

John Blandy Primary School



Handwriting Policy March 2025

Intent

We aim for all children at John Blandy to achieve a consistent neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in a cursive font, eventually producing a fluent joined handwriting style.

It is vital that children can write quickly, comfortably and legibly, as it is a skill needed in all curriculum areas. Children's self-esteem is also heightened when they are able to take pride in their handwriting.

At John Blandy we use Twinkl Cursive Script. Twinkl Handwriting offers a schoolwide consistent approach with a planned sequence of lessons to help teachers ensure they have progressively covered the skills required to meet the aims of the National Curriculum for writing transcription and the related Early Learning Goals.

The Twinkl Handwriting scheme intends to take all pupils on a journey to using fluent, speedy and joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. This, in turn, will help to support their composition and spelling.

Implementation Planning and assessment

A clear progression in handwriting sets out what children should be learning in each term as they progress through the school. This assures quality, sufficient depth and coverage of skills giving teachers the curriculum expertise to deliver effective transcription lessons. Each element of teaching handwriting is explained through the scheme ensuring all adults have the subject knowledge to talk about, model and intervene with pupils handwriting appropriately and consistently.

The scheme's supporting resources enable effective curriculum implementation and can be differentiated to meet all pupils' learning needs. Where gaps are identified, the resources can be used within intervention sessions to enhance pupils' capacity to access the full curriculum. Each lesson has built-in assessment opportunities, which give reliable snapshots of pupil progress.

Implementation

Daily lessons are incorporated into Read, Write, Inc lessons for EYFS and KS1 as well as being modelled within English lessons throughout the school. All year groups have a weekly discrete handwriting session focused purely on letter formation, sizing, ascenders and descenders. Moving towards joined, fluent handwriting in LKS2 and UKS2. Once children in UKS2 have developed their consistent, joined fluent handwriting style, their weekly handwriting sessions will focus on embedding spellings learned that week into a series of sentences which builds the fluency of consistently joined and legible handwriting.

Staff Handwriting

Staff take care to model correctly formed letters, ascenders and descenders and use a joined script as appropriate when modelling, marking or writing comments on children's work.

Shared and guided writing activities enable staff to model letter formation and handwriting and provide children with opportunities to practise skills. We teach a cursive style but do not teach a 'lead in' to the letters. Letters are learned with a 'flick' at the end for when children are then taught to join the letters.

Fully joined writing is expected by the end of Year 3 and all KS2 children use pen for writing in all subjects (except maths).

Any hand-written writing on display by adults should model the cursive handwriting style for the phase audience.

Expectations

Average expectations for speed of writing (based on DASH standardised testing) are that pupils can write at the speed of 10 words per minute by the age of 9 and can achieve a speed of 14 words per minute by the age of 11.

At our school, we have therefore set the following expectations:

End of reception

Demonstrate a correct functional pencil grip.

Correctly form most lower-case letters.

End of Y2

Form 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.

Demonstrate knowledge of how to join some letters.

End of Y4

Have a neat, legible, joined script at the speed of 10 words per minute.

End of Y6

Have a fluent, legible, joined script at the speed of 14 words per minute.

Left-handed children

At least ten per cent of the population is left-handed – a slightly higher proportion of these are males. There is no need for left-handed children to be disadvantaged when writing, if a few simple strategies are employed:

- Model letter formation, skywriting, etc. specifically for left-handed children, with your left hand.
- Make sure that left-handed children sit on the left of right-handed children, otherwise their writing arms will clash.
- Put a mark at the left side of the page to indicate where writing begins (if required), as some left-handed children mirror-write from the right.
- Left-handed children usually need to have the paper slightly to the left of the centre of their body and should be encouraged to tilt their work clockwise so they can see what they have written.
- To avoid smudging their work: — left-handed children should be encouraged to position their fingers about 1.5cm away from the end of their writing implement — the pencil should sit in the ‘V’ between thumb and forefinger, sitting parallel to the thumb — the wrist should be straight.

Writing from left to right is more difficult for left-handed children. They should, therefore, be given enough attention in the classroom to ensure that they do not learn bad habits of position, posture and pen hold which will hinder the development of a fast, fluent and legible hand.

Intervention

The most successful interventions take place alongside and within writing activities. Teachers model and correct handwriting errors using green pen. Children will respond by copying this correctly.

However, some children may need some catch up interventions to ensure their handwriting progress accelerates to meet the needs of their peers. At John Blandy we use the Twinkl intervention programmes:

KS1- ‘High Flying’- 6-week intervention programme

KS2- ‘Racing Ahead’- 6-week intervention programme

Impact

John Blandy has a consistent approach where handwriting expectations are clear and the same technical vocabulary is used by all teaching staff and learners. Regular handwriting focused sessions are evident in handwriting books (KS1/LKS2) and English

Skills books in UKS2. Handwriting is improving at all stages within our school. The Handwriting Policy will be reviewed by Governors every three years or sooner if issues need addressing.