

HANDWRITING GUIDELINES

Overview

At Heaton Primary School we use the Nelson Handwriting Scheme. Handwriting is taught explicitly from Nursery. Year groups have the appropriate sized handwriting books for practice when the children are ready and children are expected to transfer their skills into all their independent writing. When practising their handwriting skills children must be supervised to ensure they are adopting the correct style.

Teachers should write in books and in the environment neatly using the school's handwriting script, this should be legible and joined where appropriate.

Meeting the Needs of the Children

At the start of the year all children will be screened for letter formation using the school handwriting screen. The information gathered from this will then inform the handwriting groups (e.g. letter formation, handwriting grip, ready to join).

In Key Stage 1 handwriting is taught daily. In Key Stage 2 the number of weekly sessions may vary. It is up to the teacher to decide on the number of sessions required to achieve the Handwriting Non-negotiables by the end of the year.

Children who are in Year 4+ who have a legible and accurate handwriting style and are able to write at speed do not necessarily need to adopt a joined up style. Handwriting sessions for these children should focus on consistency and speed.

Assessments may reveal that some children need to use a triangular pencil, a special pencil grip or instruments specifically designed for left handed children. Children who are struggling with basic letter formation will need additional activities to develop their fine motor skills and hand/wrist strength.

Structure of Handwriting Sessions (using Nelson CD Roms on desktop):

Warm Up – activities to get the hand and body ready for writing.

Children who are practising letter formation and joins

Work through the five tabs in the appropriate level across the week:

Session 1: Focus - contains the focus letter(s) and associated illustration. Use this to introduce the letter(s)/join for the session. This can be played with the audio on, or you may choose to turn the sound off and say the associated RML letter formation rhyme.

Practising Patterns – these are patterns that are designed to be copied or traced by the teacher/children to help with the letter/join formation. These patterns should be practiced in a multisensory way (e.g. in the air, in sand, on a whiteboard).

Session 2/3: Join/Letter Formation – contains the join or letter animation from the focus tab which can be copied/traced by the teacher/individual children on the whiteboard. The animation can be played at two speeds. Play with the audio on, or you may choose to turn the sound off and say the associated RML letter formation rhyme. On this day, children should practice the modelled letter/join in their handwriting books. Adults *must* watch to ensure the correct formation is being used.

Session 4: Word Building – displays words containing the focus letter/join. The teacher can choose words to copy or trace on the whiteboard. Children then practice these in their handwriting books (or repeat Day 2/3 if necessary). This activity can be extended to putting the words into a sentence.

The final tab is a game – linked to the focus letter/join to practise handwriting, reading and word building. These can be used at the teacher's discretion as a plenary to the week's work.

Each tab can be used as a stand-alone activity or as a complete session.

Worksheets– there are two differentiated worksheets for each unit (Support – lower level and Extension – higher level than the unit). These should be used to provide ideas for what children will do in their handwriting books and not as a printed out worksheet.

Children who are accurately joining or who are in Year 4+ with an accurate and consistent style:

These children can join in the handwriting warm up with the rest of the class before participating in activities designed by the teacher to develop their handwriting speed and fluency. Possible activities may include:

1. Timed writing sessions.
2. Practising flowing movements by way of joined patterns.
3. Motor skills activities.
4. Dictation.

Year Group Handwriting Schedule

	Handwriting Non Negotiables	Nelson CD Rom	Units	Sequence of Teaching
Reception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know their dominant writing hand. • Form lower case letters a-z correctly. 	Blue	1-15	<i>In the order that the letters are introduced in RML.</i>
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit correctly for writing. • Form all letters (including capitals) correctly. • Form digits 0-9 correctly. 	Blue	16-17 digits 18-20 capital letters	<i>Capitals letters taught after lower case.</i> Autumn 1– revision of lower case letter formation (Blue Units 1-15 as required) Autumn 2 - Units 16-17 Spring 1– Unit 18 Spring 2– Unit 19 Summer 1&2– Unit 20
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form all lower and upper case letters the correct size relative to each other. • Use the four joins correctly and know which letters are break letters. • Use the correct spacing between words. 	Red	1-5 first join 6-12 second join 13-15 third join 16-18 fourth join 19 break letters (b g j p q x y z) 20 capital letters as break letters	Autumn 1 – Units 1-5 Autumn 2 – Units 6-12 Spring 1 – Units 13-15, Revision ascenders and descenders Spring 2 – Units 16-18 Summer 1 – Unit 19 Summer 2 – Unit 20 and revision
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the correct joins for all letters. 	Yellow	1-20	Autumn 1 – Revision (units 1-4) Autumn 2 – Units 5-9 Spring 1 – Units 10-13, Revision ascenders and descenders Spring 2 – Units 14-17 Summer 1 – Unit 18 Summer 2 – Units 19 & 20