**Milborne First School**

**Handwriting Policy**

**Aims**

* To have a consistent cursive approach across the whole school to ensure high levels of presentation.
* To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children’s books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.
* Children to achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting.
* Children to write with ease, speed and legibility, enabling them to maximise the fluency, quality and quantity of their work.
* To make links are made between handwriting and spelling, teaching pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns.

# Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum English Document which details specific requirements and expectations for the teaching of handwriting from Year 1 to Year 6. At EYFS requirements and expectations for writing development are detailed in the Physical development and Literacy section of the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and the Development Matters non statutory document.

**Teaching and Learning**

As recommended by the British Dyslexia Association and Dorset SENSS, we adopt a continuous cursive style of writing. BDA ‘It is recommended that children learn the continuous cursive style. Its most important feature is that each letter is formed without taking the pencil off the paper – and consequently, each word is formed in one, flowing movement.The key advantages to this system are:

* By making each letter in one movement, children’s hands develop a ‘physical memory’ of it, making it easier to produce the correct shape;
* Because letters and words flow from left to right, children are less likely to reverse letters which are typically difficult (like b/d or p/q);
* There is a clearer distinction between capital letters and lower case;
* The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling.’

The publication adopted is ‘Joint exercises for successful handwriting’ (pub AMS) and’ ‘Handwriting for Windows’ (Kath Balcombe). Teachers and Learning Support Assistants model the agreed cursive style when modelling writing both in class, on displays and in feedback in books.

Our agreed cursive style is as below:



The letters will be taught in the following order as they are grouped according to the pen’s route from the line. Capital letters do not start from the line and therefore should be worked on when children are competent with lower case.

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

Joins bottom letter joins (ai) bottom to c letter joins (ea) bottom e joins (ie) top e joins (re) top letter joins (or)

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

In the Foundation Stage children take part in activities to develop gross and fine motor skills and recognition of patterns. They will be given the opportunity to:

* Use writing as a means of recording and communicating
* Engage in activities requiring hand-­‐eye coordination
* Use one-­‐handed tools and equipment
* Draw lines and circles using fine and gross motor movement
* Manipulate objects with increasing control
* Begin to use anticlockwise movement and retrace vertical lines
* Begin to form recognisable letters correctly using a variety of mediums.
* To write from left to right and top to bottom of a page
* Start and finish letters correctly

**In the Foundation stage**

* Handwriting and letter formation is taught every day through the phonics session. Letters are introduced to children in the order set out by the Letters and Sounds phonics programme. During the teaching of the Letters and Sounds phases the adults will model the cursive script to make the link between the correct grapheme formation and the phoneme.
* Children will be introduced to pre-cursive and cursive script at the earliest stages of writing.
* The expectation is that by the end of the foundation stage pupils will start to transfer towards a cursive script depending on their skill and ability. Most of the letters will be correctly formed.
* It is expected that by the end of the foundation stage children hold a pencil using the thumb and two finger grip with most using the correct tripod grip.
* Children will be tracked through the developmental stages of pencil grip and any child who has not mastered a grip with thumb and two fingers will be offered intervention to help them progress to the next stage.
* Displays should include models of cursive script.
* Implements such as chunky triangular pencils, paint, large chalks and chunky pens etc are used by pupils to rehearse skills on paper, chalk boards, whiteboards etc.

**Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2**

Within KS1 and KS2 every class will have four handwriting sessions of 10 minutes per week.

During handwriting sessions, phonics, spellings and key vocabulary may be modelled by an adult then practised by children. During the teaching of Letters and Sounds phases it is expected that links are made between phonics and handwriting.

Children will use the sheets provided with the scheme, these have tramlines, trace lines and start points marked.

Handwriting will be a focus in marking of all subjects and children will be made aware of the high expectations of correct formation and presentation.

**Year 1 and 2**

It is expected that children will be able to:

* Use a tripod grip within year 1 and the correct mature tripod grip by year 2.
* Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
* Form letters of regular size and shape
* Know which letters belong to which handwriting families
* Put regular spaces between letters and words
* Form lower-­‐ and upper-­‐case letters and digits
* Join letters linking with phonic lessons
* Move onto a joined style in Year 2 when they are ready.
* Recognise the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate their meaning effectively

**Year 3 and 4**

It is expected that children will be able to:

* Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting
* Ensure down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch
* To use different forms of handwriting for different purposes
* To develop their own handwriting style, as appropriate

**Posture**

* Chairs and desks within classrooms are matched to children’s age and height.
* Children’s backs should be straight and feet resting on the floor. A right-handed child should have their book slanted to the left. For a left-handed child the book should be slanted to the right.
* Always make sure that the hand which is not holding the pencil or pen holds the paper.

**Implements**

* Children use a triangular shaped handwriting pencil, well sharpened.
* The correct pencil grip will be matched to the needs of the child if necessary.
* When the teacher deems a child ready within KS2, they get a pen licence. They will be provided with a special handwriting pen.
* A pencil is always used within maths regardless of whether children have a pen licence.

**Resources**

The school uses the system Letterjoin to support the teaching of handwriting. This provides models of forming letters, word samples and a way to producing text using the agreed school cursive system. Each class teacher has a log on for the website so they can produce text and worksheets to support teaching and learning.

**Use of ICT**

Letterjoin provides an APP version of the software available for use by children on iPads. Children can watch the animations then trace the patterns, letters and words on the iPad for large scale handwriting practice. A score is given for the accuracy of each pattern, letter or word.

**Equal opportunities and Special needs**

All children must have the opportunity and the encouragement to reach their full potential. Children with Special Educational needs, where necessary, will be provided with specialist equipment such as pencil grips or wider ruled lined paper. Children will also have the opportunity to use iPads to rehearse specific skills on a more regular basis. Intervention is available for children who experience significant difficulties to practice pre writing skills and fine motor coordination

**Assessment, Monitoring and Moderation**

Children in the EYFS are assessed on an ongoing basis through observation, handwriting informs part of this. Within Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, handwriting is assessed as part of children’s unaided ‘Big Write’ and school moderation. Books will be used as evidence for the progression of handwriting.

Written September 2015

Review Date: