



THOMAS'S KENSINGTON HANDWRITING POLICY

AIMS

- Children will start their handwriting experience in the Early Years using handwriting phrases (from Read, Write, Inc.) to assist them in forming their letters correctly.
- In Key Stage 1 they will adopt a consistent cursive approach to ensure high levels of presentation.
- Adults will adopt a common approach towards handwriting when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays/ resources.
- Children to achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters.
- Children to develop fluency and speed whilst writing, so that eventually the children are able to write the letters with confidence and correct orientation.

Teaching and Learning

- As recommended by the British Dyslexia Association, we adopt a continuous cursive style of writing when children are ready.
- Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Learning Support teachers model the agreed cursive style when modelling both in class, on displays and in feedback in books.

PROCEDURES

Posture and pencil grip

- Chairs and desks (where possible) are matched to children's age and height.
- Children's back should be straight and feet resting on the floor.
- A right handed child should have their back slanted to the left. For a left handed child the book should be slanted to the right.
- The tripod pencil grip is taught from Reception throughout KS1 and KS2 (described as 'Frog on a log')



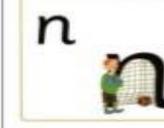
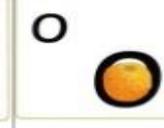
- A rhyme is taught to children to reinforce position and pencil grip:
 - “1, 2, 3, 4 Are my feet flat on the floor? 5, 6, 7, 8 Is my back nice and straight. 9, 10, 11, 12 Is my pencil nicely held?”
- Handwriting is praised weekly in EY and KS1. In every class a ‘Handwriting King and Queen’ will be crowned.

Early Years (EY): Communication, language and literacy

- Children should be exposed to print in story books and experiment with mark making with a range of materials (e.g. sand and finger painting)
- Children in the Early Years learn to write in the pre-cursive print to enable an earlier transition in Year 1 into the cursive script, depending on their ability.
- Implements such as chunky triangular pencils, large chalks and chunky pens etc. are used by pupils to rehearse skills on paper, chalk boards and easels etc.

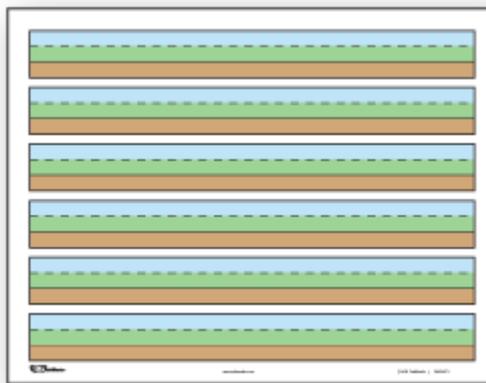
Here are the handwriting phrases from Read, Write, Read Inc. that will be taught in Reception.

Rhymes for letter formation - taken from Read Write Inc.

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|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| <p>a</p>  <p>Around the apple and down the leaf.</p> | <p>b</p>  <p>Down the laces to the heel and around the toe.</p> | <p>c</p>  <p>Curl around the caterpillar.</p> | <p>d</p>  <p>Around the dinosaurs bottom, up his tall neck & down to his toes.</p> | <p>e</p>  <p>Lift off the top and scoop out the egg.</p> | <p>f</p>  <p>Down the stem and draw the leaves.</p> |
| <p>g</p>  <p>Around the girls face, down her hair and give her a curl.</p> | <p>h</p>  <p>Down the head, to his hooves and over his back.</p> | <p>i</p>  <p>Down the body and dot for the head.</p> | <p>j</p>  <p>Down his body, curl, dot for his head.</p> | <p>k</p>  <p>Down the kangaroo's body tail and leg.</p> | <p>l</p>  <p>Down the long leg.</p> |
| <p>m</p>  <p>Down Maisie, mountain, mountain.</p> | <p>n</p>  <p>Down Nobby and over his net.</p> | <p>o</p>  <p>All around the orange.</p> | <p>p</p>  <p>Down the pirates plait and around his face.</p> | <p>qu</p>  <p>Round her head, up past her earring, down her hair, and flick.</p> | <p>r</p>  <p>Down the robots back and curl over his arm.</p> |
| <p>s</p>  <p>Slither down the snake.</p> | <p>t</p>  <p>Down the tower, across the tower.</p> | <p>u</p>  <p>Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle.</p> | <p>v</p>  <p>Down a wing, up a wing.</p> | <p>w</p>  <p>Down, up, down, up.</p> | <p>x</p>  <p>Down the arm and leg, repeat the other side.</p> |
| <p>y</p>  <p>Down a horn, up a horn and under head.</p> | <p>z</p>  <p>Zig-zag-zig.</p> | | | | |

Key Stage 1 (KS1)

- Within KS1, every class will have a 30 minute handwriting lesson per week.
- In handwriting lessons in Year 1, each class will learn the handwriting groups progressing through the 5 letter groups.
- In handwriting lessons in Year 2 the 5 handwriting groups are revised throughout the year and the weekly phonic sounds will be reinforced, modelled by an adult and practised by the children.
- Lined white boards are used to practise letter joins as well as lined paper in handwriting books.
- Year 1 (and some children in Year 2) use 'Sky, Grass and Soil' guidelines to learn where to position their tall, middle and low letters.
- Children in KS1 have a handwriting book.



Aa Bb Cc Dd

Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii

Jj Kk Ll Mm

Nn Oo Pp Qq

Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv

Ww Xx Yy Zz

Lower Key Stage 2: Years 3 and 4

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].

Pupils should be joining handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

Pen Licences

'Pen Licences' are to be introduced in the second part of Lent Term in Year 3

Pen Licence Certificates are awarded to those children who make a concerted effort to produce legible, joined handwriting, using cursive letter joins.

Some of the skills that children may need to demonstrate to earn a pen licence include:

- using a correct pencil grip
- writing on the line
- joining letters correctly
- starting each letter in the correct place
- keeping letters the same size
- forming letters with the correct shape
- leaving appropriate gaps between words
- ensuring that ascending and descending strokes are the right length
- writing clearly enough for other people to read their work

Teachers will usually assess children's work over a number of weeks to decide whether they're ready for a pen licence, rather than basing their decision on a one-off handwriting test.

Upper Key Stage 2: Years 5 and 6

Pupils should be taught to:

- write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
- choose which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
- choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task.
- lead in from line, flick out. Avoid 'submarining' or 'hovercrafting'.
- keep letters the same size.
- not take pen off the paper during the formation of words, apart from when there is an x.
- keep descenders same length.

Pupils in Year 5 and 6 are encouraged to *slant* letters in order to write with greater speed.

Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what their written expression and voice. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use un-joined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.

Planning

During handwriting sessions, children will apply taught formations to letters, words or parts of texts relevant to their current learning. For example, they may practise the letters from their current phonic focus, the letter string used in their weekly spellings, key vocabulary related to NC

core texts or parts of a text from guided reading weekly texts. Handwriting lessons are identified on the weekly Thomas's Literacy plans and handwriting books are used as evidence for the progression of handwriting. Children in KS2 are expected to participate in at least one handwriting session a week, linked to spelling patterns in the new National Curriculum, as set out in the Collins Treasure House Handwriting Scheme, which is accessed by all year groups in KS2. These sessions occur as early morning work.

Implements

- Children use a standard HB pencil, well sharpened.
- When a KS2 teacher deems a child ready for writing with a pen, the child will receive a 'pen licence'; and will be provided with a special handwriting pen. We provide Manuscript Handwriting pens.
- We are promoting the early use of handwriting pens and aim to introduce pens to certain children at the end of Year 3 (second half of Lent)
- The children write in royal blue (washable) ink
- A pencil is always used within maths regardless of whether children have a pen licence.
- The children at the upper end of Key Stage 2 are encouraged to write in their own fountain pens

Resources

EY and KS1 use the ICT software 'Read, Write, Inc.' to support the teaching of handwriting. This provides a model of forming letters alongside helpful phrases to assist memory. Each teacher has the software programme to support teaching and learning.

KS2 uses a range of worksheets from the Spectrum Handwriting Scheme and now we have introduced the Collins Treasure House Handwriting Scheme which matches the new curriculum with handwriting and spelling.

The children use lined handwriting books to practise letter formation.

Homework

Pencils should be used in homework books by KS1 children. They are encouraged to use the cursive scripts in all written home learning. KS2 children should also be encouraged to use the cursive script in all homework tasks.

Modelling and Teacher Input

At Thomas's Kensington, we encourage all staff to adhere to the cursive style when modelling writing for children, when marking books or writing on the whiteboard. We are also keen for displays to feature as much handwritten work as possible and for teachers to use the cursive style in displays – not just word-processed signage.

Incentives

The Lower School uses Handwriting Crowns for those children who make a big effort with handwriting.

The Prep School uses Handwriting Achievement Stickers to acknowledge good effort in handwriting.

Alternative Pens

The school provides manuscript handwriting pens, but if a child is struggling, we encourage children to try a different type of pen – particularly one that is designed for people who have difficulties with handwriting. A child who struggles to use the class handwriting pen might do much better with a pen that has a different angle, weight or shape of barrel, and then be ready to make the transition from pencil to ink. We have a supply of alternative pens and grips.

Equal opportunities and Special needs

All children must have the opportunity and the encouragement to reach their full potential. Children with Special Education needs and disabilities, where necessary, will be provided with specialist equipment such as pencil grips or wider ruled paper. Interventions are available for children who experience mild difficulties with handwriting. Those are led by the Learning Support/SEND teachers across all Key stages. Further support is available to those with significant difficulties to practise pre-writing skills and fine motor coordination with Occupational Therapist who works collaboratively with teachers and parents.

We refer children with dyspraxic profiles to our SENDCo who will support handwriting by liaising with the appropriate external services, in our case the Occupational Therapist who will assess and advise the Form Teacher and parents.

See also: [Curriculum Policy, Teaching & Learning Policy](#)

| This policy will be reviewed annually | | | |
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| Latest Review: September 2019 | By: | Nick Clabburn, Head of English and Alice Mackey, Lower School Curriculum Leader | No changes |
| Next Review: September 2020 | By: | Nick Clabburn, Head of English and Alice Mackey, Lower School Curriculum Leader | |