



## HEADLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL HANDWRITING POLICY

### **Rationale:**

Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum; a legible and fluent script enables children to communicate clearly. The expectation of neat handwriting from both staff and pupils provides a clear indication of a school's commitment to high standards in general and of presentation in particular.

Having a consistent approach towards handwriting and the presentation of work throughout a school and across all subjects, is essential. Coherence and continuity in the teaching of handwriting, coupled with consistency in expectations and high quality modelling will encourage and engender a sense of pride in the work pupils produce.

Adopting a fully cursive script has many benefits:

- With each lowercase letter starting on the line, it avoids ambiguity around letter formation and enables the development of a clear and legible script.
- The 'hooks' on each letter supports the transition between the formation of single letters onto digraphs, trigraphs and whole words seamlessly.
- Children who write fluently generally have a better stamina for writing.
- Cursive writing aids children's spelling as a muscle memory of the 'movement of each word' is developed, leading to automaticity.

At the end of Key Stage Two the majority of pupils should have developed a fluent, legible and joined handwriting style whilst also understanding that different forms of handwriting (cursive, printed or capitalisation) are used for different purposes. Adopting a fully cursive script throughout the school will enable and support pupils to reach their full potential in this regard.

### **Aims**

At Headlands Primary School we will:

- Make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.
- Ensure that all pupils are supported from Early Years Foundation Stage through to the end of Key Stage One in developing a clear, legible handwriting style using a continuous cursive script.
- Ensure that in Key Stage Two, the building blocks of earlier teaching will be built upon and embedded with the emphasis on developing a fast, flowing and mature script.
- Teach digraphs/trigraphs, prefixes/suffixes, high frequency words, spelling lists and topic-specific vocabulary as joined units with an expectation that they are written as such by children in or out of the context of a word or sentence.
- Ensure pupils have access to resources that support them when working independently.
- Provide additional support for those children whose fine motor skills may be a barrier to achieving a legible and fluent script, ensuring they achieve their optimum handwriting level.
- Provide parents with the resources and information to support their children in developing an accurately formed, neat and fully cursive handwriting script.

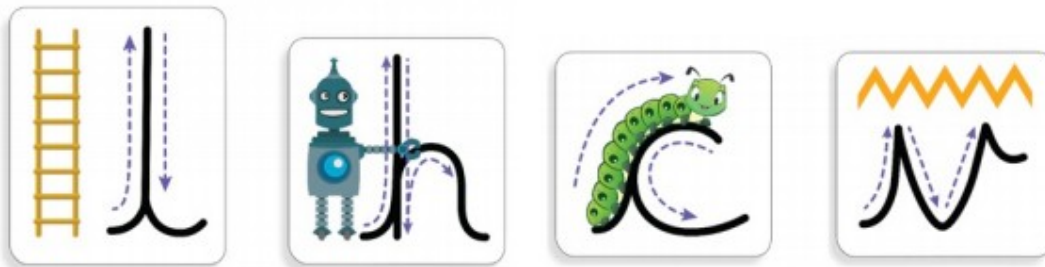


### Early Years Foundation Stage:

Teaching will focus on movements to enhance gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern making and physical education, exercises to develop and improve fine motor skills such as making marks on paper, whiteboards, chalk boards, sand trays to familiarise pupils with letter shapes and the modelling and teaching of specific letter formation and vocabulary. Some of the teaching will be discrete whilst most will take place within the context of other curriculum subjects including the daily phonics session. Additionally, the children will have access to a range of writing media and experiences throughout the areas of provision. They will be given the opportunity to practise what they have been taught with implements of different size, weight and type.

By the end of Early Years Foundation Stage the majority of children will be able to:

- Sit in the correct position and hold a pencil correctly to allow fluid movement of the nib.
- Understand that letters are written on a base line and that all cursive letters 'start on the line' and 'end with a hook'.
- Begin to form many recognisable joined-up cursive letters, capital letters, numerals and some fully-cursive high frequency words.
- Be familiar with the different shaped letter families and the vocabulary associated with each including the terms ground, grass and sky letters.



### Key Stage One:

In Years One and Two, handwriting will be taught discretely with the daily phonics session providing additional opportunities to teach and consolidate the correct 'joined' formation of digraphs/trigraphs, prefixes/suffixes and high frequency words as they are introduced. Discrete sessions will focus on teaching 'families' of letters/joins and whole words containing these patterns.

By the end of Key Stage One children the majority of children will be able to:

- Write legibly using upper and lower case letters all with the correct joins.
- Ensure letters sit on the base line and are consistent in size with ascenders and descenders that are the correct length.
- Form capital letters that of an appropriate size to the lowercase letters and use where appropriate.
- Form numerals that are consistent in size and sit on the base line.
- Leave appropriate spacing between words.
- Have improved the legibility and fluency of their writing.

## Key Stage Two:

Handwriting will be linked to the teaching of spelling but may also be taught formally and discretely where necessary. Dictation exercises may be used to provide opportunities for additional practice and to support fluency.

By the end of Key Stage Two the majority of children will:

- Have improved the quality, speed and stamina of their handwriting in the following ways:

**Quality:** Ensure letters are consistently sized, with equal word spacing and with ascenders and descenders that are parallel.

**Speed:** Improve speed of handwriting to allow creative writing to take precedence over the task of handwriting and be able to 'take notes' at a faster pace.

**Stamina:** Have the strength and mobility to be able to write for longer periods of time without fatigue.

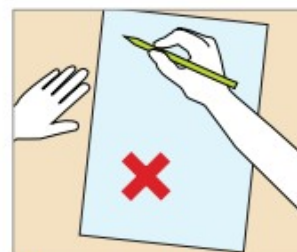
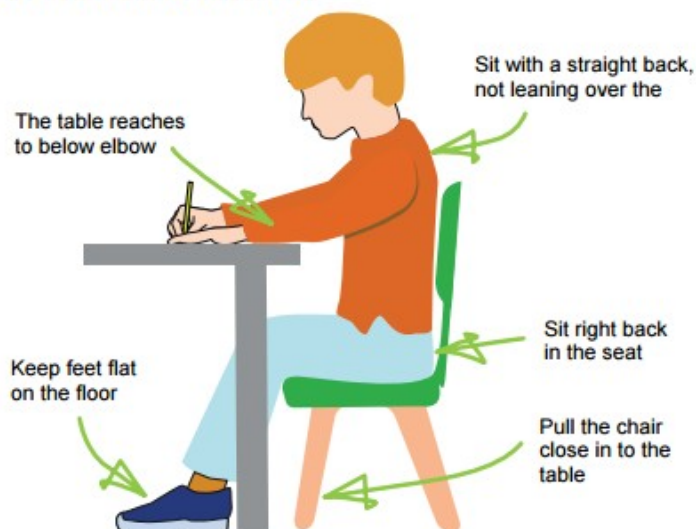
- Be able and confident to make informed choices, applying different forms of handwriting for different purposes.

In Lower Key Stage Two, the children will continue to use pencil but be given the opportunity to use a pen for certain pieces of work. Where appropriate, children may then be encouraged to make their own choice. In Upper Key Stage Two, all children will be provided with a pen however, some may choose to remain using pencil. It is the child's responsibility to maintain a high standard of handwriting and presentation across all subjects. For children using pen, members of staff may ask individuals to return to pencil if standards are not maintained.

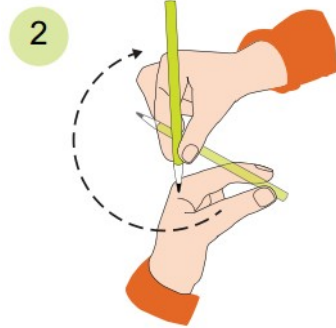
## Across the School:

Regardless of age, pupils should be taught/reminded to sit correctly at a table holding a pencil/pen comfortably and correctly. Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows pencil/pen to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the nib.

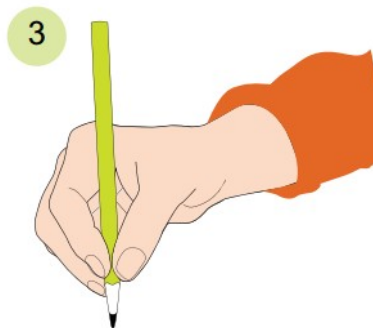
### SITTING POSITION



Paper position for right-handed children



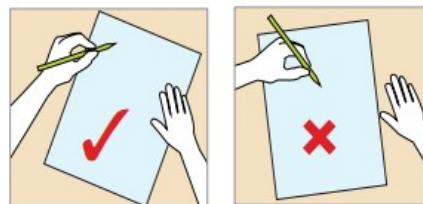
- 1) Grip the pencil with your index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.
- 2) With your free hand, spin the pencil from underneath.
- 3) Use your middle finger to support the underside of the pencil.



Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow right-handed teachers as they demonstrate letter formation. Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.



- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.



Paper position for left-handed children

### Monitoring:

Monitoring will be undertaken as part of the school's book sampling schedule with feedback given to staff.

**Headteacher:** Mrs Ruth Ellis

**Chair of Governors:** Rev. Ron Smith

**Date:** 10.11.2025