and these experiments are recognised and praised as an important stage for a child in understanding that marks on paper convey meaning.

Children are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements both indoors and out; a multi-sensory approach is used to help children feel the movement in the hand.

Fine motor skills are developed through bead threading, colouring, puzzles etc. Pencil control is developed

through tracing, dot to dot, pattern copying etc. Letter formation is practiced and the link to the phonics is made.

Funky Fingers activities are planned within the Foundation 1 and Foundation 2 continuous provision areas and within planned enhancements. timetable to support muscle and coordination development. . Please see the Handwriting presentation to parents on the school website. [Bedgrove Infant School - Curriculum Presentations](#)

National Curriculum Key Stage 1 expectations.

Pupils should be taught to:

Year 1

- Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- Form the different shapes from Casey The Caterpillar
- Begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place using the shapes that have been learnt
- Form capital letters
- Form digits 0-9
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways using the same shape- such as tall stick letters) and to practise these.

Year 2

Pupils should be taught to:

- Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

2014 National Curriculum

The children are taught how to form both lower case and capital letters whilst still developing fine and gross motor skills with a range of multi-sensory activities.

Handwriting is taught regularly and can be linked to phonics sessions. The children are taught to:

- Write from left to right and from top to bottom.
- Start and finish letters correctly.
- Be consistent with the size and shape of letters and the spacing of letters and words.
- Have the correct pencil grip.
- Find a convenient position for their page.
- Have the correct posture and position
- Join their letters once they have developed a good print technique.

Benchmarks for handwriting

Foundation 1: Gross motor skills are well developed and pencil grip is developed with mark making and some attempts at recognizable letter formation

Foundation 2: Fine motor control is well developed and the majority of letters are formed correctly

Year 1: All letters formed correctly. Own name and high frequency words joined. Capital letters stand

alone. Begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.

Year 2: Consistent size and orientation. Majority joined. Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another.

Assessment

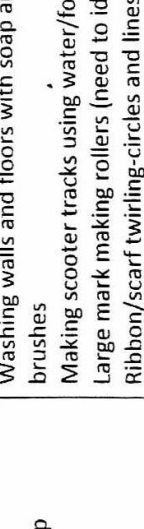
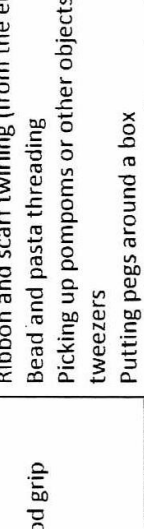
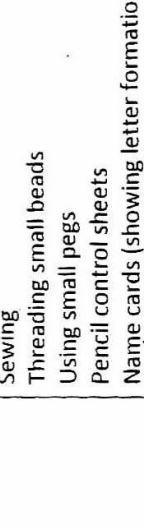
In the Early Years Foundation Stage children are closely monitored as they progress through the development of gross and fine motor skills and their pencil grip following the Funky Fingers progression model. (See Appendix 1)

At least three times a year, samples of children's writing are collected and moderated against National Curriculum criteria – this will include an assessment of handwriting.

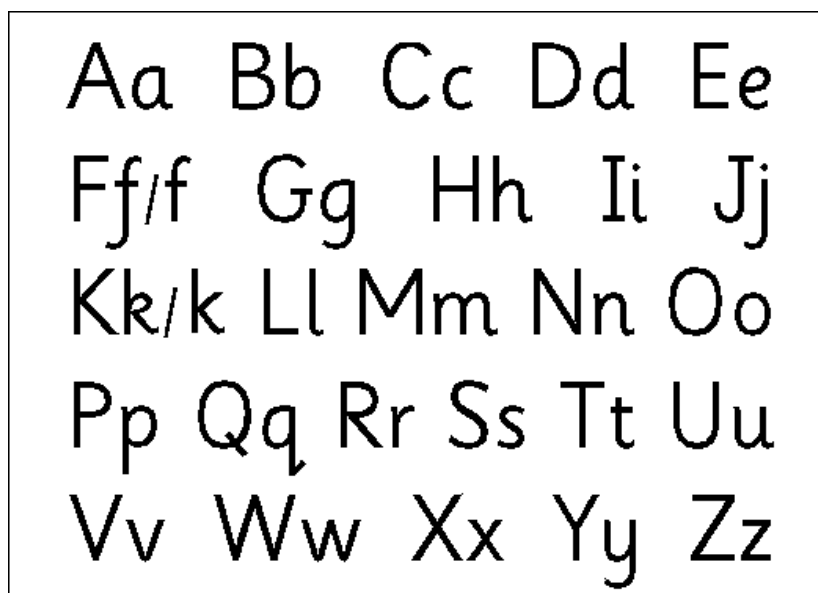
Year Group Leaders and Phase Leaders regularly monitor presentation in children's books as part of their monitoring roles.

Appendix 1: Funky finger Progression Grid

Funky fingers Handwriting Progression

Who	Now/Next	Appropriate learning activities
	<p>Where are they now? Using palmer grip or digital pronate grip</p> <p>Next Steps Develop upper body strength and gross motor movements to support shoulder and elbow pivots</p>	<p>Washing walls and floors with soap and large brushes Making scooter tracks using water/foam Large mark making rollers (need to identify) Ribbon/scarf twirling-circles and lines from shoulder Making race tracks in flour using lolly sticks, with toy cars Making large swimming movements using malleable materials from emergent skill level in ABC book</p>
	<p>Where are they now? Using static tripod grip or inverted tripod grip</p> <p>Next Steps Develop mid body strength, fine motor control and also strength in fingers</p>	<p>Ribbon and scarf twirling (from the elbow) Bead and pasta threading Picking up pompoms or other objects using tweezers Putting pegs around a box Using malleable materials from the developing skill level in the ABC book</p>
	<p>Where are they now? Using tripod grip</p> <p>Next Steps Correctly form first letter and then other letters in name and further develop fine motor control to support handwriting skills</p>	<p>Sewing Threading small beads Using small pegs Pencil control sheets Name cards (showing letter formation) Using resistant doughs from advanced skill level in ABC book</p>

formation

**Appendix 3: Order of introduction of letters**

Curly Bouncers: c, a, d, o, s, g, q, e, f, x	In joins
One- armed robots; r, b, n, h, m, k, p	Diagonal join, no ascender to an anti-clockwise letter: ice, ide
Capitals from the Curly Bouncers	Horizontal join. No ascender: ow, ou, oy, oi
Capitals for the Line Ladders	Horizontal join, no ascender, to an anti-clockwise letter: oa, ode
Zig zags: z, v, w	Diagonal join to r: ir, ur, er, or, oor
Capitals for the one armed robots	Horizontal join from r to ascender: url, irl, irt
Capitals for the zig-zags	Horizontal join from r: ere
Diagonal join to ascender: at, all, th, ch, cl	Joining to and from r: air
Diagonal join, no ascender: in, im, cr, tr, dr, lp, mp	Diagonal join to s: dis
Diagonal join, ascender: to an anti-clockwise letter: id, ig, nd, ld, ng	Horizontal join to s: ws
Diagonal join, no ascender: ee, ai, ay, ime, ine	Introducing diagonal join from s to ascender: sh
Horizontal join, no ascender: op, oy, one, ome	Diagonal join to anti-clockwise letter: ea, ear
Horizontal join, no ascender, to an anti-clockwise letter: oa, og, wa, wo	Horizontal join from f, no ascender: fu, fr
Horizontal join to ascender: ol, ot, wh, oh	qu
Horizontal and diagonal joins to ascender, to anti-clockwise: of, if	rr
Joining words: Monday to Sunday	ss
Diagonal join to ascender: eet	ff
Diagonal join, no ascender: a_e	Capital letter practice: height of ascender and capitals

Appendix 4: Casey the Caterpillar Handwriting Language

<u>Shapes</u>	<u>Letters and rhymes</u>
<u>Whoosh</u>	a _____ open mouth, short stick, flick
<u>Short stick</u>	b _____ tall stick, tunnel, close
<u>Tall stick</u>	c _____ open mouth
<u>Tunnel</u>	d _____ open mouth, tall stick, flick
<u>Open mouth</u>	e _____ twig, open mouth
<u>Hanging stick</u>	f _____ feeler, cat's tail, twig
<u>Cup</u>	g _____ open mouth, hanging stick, cat's tail
<u>Feeler</u>	h _____ tall stick, tunnel
<u>Cat's tail</u>	i _____ short stick, flick, spot
<u>Sloping stick</u>	j _____ hanging stick, cat's tail, spot
<u>Twig</u>	k _____ tall stick, twirly curly vine,
<u>Spot</u>	l _____ tall stick, flick
<u>Egg</u>	m _____ short stick, tunnel, tunnel, flick
<u>Letter groups:</u>	n _____ short stick, tunnel, flick
Short stick - i	o _____ open mouth, close
Tall stick – l, t	p _____ hanging stick, tunnel, close
Tunnel – n, m, r, b, h	q _____ open mouth, hanging stick, flick
Open mouth – c, o, e, a, d	r _____ short stick, tunnel STOP
Cup – u, w	s _____ Sammy Snake
Hanging stick – p, q	t _____ tall stick, flick, twig
Cat's tail – j, g, y	u _____ cup, short stick, flick
Sloping stick – z, x, v	v _____ sloping stick, sloping stick
Feeler – f	w _____ sloping stick, sloping stick, sloping stick, sloping stick
Sammy Snake – s	x _____ sloping stick, lift off, sloping stick
Twirly curly vine – k	y _____ cup, hanging stick, cat's tail
	z _____ twig, sloping stick, twig