

Hill House International Junior School



Handwriting Policy

School Aim

Here at Hill House we aim for all pupils to develop a fluent, neat, speedy and legible style of handwriting using continuous cursive letters that leads to producing words automatically in independent writing. We use cursive/ joined-up handwriting style as the basis of our handwriting policy in line with the 2014 National Curriculum requirements.

Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum. By the end of Senior School, all pupils should understand the importance of neat presentation and the need of different letterforms for different purposes (cursive, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly. We aim to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.

Teaching and Learning

Handwriting is a cross-curriculum task and should be taken into consideration during all lessons. Explicit teaching and practice of handwriting skills is to be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure Key Stage targets are met.

Handwriting is a skill, which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important. Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed and the models provided is the key to effective learning.

As for all motor skills, long practice sessions spaced apart are much less productive than short and frequent sessions. Therefore, handwriting practice should be 'little and often', a few minutes at a time to practise a particular set of letters.

The role of the teacher:

To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting.

To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling. To

provide resources and an environment which promotes good handwriting. To

observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development. To

model appropriate handwriting to the children when using white boards or marking books.

Continuity and Progression

The letter formation taught is a cursive style (see appendix 1). This ensures an early transition to joined writing. Once children are able to form letters correctly, line guides should be provided when children are writing on plain paper to help develop uniformity of size and the correct position of the letters. Wide or narrow lines are used according to the child's needs and at the teacher's discretion. Teaching includes presentational features such as margins, dates, underlined headings and how to cross out with one straight line (the use of rubbers should be discouraged).

Posture

Developing a good posture is as important as developing a good pencil grip. Correct posture (see appendix 2) is taught to enable children to sustain writing for longer. Their writing will benefit if they become used to sitting comfortably.

- Ensure feet are flat on the floor.
- Ensure that they have a good pencil grip.
- Children should be sitting up with their bottoms pushed into the back of their chairs.
- The lighting should be good, so that the children can see what they have written.
- Children should have a direct view of the teacher/board.
- Children should use their non-writing hand to steady the paper and bear some body-weight.
- The paper should be tilted slightly.

EYFS

For our youngest pupils, we aim for 4 to 5 weekly sessions totalling up to an hour. The emphasis at this stage is with movement. Letter formation (starting at the right entry point and then moving in the right direction) learned at this early stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility.

To aid movement, close attention is given to pencil grip (see appendix 3), correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space. At this stage the correct formation of letters is stressed. Children who have been allowed to invent their own ways of forming letters will find it harder to change the longer they are allowed to persist and unless these habits are 'unlearned' it will be very difficult for them to learn a fluent, joined hand.

To encourage correct letter formation a 'patter' is used to aid memory eg. 'a'- all the way round, down and flick.

Pupils are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements; a multi-sensory approach is used to help pupils feel the movement in the hand. Gross motor skills are developed through sky writing letters, making patterns in the air and making different body shapes and actions. Fine motor skills are developed through bead threading, playdough modelling, finger painting etc. Pencil control is developed through tracing, pattern copying etc.

Suggested activities to develop gross and fine motor skills

- Tracing in wet sand
- Painting using thick brushes (water on playground/wall)
- Pegboard patterns
- Weaving activities
- Cutting out
- Whiteboard work
- Draw letters on backs/different textures eg. carpet, sandpaper
- Jelly letters

Letter formation is practised and the link to the phonic sound is made. Shape families are used to introduce the letters of the alphabet and are sorted into 4 main movement groups. The four groups are:

- Long ladder letters-down and off in another direction, exemplified by the letter l - letters y, i, j, l, t, u
- One armed robot-down and retrace upwards, exemplified by the letter r - letters b, h, k, m, n, p, r

& numbers 2,3,5 which follow a clockwise direction

- Curly caterpillar letters- anti-clockwise round, exemplified by the letter c - letters c, a, d, e, g, o, q, f, s & numbers: 0, 6, 8, 9
- Zigzag letters - letters: v, w, x, z & numbers: 1, 4, 7

Years 1 & 2 – Key Stage 1

Building on the Foundation Stage, pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a legible style. This is achieved in Year 1 by developing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and by practising handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing. Children move on to thin pencils when appropriate.

Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion is taught and basic joins are introduced as soon as children are secure in the movements of each letter. In Year 1 these joins are introduced with the phonic teaching eg. "ch": this is taught as two letters one sound (a digraph) so it makes sense to write it as one unit. This continues in Year 2 and the four basic handwriting joins (diagonal and horizontal joins to letters with and without ascenders) are practised and letters that do not join are identified.

Years 3 & 4 – Key Stage 2

In Year 3 the children consolidate their use of the four basic handwriting joins, ensuring consistency in size, proportion and spacing of letters. By the end of Year 3 joined handwriting should be used at all times unless other specific forms are required, e.g. printing on a map, a fast script for notes. In Year 4, handwriting speed, fluency and legibility are built up through practice. It is anticipated that all children will be writing in pen for certain pieces of work by the end of Year 4.

Pen Licence

Throughout Year 3, the children are individually awarded with their pen licence once they have developed a fluent and legible style of handwriting, this includes letters being correctly formed and of the same size. This then allows them to write in pen during their English lessons and for their English

homework. In Year 4, children who have their pen licence are able to write in pen in all subjects provided they maintain the expected standard of cursive handwriting.

Years 5 & 6 – Key Stage 2

Years 5 and 6 will be used to consolidate learning for those children who have not yet achieved a fluent and legible joined script. Those who have, will develop an individual style based on the principles of good handwriting taught in previous years.

Inclusion

The vast majority of children are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and provision will be planned for this in IEPs. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with the SENCO to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc.

Left handed pupils

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils (see appendix 4) and make appropriate provision:

- 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 as some left-handed children mirror-write from the right.
- Left-handed children usually need to have the paper slightly to the left of centre of their body and should be encouraged to tilt their work clockwise so they can see what they have written.

Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate letter formation to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

Authorised by	Resolution of the Proprietors
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Signed on behalf of the Proprietors Edmund Townend

Date 20 September 2018

Effective date of the policy 20 September 2018

Review date of the policy 20 September 2019

Appendix 1 - Cursive alphabet & numbers used at Hill House

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

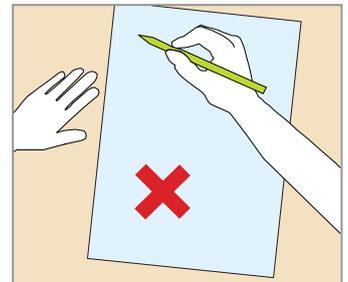
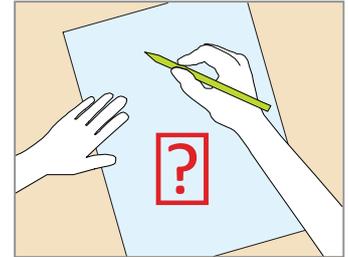
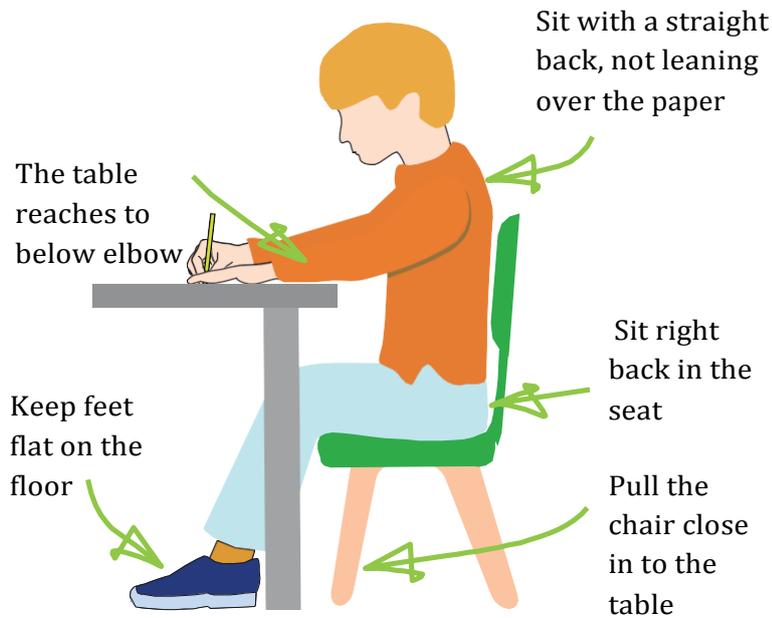
*a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x
y z*

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Appendix 2 - Posture

Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

SITTING POSITION

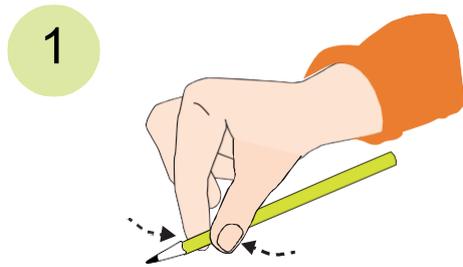


Paper position for right-handed children

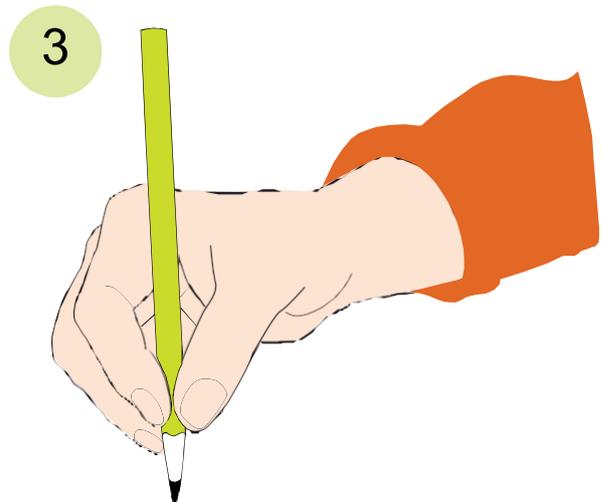
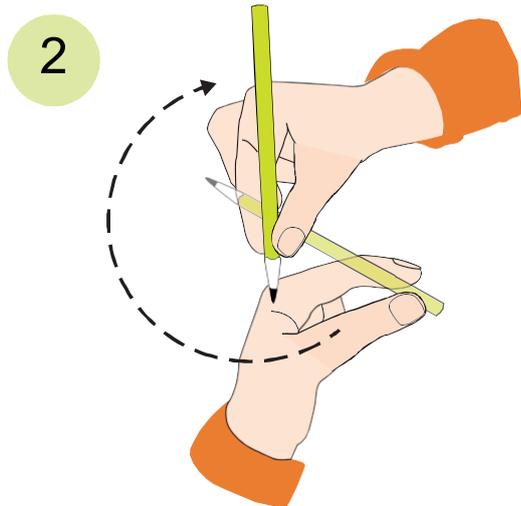
Appendix 3 - Pencil grip

THE TRIPOD PENCIL GRIP

Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib.

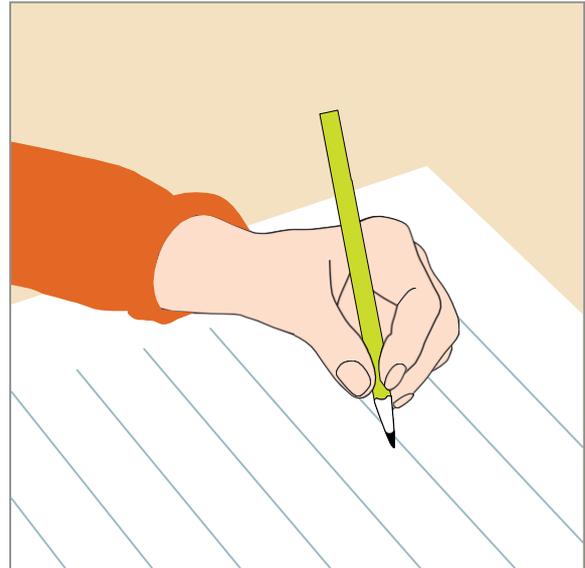
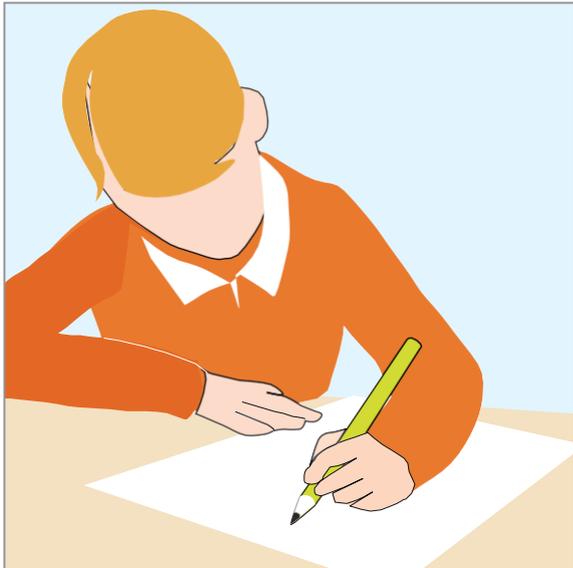


- 1) Grip the pencil with your index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.
- 2) With your free hand, spin the pencil from underneath.
- 3) Use your middle finger to support the underside of the pencil.



Appendix 4 – Left handed pupils

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow right-handed teachers as they demonstrate letter formation (and vice versa). 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.