



Banks Lane Junior School

Communication, Collaboration, Curiosity, Resilience, Reflection



# Handwriting Policy and Guidelines

### Aims

1. To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
2. To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by;
  - Having a correct pencil grip
  - Knowing that all letters start from the top, except d and e which start in the middle
  - Forming all letters correctly
  - Knowing the size and orientation of letters

### Teaching time

There should be a discrete teaching of handwriting, however, this should be as part of an English lesson as a starter. 1-2 times a week as an English starter. Children use Learning Logs for handwriting so there is not a different expectation in different books.

### Model used

Banks Lane Junior School uses the Nelson Thorne's Handwriting Scheme with the following letter formation

#### **Lower case letters**

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

#### **Capitals**

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

#### **Numbers**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

#### **The Four Joins**

1. to letters without ascenders

2

2. to letters with ascenders
3. horizontal joins
4. horizontal joins to letters with ascenders

**The break letters** (letters that aren't joined **from**) are:

b g j p q x y z s

See appendix 3 for examples of the break letters

NB children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units BEFORE learning to join.

### Teaching Sequence

- Hand and finger strength
- Physical preparation
- Tracing
- Patterns
- Over teacher's writing (highlighter)
- Under teacher's writing (directly under words - write in large letters, leave large spaces between words)
- Independence

**For the order of teaching letters and joins see Appendix 2**

### Techniques for teaching letter formation

- Model good handwriting all the time
- Demonstrate
- Talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Children form letters in the air
- Finger trace over tactile letters

- Write over highlighter pen (or dotted letters)
- Draw round templates
- Write with chalk on chalkboard
- Wax resist letters
- Form letters with beads in playdough
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the back of the person in front of you

### Getting ready to write

#### **Seating and posture**

- Chair and table should be at a comfortable height
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Encourage children to sit up straight and not slouch
- The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor
- Tables should be free of clutter
- Rooms should be well lit
- Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners

**See appendix 1 for warm up exercises.**

#### **Pencil grip**

- Children should write in pen from Year 3 once they have earned their pen licence
- A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil

#### *For right handers*

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point
- The paper should be placed to the right tilted slightly to the left
- Use the left hand to steady the paper

#### *For left handers*

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger
- Hold about 3cm from the tip
- The hand should be kept below the writing line
- The paper should be tilted slightly to the right at about 20 - 30°
- Use the right hand to steady the paper

NB It is very important that a right handed child is NOT seated on the left hand side of a left handed child as their elbows will collide!

## Assessment

Year group leaders and senior leaders should monitor children's writing and presentation in books regularly. The following should be considered:

- Is the writing generally legible?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with the Level Descriptors in the National Curriculum?

**Remember, the expected standard for a Year 6 writer states that a child should write legibly and joined.**

## Individual assessment

Children should be observed as they write during handwriting lessons - the teacher must circulate, monitor and intervene. Teachers also need to monitor and mark whole pieces of writing. The following should be considered:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movement when forming and or joining letters?
- Are any letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
- Is the writing easily legible?

Here's a warm up that's great for posture and a positive attitude. Use it before cursive handwriting lessons and during the refreshing and can be done even in a crowded class. If it's manageable, let your students jump in place first.

**APPENDIX 1**



Push palms



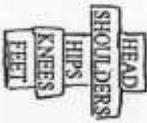
Pull hands



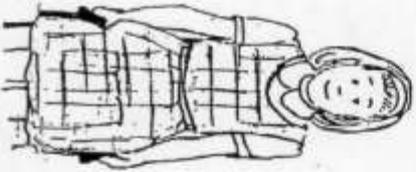
Hug yourself tightly



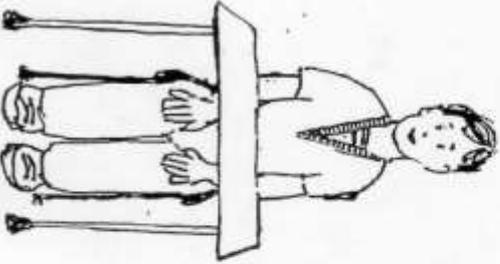
Reach high, one hand, then other  
Reach - make circles in the air



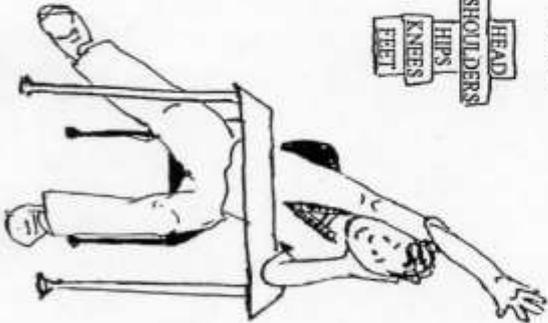
\* BLOCKS



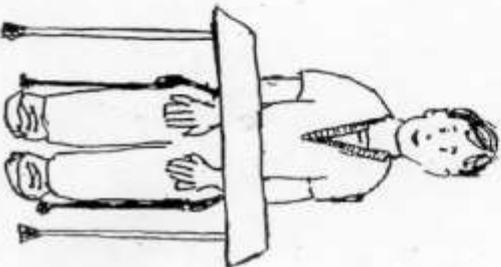
Pull up on chair



\* Stack your blocks



Assume an outrageous posture



Stack your blocks again!

## APPENDIX 2

### Order of teaching

#### Single letters (YR and Y1)

- c a d g q o
- e s f
- i l t
- u y j k
- r n m
- h b p
- v w x z

#### Supporting activities

- tracing patterns
- tracing
- copying over (letters, numbers and words)
- copying under (letters, numbers and words)

#### Joins Y2 (going into Y3)

##### Introduction of the four handwriting joins

- First join; un um ig id ed eg an or ing ung
- Second join; ch sh th tl ll ill sli slu ck ack st sti ink unk
- Third join; od pg re ve oon oom
- Fourth join; wl vl of ff fl flo
- Practise the break letters b p g q y j z
- Practise capital letters

### **Supporting activities**

- Match and copy captions
- Trace and copy patterns
- Copy words
- Copy sentences
- Write out menu
- Copy poem
- Alphabetical ordering

### Joins Y3 (going into Y4)

#### Revision

- Practise the break letters b p g q y j z
- Practise capital letters

#### Further practise of the four handwriting joins

- in ine
- ut ute
- ve vi
- ok oh
- sh as es (practising two ways of joining the letter s)
- ri ru ry (practising joining from the letter r)
- oa ad as (practising joining to and from the letter a)
- ee ea ed (practising joining from the letter e)
- ow ov ox (practising joining from the letter o)
- ky hy ly (practising joining to the letter y)
- ha ta fa (practising joining to the letter a)
- od oo og (practising joining from the letter o)
- er ir ur (practising joining to the letter r)

- ai al ay
- o you oi
- re oe fe (practising the horizontal join to the letter e)
- fu wu vu (practising the horizontal join to the letter u)
- ot ol ok (practising joining to ascenders)
- ai al ow ol (practising all the joins)

### **Supporting activities**

- copy words
- copy sentences
- copy poems
- match questions to answers
- copy jokes
- make and copy compound words

### **Year 4**

- ning ping ting
- oc od oo
- ake ome are
- fla flo fle
- who wha whe
- ie in il
- inly ky ny
- ap ar an
- ick uck ack
- practise writing with a slope
- he

- we
- re
- fte fir fin
- wra wri kni (silent letters)
- ii ll tt rr nn mm cc oo dd ss ff ee
- ew ev ex (spacing)
- th ht fl (proportions)
- ac ag af
- Capital letters
- Decorated capital letters
- Practising with punctuation ! ? - " " , ' ,

### **Supporting activities**

- Copy words, sentences, poems
- Trace and copy
- Copy tongue twisters
- Copy instructions

### **Years 5 and 6**

- Practise consistency and size of letters
- Practising using a diagonal joining line
- Practising leaving an equal space between letters
- Practising joining to the letter y
- Practising using a horizontal joining line
- Practising the size and height of letters
- Practising joining from the letter i

- Practising joining to and from the letter v
- Practising consistency in forming and joining letters
- Practise speedwriting
- Practising crossing double tt on completing the week
- Practising joining to and from the letter e
- Practising joining to and from the letter w
- Practising drafting and editing
- Practising joining to the letter t

APPENDIX 3 - Example of break letters

big green  
jelly happy  
unique xylophone  
zebra swans

APPENDIX 4 - Example of joins

I fell asleep in class  
today  
as I was awfully bored  
I laid my head upon  
my desk  
and fell asleep and snored