



Forefield Infant and Nursery School Handwriting and Presentation Policy

Last reviewed March 2021

Our aim is for children to develop legible, fluent and efficient handwriting.

In handwriting, as in other skills, children will develop at different rates; for that reason, it is important that there is a consistent style of handwriting throughout the school, and that all staff consider themselves to be teachers of handwriting, with a clear understanding of the progression of skills, and of how to remedy errors. It is not sufficient to exhort children to improve their handwriting; the different elements need to be taught and practised. Early intervention is essential at every stage, to prevent the acquisition of bad habits which are difficult to correct.

The school follows the Nelson Handwriting scheme throughout Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. A reference sheet displaying the letter forms, letter groups, joining groups and joins can be found on the main English page and will be shared with parents during phonics/meet the teacher sessions.

The following is a brief outline of our agreed policy:

Posture: children should be taught the importance of sitting upright and correctly on their chair, with their feet on the floor.

Pencil grip: children should use a tripod grip, and be given constant reminders until this is established. Triangular section pencils and shaped pencil grips are available in school for children who find them helpful.

Position of paper: left handed children should be encouraged to tilt their paper slightly to the right to improve their view of what they are writing, and to reduce smudging later on when they write in ink. Right handed children may find it helpful to tilt paper slightly to the left. Paper should be steadied with the free hand.

Paper: from Reception Class, children will be given lined paper and exercise books, to encourage the correct placing of letters on the line. Lined paper as detailed in the appendix, should be used during handwriting lessons.

Fonts: materials prepared in school will use Sassoon Primary Infant font, which includes the same letter shapes as Nelson script.

The following is a brief outline of what children are taught in each year group:

Nursery: children focus upon developing their gross and fine motor skills which are essential to the development of good handwriting. As their fine motor skills develop they use stencils, draw pictures and carry out tracings in order to develop their manipulation of writing materials. They learn to write their name using both gross and fine motor equipment, focusing on forming each letter of their name correctly. Teaching will be multi-sensory and appropriate to the needs of the individual child.

Reception: children continue to develop their gross and fine motor skills in order to develop further control of writing equipment. They are taught to form letters correctly, paying attention to the starting point for each letter, the direction of pencil movement, the shape and orientation of the letter, the relative heights of the body of each letter and any ascender and descender. Our policy is to teach a letter shape which closely resembles print for early readers, and which will not need to be changed as handwriting becomes joined.

Year 1: during the Autumn Term, children embed the correct letter formation taught in Reception. In the Spring Term, children are introduced to cursive handwriting. They will begin by joining vowel and consonant digraphs, to facilitate the recall of spelling patterns. Later, the four basic handwriting joins will be taught systematically and then practised in regular short handwriting sessions, linked to spelling patterns.

Year 2: throughout year 2 the four basic handwriting joins will be taught systematically and then practised in regular short handwriting sessions, linked to spelling patterns. Once the children are secure in their cursive handwriting, they will be encouraged to use this in all of their writing.

Adult Writing: When making written comments in children's books and when writing on the board, adults will model the relevant letter formation to the year group they are working with.

Further help and guidance can be sought from the English Subject Leader (Dawn Oldham) or from the SENDCo (Vanessa Buckley).

Appendix

1. Year 2 good handwriting rules.

Good Handwriting...

...is readable!

...has careful clear letters.

...sits on the line.

...starts at the margin.

...goes to the end of the line.

...has a finger space between each word.

...has the same letters the same height.

...is not too **big**, and not too small.

...is joined up!
