

Blanford Mere Nursery & Primary School



Handwriting Policy

Date adopted by governors

December 2024

To be reviewed

December 2027

HANDWRITING POLICY

At Blanford Mere, we follow the Nelson Handwriting scheme. Nelson Handwriting provides a clear, practical framework for implementing and developing whole school handwriting. Pupils are actively encouraged to explore different styles of handwriting and develop their own style, when their letter formation and joining strokes are secure.

AIMS

It is our aim 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.

WHAT WILL THIS LOOK LIKE?

Handwriting will be a discrete lesson taught daily in Reception and KS1, three times in a week in Y3/4 and at least once a week in Y5/6. It is vital that teachers model the Nelson font to the children, and explicitly teach letter formation and joins in each of these sessions. Children will practise their handwriting in their handwriting books, so that they can appreciate handwriting is a discrete skill to be applied across all work, not just work done in their English book.

KS1 Handwriting books: Red A5 books (blue line width 6mm)

KS2 Handwriting books: Purple A5 books (blue line width 4mm)

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 practice manipulative skills e.g. cooking, 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 (linked to music and sounds) to gain confidence with the basic movements and flow of writing.
- Children will be introduced to graphemes in line with their Little Wandle programme. Handwriting will be further embedded by teachers, via high quality modelling, when they are carrying out their daily Phonics session.
- Children will be taught to form letters, using a variety of strategies and materials, following the Nelson Handwriting scheme.
- Children will be taught how to join letters correctly.
- Parents will be given opportunities to support their child to practise their letter formation at home. Teachers will send home materials to enable parents to do this.

ACROSS THE PRIMARY AGE RANGE, TEACHERS AND TEACHING ASSISTANTS WILL:

- Have high expectations; valuing work that is the child's best effort and supporting when it clearly is not.
- Identify left handed children and make sure they have sufficient space in which to work.

- Provide appropriate 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.
- Reinforce how to form letters, using a variety of strategies and materials.
- Reinforce how to join letters correctly.
- Monitor children's progress through regular assessments and observations of how letters and numbers are formed.
- Implement intervention for those children not forming letters or numbers correctly.
- Encourage children to assume a correct sitting position in order to write – both feet on the floor etc. See the front of the Nelson Teacher books for support with this.
- Where necessary, group children and provide differentiated tasks; engaging whole year teams in planning and support.
- Modelling good handwriting; on the board, in marking children's work, displays, use Nelson handwriting font on teaching materials where possible.
- Allow children with very poor fine motor skills to print and not make joins.

CHILDREN SHOULD:

- Take pride in their work (All children)
- Learn to write clearly recognisable letters and form them correctly (EYFS)
- Know which letters join to others and which do not (KS1)
- Be able to join letters appropriately (KS1)
- Enhance speed and fluency in order to develop a legible individual style (KS2)
- Demonstrate correct letter formation and joins learnt in all handwriting across the curriculum (KS1 and KS2)

GUIDANCE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING OF HANDWRITING

Handwriting will be a discrete lesson taught daily in Reception and KS1, three times in a week in Y3/4 and at least once a week in Y5/6. Each session will have a clear focus and the children will watch the teacher modelling letter formation and/or joins. It may be that it will be more appropriate to group the children in order to differentiate, but the children must see an adult modelling the writing! At least once a week, each child should be observed handwriting and coached on any development points. Teachers/teaching assistants will initial when handwriting has been observed. Children should be exposed to a range of typed fonts across all subjects. NTFPreCursivefk should be used for LO's/headers in books.

Teachers should model clear handwriting, using the Nelson joins, on working walls and displays. An A-Z of lower case and upper case letters will be displayed on working walls and in planners from September 2020, in the following format:

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

SOME GENERAL POINTS:

- Nelson Handwriting scheme provides photocopiable sheets, and Reception and KS1 have the use of workbooks, but nothing is more effective than a teacher modelling letter formation and joins.
- We do not join from descenders; g j y, nor break letters; b x z q. We do join to the descenders/break letters, just not from them. **Unlike the Nelson Handwriting font**, we form our G, J and I with 'the hats' on (G, J, I). We do not use the Nelson q, instead we ensure a q has a 45 degree upward flick to the right (q). We use the following formation for f, and k (f, k). We do not join from, or to, capital letters.

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. Encourage children to develop different styles of handwriting to suit their situation – e.g – notetaking, presenting work in best etc.

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

KS2 cycles due to split year groupings

Year 3/4 Cycle A – Year 3 progression

Year 3/4 Cycle B – Year 4 progression

Year 5/6 Cycle A – Year 5 progression

Year 5/6 Cycle B – Year 6 progression

Please note, the aim of the Nelson Handwriting Scheme, and the handwriting principles of Blanford Mere Primary School, mean that children should be secure with correct letter formations and some joins by the end of KS1. This means that the curriculum content is broadly similar across KS2, focusing upon style, fluency and neatness of presentation. Teachers will still provide specific feedback to pupils on their handwriting through all subjects, giving them opportunity to improve via gap tasks.

PEN LICENCES

- All children in Year 6 will be given an appropriate pen to use.
- When a child in Year 3 – 5 is assessed by the English Subject Leaders as having consistently legible, neat and fluent handwriting (see assessment criteria below) they may earn their pen licence.
- They will use their pen for all lessons, with the exception of number work, diagrams and drawings.
- Children will only be permitted to use school pens, not pens brought in from home.
- Pen licences can be revoked if the high standards of presentation are not maintained by the individual over a sustained period of time. This will be at the discretion of the class teacher, in conjunction with the English team.
- The English team will monitor and update records of who currently holds a pen licence.
- Each child will receive a gift in this assembly as a recognition of their achievement.
- Assessment criteria to achieve pen licence: Are all the letters the correct size? Are all the down strokes parallel? Are the height and length of ascenders and descenders regular? Is the space between letters even? Is spacing between words even? Is the writing a reasonable size? Could presentation be improved in any other way?

Adopted by Governors:

Review date: