



Handwriting and Presentation Policy

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Reference to Handwriting and why it forms an essential part of our teaching of the writing process.

- The national curriculum specifies that children should be taught to correctly form letters of the correct size and orientation.
- This requires effort and attention, as well as suitable motor skills. There is evidence that repeated practice in handwriting is necessary to go beyond accuracy to fluency in letter formation.
- There is no need to start the formal teaching of handwriting **before** Reception, but children at the end of the EYFS should be able to 'hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases'.
- The national curriculum requires children to learn un-joined handwriting before they 'start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters'.
- Delaying teaching joined handwriting gives teachers and children time to focus on other aspects of the writing process, such as composition, spelling and forming letters correctly.
- Research supports the idea that writing letters may be important for supporting children's early reading development, because it stimulates the areas of the brain known to underpin successful reading. A small study with 4- to 5-year-olds showed that practice in writing letters 'stroke by stroke' may be the 'gateway' through which beginning readers learn to recognise the features of each letter, as well as learning which features are not important.

The research also stresses that 'skilful handwriting has an impact on composition ... as it is associated with the quality, length and fluency of writing according to two meta-analyses'.

Aims

It is the aim of Butler's Hill Infant school that every child should be enabled to develop a fluent legible style of handwriting. Capital and lower-case letters should be used appropriately and the letter size should be consistent. We will provide opportunities for children to develop, practise and perfect skills and provide targeted support to any child experiencing difficulty in this area of their learning.

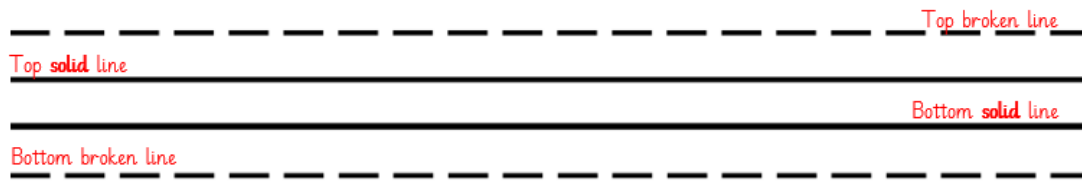
Butler's Hill follows the Improvement in Schools through Handwriting and Art (ISHA) approach to handwriting. There has been a whole school shift to exercise books and paper that supports the programme.

Implementation

Handwriting will be a discrete lesson taught three times a week, sessions lasting approximately fifteen minutes. It is vital that teachers model and explicitly teach the letter formation and joins (where appropriate) in each of these sessions, following the ISHA sequence and use of appropriate vocabulary, to ensure consistency and fidelity to the programme. All writing books now contain the programme's appropriate line guides and sheets can also be printed off for handwriting sessions and use in other curriculum areas. Sessions will include a warm up activity, as well as key instruction as to how to sit and hold their pencil correctly. Flipcharts have been developed to support the teaching of the scheme in terms of sequence, specific vocabulary to be used and how to use the line guides.

In F2, to support the Essential Letters and Sounds Scheme, teachers will use the ELS mnemonics and rhymes to support letter formation during taught phonic sessions, handwriting sessions and during guided/shared writing. These letters will be carefully modelled under the visualisers for children to replicate independently in their own books – teachers to give immediate feedback where letters are being written inaccurately. ELS phonic books have been adapted to include the new policy handwriting paper.

To support our handwriting approach, children are introduced to a set of handwriting lines and these stay the same throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The lines reduce in size as the children's formation improves.



Letter Formation and Sequence

For lower case letter formation, the letters are grouped into Letter Families – see full overview for letters.

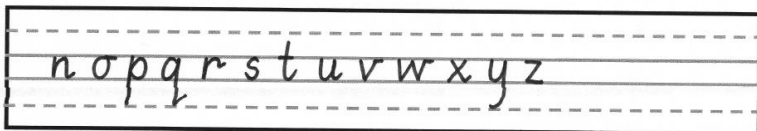
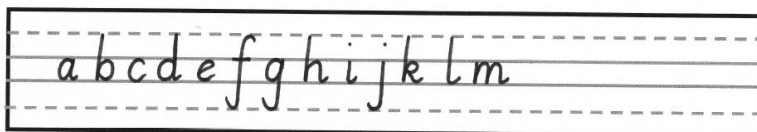
- Family 1 – The Straight-Line Family
- Family 2 – The Coat Hanger Family
- Family 3 – The Bridge Family
- Family 4 – The Zig Zag Family
- Family 5 – The Smile Family
- Family 6 – The Misfits!

Upper Case Letter Formation

- Should be taught as tall letters in size.
- Do not join on to the letter which follows.
- All letters touch the top broken line and bottom solid line.

Language

Consistency of language is very important when teaching handwriting to ensure children begin to assimilate patterns and shapes and link letters together that look similar each other. It is also important to remain consistent across the school when describing where letters sit on the lines so children do not become confused. Following the ISHA programme will ensure teachers are confidently and consistently using this supporting language – flipchart to support this.



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

Posture to write

Abbreviations are used throughout our lessons to support handwriting and ensure correct posture

- BBC – Bottom, Back, Chair
- TNT – Tummy Near Table
- 6 feet on the floor – all chair feet on the floor as well as children's feet flat.

Where appropriate, children may need to write whilst laying on the floor. In this instance, children are supported to do so through knowledge of the correct posture, including forearms flat on the floor to support their core.

In the Foundation stage handwriting will be implemented as follows:

- Children will develop hand eye co-ordination, gross and fine motor skills to support handwriting.
- Children will use a range of tools to develop drawing lines and circles using gross motor skills e.g. swirling ribbons, batting balls, painting.
- Children will use a range of materials to develop fine motor skills e.g. wax crayons, markers, pencils, sponges, chunky brushes, cotton wool balls, shaving foam, finger paints, etc.
- Children will practise manipulative skills e.g. playing with constructions, threading and playing instruments.
- Children will use variety of tools and paper, indoors and outdoors for purposeful writing. e.g. role play, labelling, making cards.
- Children will physically develop the movements of letter shapes using gross motor skills to gain confidence with the basic movements and flow of writing.
- Children will use the adapted lines guide paper in their exercise books as well as laminated sheets for practice.
- In Nursery (FI) teachers follow the age related progression of mark making i.e. long ladder letter families.
- Parents will be given opportunities to support their child to practise their letter formation at home where additional practice is needed to meet appropriate age related expectations.
- Teachers can send home materials to enable parents to do this – practice line guide sheets

Across the Key Stage Teachers and Teaching Assistants should:

- Identify left handed children and make sure they have sufficient space in which to work
- Provide appropriate line guided paper and pencils and/or pens (i.e. all pencils must be sharp and of a reasonable length)
- Model how to hold a pencil correctly using appropriate ISHA vocabulary as well as an appropriate sitting position.
- Reinforce how to form letters, using the ELS approach where appropriate, and the designated paper as per whole school writing.
- Reinforce how to join letters correctly as per ISHA recommendations.
- Monitor children's progress through termly assessments and observations of how letters and numbers are formed in their everyday writing – immediate feedback to be given.
- Implement intervention / additional practice time for those children not forming letters or numbers correctly
- Where necessary, group children and provide differentiated tasks where need arises particularly for SEND children, where FMS are key issues.
- Modelling good handwriting; on the board, in marking children's work and displays
- Allow children with very poor fine motor skills to print and not make joins.

Handwriting feedback and marking

Teachers / TA marking a piece of work should identify specific letters that have not been formed or orientated correctly on the line using a pink pen. Children will practise these letters until they are correct and teacher will then indicate in green (and dated) when this has been achieved in several pieces of writing. Where letter formation is still poor / difficult for that child use a yellow felt tip for them to trace over, this should also indicate starting points and direction where necessary. Further support / practice should be made available at different points in the day i.e. morning activity. Ensure handwriting remains a priority in every piece of writing across the curriculum.

Termly Assessment

Alongside termly writing assessment KSI are to copy write a known nursery rhyme. They will only have to focus on handwriting as this will give an indication of full capability when children are not focussing on all the other aspects of

the writing process. From this assessment teachers can see how much progress is being made and where additional support is needed.

Children should:

- Take pride in the general presentation of their work.
- Learn to write clearly recognisable letters and form them correctly (EYFS / Year 1)
- Know which letters join to others and which do not (Year 2 as appropriate)
- Be able to join letters appropriately (KSI / Year 2)
- Demonstrate correct letter formation and joins learnt in all handwriting across the curriculum (KSI and KS2)

Guidance on teaching and learning of handwriting.

Each session will have a clear focus and the children will watch the teacher modelling letter formation and/or joins. The children must see an adult modelling the writing using the visualisers. We do not join descenders e.g. f g j y.

Assessment checks:

Are all the letters the same size?

Are all the down strokes parallel?

Are the height and length of ascenders and descenders regular within the line guide?

Is the space between letters even?

Is spacing between words even?

Is the writing a reasonable size?

Could presentation be improved?

For fluent writers extend skills by:

- Encouraging children to evaluate their own and others' writing.
- Attempt to write faster retaining fluency and legibility – setting time challenges for each other.
- Remove the line guides when letter formation is accurate and consistent.

SEND

Additional resources to support children with fine motor control and/or other difficulties can be obtained from the SENDCo and each individual case assessed to ensure it meets the child's need.

Teachers have access to the Teodorescu Perceptuo-Motor Programme resources.

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