



# **Russell Hall Primary School**

## **Handwriting Policy**

## Foundation Stage

Young children learn by imitation and the majority of new entrants to school will have been copying writing from as young as three years old. However, only a proportion of these children will be forming their letters correctly, and indeed may be writing in capital letters having learnt to do so from environmental print. Therefore it is vital that the correct formation is taught *as quickly as possible* to promote good habits and in an effort to eliminate bad ones.

### Developing good hand control

Throughout FS1, pupils should be given plenty of opportunities to develop hand control – plasticine, cutting out, small construction toys, jigsaws, peg boards, drawing patterns etc. These should be given/offered on a daily basis.

This will continue into FS2 alongside the teaching of letter formation.

### FS1

Although letter formation may not be explicitly taught to pupils at this stage, the cursive script will be modelled by practitioners for pupils when writing names, for labels and in information provided to parents and carers about letter formation. (appendix 1)

It is important that children still see a variety of different prints in books, labels, signs, etc and to know that letters can look different and still make the same sound. However, they should know that when we write letters, that we write in the cursive style.

### FS2

Handwriting should be taught as a whole class or to groups, in the order of the letter patterns in appendix 2.

At this stage, **handwriting** should be considered as a separate subject and should therefore NOT be **taught** alongside phonics, which are being introduced in a more phonetically pleasing order. Children will however, have the letters **modelled and be encouraged to form the letters in the cursive style** from the start.

The **formation of the letters** should be **taught** at a brisk pace starting in January of Term 2, aiming for all the lower case letters and numbers being introduced by the end of Spring Term. Specific teaching of letter formation will be taught in the family groups. (appendix 2)

Time may then be taken to reinforce them on a daily basis during Term 3. Children should be encouraged to write their name correctly at all times.

**These lessons should be adult led**, with the teacher demonstrating the formation and then circulating to ensure this is being done correctly. It is an opportunity to help and praise individuals. Handwriting lessons are NOT successful, at this stage, when pupils are left to practice independently either in a jotter and/or workbook as they are often reinforcing the wrong formation.

It is recommended that teachers use a variety of materials to introduce and practise the movements required to form letters – a white board is ideal for this. Pupils could also write in the air and use crayons, sand and paint or large plain paper. When forming the letters on paper, using a lined jotter is

recommended so that children can begin to sit letters on the line and know that many letters begin by putting the pencil on the line.

### Peer/self evaluation

A simple way to do this is to ask the pupils to circle their best example of a letter/word and to tell a partner why they chose it. A peer may be asked to highlight or put a star next to the one *they* think is best and explain why.

Examples of good handwriting should be celebrated and displayed to motivate other members of the class.

### Year 1

Pupils should spend the first term practising the formation of lower case letters **as part of** words eg common words and/or CVC, CCVC, CVCC words. Again this is more effective done as a teacher led session. Their own forename and surname should be practiced, followed by the introduction and consolidation of capital letters.

At this stage, handwriting should still be taught **as a whole class**, 5 times a week for approximately 10 minutes, but with additional activities for any children experiencing difficulties. It is especially important for these pupils to be given hand control activities as described earlier.

### Joined script

To prepare for using a joined script, pattern making is still a priority.

The pupils should be ready to learn base line joins at the beginning of term 3. Again, the teacher may decide to use whiteboards at the beginning of this process.

*\* It is very important that children are encouraged and expected to transfer their joined script to all areas of the curriculum.*

### Year 2

Pupils should spend a few weeks practising base line joins before progressing on to top joins, joins to anti- clockwise letters and other joins. Again, the teacher may decide to use whiteboards at the beginning of this process.

At this stage, handwriting should still be taught **as a whole class**, 2-3 times a week, but with additional activities for any children experiencing difficulties. It is especially important for these pupils to be given additional letter formation activities and in some case hand control activities.

*\* It is very important that children are encouraged and expected to transfer their joined script to all areas of the curriculum.*

## Reception, year 1 and year 2

### Writing area

It is essential that there is a writing area in each class which will provide a stimulating and interesting area where the pupils can choose to write. This may be free writing and/or writing tasks eg make a menu or write a silly poem. There should be a variety of pens/pencils and paper, plus some examples

for set activities eg real menus. It may also be useful to display a list of common words displayed in the school cursive script.

### **Year 3 and 4**

Pupils will benefit from a regular handwriting lesson, **again teacher led**. This will help to reinforce good practice and will give them opportunities for self assessment.

By this stage, handwriting *could* focus on spelling such as common words, project and Science words or a focus on words to use within their own writing e.g alternatives for 'said'.

*\* By this stage, your expectations should be for pupils to transfer their joined script to all areas of the curriculum. However, the pupils will need to be constantly reminded of this and praised when they succeed.*

### **Year 5 and 6**

At this stage all pupils should be encouraged to use their own fluent and legible style in all their writing. With good teaching in FS – year 4, most pupils will be able to do so.

If a pupil's writing is still poor, it is often simply the size of the letters that is inconsistent or the placing of them on the line. This may be best tackled by teacher/pupil discussion or individualised and specific target setting eg 'I am going to make t,b,d,k,l and h taller than the rest of my letters.'

**Writing for different purposes**- As adults, our handwriting will vary depending on the task e.g. writing a letter to the bank manager will probably look very different from a note to take on the food shop. Pupils should be told what you are expecting in terms of handwriting and presentation before *all* tasks. It would be unrealistic to expect perfect handwriting when note taking, for example, Sometimes pupils will be expected to write quickly.

Appendix 2

HANDWRITING PLANNER

Reception

T= Taught/introduced P= Practised

TABLE 1	T	P		T	P		T	P		T	P		T	P
c			i			r			s			01		
o			l			n			v			23		
a			t			m			w			45		
d			f			h			x			67		
g			j			b			z			89		
q			u			p						assess		
e			y			k						Child's First name		
assess			assess			assess			Assess a-z					

**Appendix 3**

**HANDWRITING PLANNER**

**Year 1**

<b>TABLE 2</b>	<b>Taught</b>	<b>Practised</b>	<b>Assessed</b>
Lower case a-z	//////		
Child's full name			
Capitals A-M			
Capitals N-Z			

**Baseline joins**

<b>TABLE 3</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>P</b>		<b>T</b>	<b>P</b>		<b>T</b>	<b>P</b>		<b>T</b>	<b>P</b>
ll			all			ar			ip		
li			in			aw			up		
ti			un			iv			ib		
il			an			hu			ub		
it			im			ti			th		
ill			um			ki			ck		
ut			am			du			ch		
at			ine			ay			ent		
ull			ime			ey			ant		
assess			assess			assess			assess		

**Appendix 4**

## HANDWRITING PLANNER

### Year 2

#### Top Joins T= Taught P= Practised

TABLE 4	T	P		T	P		T	P		T	P		T	P
ou			re			ob			ve			fe		
ov			ri			ol			we			fi		
ow			rt			ot			wh			fu		
op			rk			of						fl		
						if						ft		
			assess									assess		

#### Joins to anti- clockwise letters

TABLE 5	T	P		T	P		T	P		T	P
ac			oa			fa			ea		
ad			od			fo			ed		
ag			og			va					
ca			oo			wa					
da						ws					
ha			assess						assess		

#### Other Joins

TABLE 6	T	P		T	P		T	P
To e			descenders			ss		
Joining from t			Descenders to e			sw		
Joining from p			qu			us		
Joining from b			ff			ix		
						assess		