**Handwriting at Pendragon Primary School**

**EYFS**

### At Pendragon, our handwriting approach starts with mark-making using a range of tools and sensory media for example flour, glitter, soil. Research has shown that mark making is crucial for a child’s development and learning. It not only teaches young children how to hold a pen correctly, but it also prepares them for writing and develops their handwriting skills.

When children are making these early marks, they are practising to hold a pencil and are attempting to control their marks with their muscles. This enhances their physical development by improving their fine and gross motor skills and helps to develop their hand-eye coordination.

Some children begin school showing a dominant hand, for those who do not, we provide a supportive environment that allows them to further explore, and experiment before establishing their preference.

The children are **encouraged** to use a tripod grip when holding writing implements.



During whole class and small group teaching sessions children begin to mark-make on a whiteboard. This resource enables children to build their confidence and resilience knowing that they can edit their work and the chunkier pen is easier to grip than a pencil. This work is highly valued and continues to be throughout Early Years.

The next stage is to introduce the children to letter graphemes as part of our Storytime Phonics programme. As each phoneme is introduced the corresponding grapheme is also modelled. The children are taught a grapheme rhyme linked to the Storytime Phonics book and are encouraged to say these while forming the letter. We teach the children a cursive style of writing i.e. with lead-ins (entry strokes or 'whooshes') before the letter and exit flicks after the letter, so the Storytime Phonics rhymes have been adapted to match using the language ‘follow or take.’ Digraphs are taught as joined graphemes.

Handwriting is practised in conjunction with a wide range of practical activities that to continue develop and strengthen fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination.

ELG Physical Development Fine Motor skills

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

ELG Literacy Writing

Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed

Our handwriting approach continues through the school in line with the National Curriculum expectations.

**In Y1 pupils are taught to:**

♣ sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly

♣ begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place (continuing to use the rhymes from Storytime Phonics). Digraphs continue to be taught as joined graphemes.

♣ form capital letters

♣ form digits 0-9

♣ understand which letters belong to which handwriting ‘families’ (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

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| Handwriting Families |
| **Long ladder letters**Down and off in another direction | l i t j u y |
| **One-armed robots**Down and retrace upwards | m n r b p h k |
| **Curly Caterpillar letters**Anticlockwise round | c a d o q g e f s |
| **Zig-zag letters** | v w x z |

**In Y2 pupils are 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 unjoined

♣ 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.

**In Y3 and Y4 pupils are taught to:**

 ♣ use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined

♣ increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].

**In Y5 and 6 pupils are taught to**:

♣ write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:

* choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
* choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

Handwriting sessions take place at least twice weekly in EYFS and KS1 and at least weekly in KS2. Handwriting sessions are often combined with practising spelling patterns or the teaching of vocabulary in different subjects

Children write in pencil in EYFS and Y1. Those children from Y2 onwards who demonstrate legible, consistent, high quality handwriting can earn a pen licence and write with a handwriting pen.

Interventions are provided for any children who have difficulty with their handwriting and presentation. This may take the form of hand-therapy – activities to develop hand manipulation, hand arch development, hand dominance and hand strength or focused hand writing practise targeting particular areas of weakness. Equipment such as pencil grips and sloping boards are used where appropriate.

Staff model the school handwriting style in handwriting lessons, on wall displays, spelling aids, etc. All staff laptops have the school font, JoinItC11, installed.