

HANDWRITING POLICY

A fluent, cursive and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. This is an entitlement that needs skilful teaching if each child is to reach their full potential at primary school and beyond. Our aim is that the children will be able to write clearly, fluently, quickly and with stamina so that they can cope with the everyday demands of school life.

At Alexanders, children are taught a pre-cursive script from Term 3 of Year 1 - as found on Twinkl and based on the (Rosemary) Sassoon font - forming letter shapes with 'leads-in and out', leading to cursive script when ready. Through purposeful guided practice it is hoped the children will foster a comfortable and legible cursive handwriting style.

Throughout the rest of the school, handwriting practice will take place in a handwriting book and will be undertaken weekly. From Year 4, children are encouraged to complete all their work in cursive. From Year 5 cursive writing is mandatory (support learners exempt).

From the beginning of Year 6, children will undertake handwriting practice in black pen and will be awarded a 'pen license' when adept at writing in pen which will allow them to complete all written work in pen in every subject. The objective here is to prepare the children in Year 6 for their progression into Key Stage 3.

There is a model for individual letters in banner form which can be downloaded from Twinkl. This should be available for all children to view in their classrooms.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy include:

- To aid children to understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate their meaning clearly
- To encourage children to take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of achievement
- To support children so they can write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively
- To support children so they develop a fluent, joined and legible style of writing where letters are accurately formed and consistent in size and spacing.
- To enable children to achieve correct letter movement for both left and right-handed writers.

Key Stage One

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are involved in pre-writing activities to develop their fine motor coordination skills, manipulative skills and hand-eye co-ordination. Children practise forming letters using a variety of materials, such as sand and paint. As we follow a synthetic phonics system at Alexanders, children learn the letter shape with the phonetic letter sound. The correct pencil grip will be taught and encouraged. Correct sitting position and posture will also be encouraged.

The children in Reception Class will be taught to form letters using the Twinkl print script based on the (Rosemary) Sassoon font aligned with the National Curriculum of England guidelines which objective it is to aid the development of handwriting for children of all age groups and abilities.

Year 1

Children continue to be taught the correct formation of the letters in handwriting lessons and in conjunction with synthetic phonics work being undertaken in literacy lessons. 'Leads-in' will be introduced and, when consolidated, leads out will also be introduced. Joining of short words such as 'in', 'on' will take place. Children who require more support will be identified. Use of pen by adults to model writing in children's books will take place. The correct pencil grip will be reinforced and where necessary, corrective rubber pencil grips for those needing them should be used. By the end of the year it is expected that all children will be using the leads in and out strokes. Handwriting is taught frequently and discretely through direct teaching so that pupils form letters correctly and confidently.

The children in Year 1 will continue to be taught to form letters using the Twinkl print script based on the (Rosemary) Sassoon font during terms 1 and 2.

When ready, the children will progress on to using the Twinkl pre-cursive font aligned with the National Curriculum of England guidelines which objective it is to aid the development of cursive handwriting for children of all age groups and abilities.

Students in Year 1 will write in A4 'feint & margin' exercise books and write over 3 lines using the 'sky, grass and ground' principle.

The erasing of work with a rubber eraser is to be discouraged. Pupils should be directed and encouraged to place a single neat line through any incorrect work and write neatly next to or above the mistake that has been struck-through.

National Curriculum of England advice for Year 1

Pupils should be 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
- form capital letters without joiners

Year 2

Children continue to be taught handwriting regularly and move swiftly during the first term to joining letters after consolidating leads in and out and continuing to check letter formation. Handwriting will continue to be taught in discrete lessons but will start to be used in all written work. Pupils are taught to write with a clear and joined style as soon as they can securely form letters with the correct orientation. Subsequent terms will consolidate this and will focus on refining joins and overall presentation of handwriting. By the end of Year 2 it is expected that all children will be joining words with confidence and control and show some understanding of which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (ie letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

Initially, children in Year 2 will continue to practice the joiners for the Twinkl pre-cursive font.

As the year progresses children will be introduced to Twinkl cursive unlooped font based on the (Rosemary) Sassoon font and aligned with the National Curriculum of England guidelines which objective it is to aid the development of cursive handwriting.

Students in Year 2 will continue write in A4 'feint & margin' exercise books and write over 3 lines using the 'sky, grass and ground' principle.

The erasing of work with a rubber eraser is to be discouraged. Pupils should be directed and encouraged to place a single neat line through any incorrect work and write neatly next to or above the mistake that has been struck-through.

National Curriculum of England advice for Year 2

Pupils should begin to:

- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- use 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 and orientation
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

Key Stage Two

Lower Key Stage Two - Years 3 and 4

Children in Lower Key Stage 2 will have regular handwriting practice to reinforce the joins learned in Key Stage 1 and to develop a looped cursive style of handwriting that is fluent and legible. They will continue to practise cursive writing to aid presentation, legibility and the finer points of the letter joins.

Children in Year 3 will continue to practice the joiners for the Twinkl cursive unlooped font but will slowly introduced to the looped version of the some of the letters - such as the letters 'f' and 'g' and will practice the modified joiners for these letters.

As Lower Key Stage Two progresses, children will be encouraged to move adapt their handwriting to the Twinkl cursive looped font based on the (Rosemary) Sassoon font and aligned with the National Curriculum of England guidelines.

Students in Year 3 will write in A4 '4 spaces per 25mm' exercise books and write over 3 lines using the 'sky, grass and ground' principle.

Students in Year 4 will write in A4 '4 spaces per 25mm' exercise books but write over 2 lines only using the 'sky and grass' principle.

The erasing of work with a rubber eraser is to be discouraged. Pupils should be directed and encouraged to place a single neat line through any incorrect work and write neatly next to or above the mistake that has been struck-through.

National Curriculum of England advice for Lower Key Stage 2

Pupils should be taught:

- to 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.

Key Stage Two

Upper Key Stage Two - Years 5 & 6

In Years 5 and 6, children will need reminders about joins and any inaccuracies in the formation of letters or any inconsistencies of style should be worked on. **It is recognised that older children like to develop a more personal style.** However - for children who have learned to write at Alexanders - this personal style must be consistent with the school style. Children may practise different presentation styles – varying heights, use of capitals etc.

All children in Upper Key Stage Two - except for those children who still require developmental support or who may have joined us from another school - should now be encouraged to write in Twinkl cursive looped font at all times except for labelling diagrams and pictures.

Students in Year 5 will write in A4 'Irish & margin' exercise books and write over 2 lines using the 'sky and grass' principle.

Students in Year 6 will write in A4 'Irish & margin' exercise books and write over 2 lines using the 'sky and grass' principle. Children in Year 6 will undertake handwriting practice in black in pen. When proficient, each child will be awarded a 'pen licence' which will afford them the privilege to write in black pen in all subjects (with the exception of mathematics books).

The erasing of work with a rubber eraser is to be discouraged. Pupils should be directed and encouraged to place a single neat line through any incorrect work and write neatly next to or above the mistake that has been struck-through.

Tippex and other brands of pen erasing fluid are not allowed at Alexanders. Pupils should be directed and encouraged to place a single neat line through any incorrect work and write neatly next to or above the mistake that has been struck-through.

National Curriculum of England advice for Upper Key Stage Two

Pupils should be taught to write legibly, fluently, and with increasing speed and stamina by:

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

Key Stage Three

Years 7 and 8

In Years 7 and 8, children will continue to practice handwriting with the objective of increase fluidity and stamina. They will need reminders about joins and spacing, and any inaccuracies in the formation of letters or any inconsistencies of style should be pointed out. Extra practice should be undertaken wherever necessary. **It is recognised that senior-school aged children like to develop a more personal style and may practise different presentation styles – varying heights, use of capitals etc - and may wish to underline or decorate their work.**

Some children will have joined Alexanders at the commencement of Key Stage Three and may have learned a different cursive (non-Sassoon) script during their earlier school years. Cursive writing that is legible, fluent and consistent is acceptable regardless of choice of cursive script as long as written work remains legible to the teacher.

Students in Years 7 and 8 will write in A4 'feint & margin' exercise books and write over 1 line: capital letters should touch the line above and the line below. Lowercase letters should end half way between two lines and should be consistent in size.

The erasing of work with a rubber eraser is to be discouraged. Pupils should be directed and encouraged to place a single neat line through any incorrect work and write neatly next to or above the mistake that has been struck-through.

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Left-handed Children

Left-handed children may experience more difficulty with handwriting than right-handed children. As long as support is given, there is no reason why the left-handed child should not achieve a fluent legible hand-writing style. Left-handed children should be seated to the left of any right-handed child, but not with their left to a wall or other obstruction. There must be sufficient space to the left of the left-hander to enable them to place their paper in a comfortable position.

Young left-handed children tend to hold their pencils close to the lead and thus cover their writing with their hand. This means that although they know there are spaces between the words, their writing often appears without any. **Teachers are to ensure that the pencil grip is high enough from the paper to leave a gap, yet remain comfortable. This can be achieved, if needed, by using the corrective rubber pencil grips.**

Non-Sassoon Font Writers

Some children will have joined Alexanders later in their school career and may have learned a different cursive (non-Sassoon) script during their earlier school years. Cursive writing that is legible, fluent and consistent is acceptable regardless of choice of cursive script as long as written work remains legible to the teacher at all times. Children who join the school should not have to learn Sassoon Font and handwriting support - when required - should be provided to all pupils regardless of cursive script being used.

A Teacher's Handwriting

A teacher's handwriting is the model for the children. All teachers should aim to produce quality writing at all times. It should match the school style as often as possible. When a teacher is demonstrating handwriting they will take the left-hander into account and ensure that the demonstration allows the child to copy movements accurately.

Support Staff

Support staff should use the school style when writing in the children's books so that the models offered to the children are consistent.

Worksheets / Whiteboard Work.

These should match the style and stage of development of the year group.

Displays

There should be a model for letter formation accessible to children at all times. Displays should also reflect the cursive script. Some displays may use unjoined script as a model for how text looks in books.

Handwriting Implements

- Reception – A variety of suitable implements e.g. crayons, pencils, large felt pens, sand trays etc should be provided.
- Years 1 and 2 – Pencils, crayons, twist crayons and coloured pencils should be provided as appropriate to the work being undertaken.
- Years 3 / 4 – Pencils, crayons, twist crayons and coloured pencils should be provided as appropriate to the work being undertaken.
- Years 5 / 6 – Pencils, crayons, twist crayons and coloured pencils should be provided as appropriate to the work being undertaken. Black handwriting pens will be used for handwriting practice from the beginning of Year 6. Children will work towards obtaining a 'Pen Licence'. It is expected that all children will be using a pen by the end of Key Stage 2. **No ink is to be used in maths books.** No gel pens are to be used in school exercise books.
- Years 7 / 8 – Pencils, coloured pencils and pens should be provided as appropriate to the work being undertaken. A supply of pens and pencils will be kept in the classrooms. Children who persistently lose their pens may be asked to purchase replacements. Students may choose to bring their own pens and other stationery from home if these pens adhere to the school's policy. **No ink is to be used in maths books.** No gel pens are to be used are to be used in school exercise books.
- The erasing of work with a rubber eraser is to be discouraged. Pupils should be directed and encouraged to place a single neat line through any incorrect work and write neatly next to or above the mistake that has been struck-through.
- Tippex and other brands of pen erasing fluid are not allowed at Alexanders. Pupils should be directed and encouraged to place a single neat line through any incorrect work and write neatly next to or above the mistake that has been struck-through.

REVISED: 29th January 2019

REVISED BY: Louise Oosthuizen