



THOMAS'S FULHAM HANDWRITING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

At Thomas's Fulham it is our aim that all pupils should develop a fluent and legible style of handwriting by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6 we hope all pupils have developed a consistent and personal handwriting style. We believe that legible and neat handwriting and the presentation of written work helps to raise standards as the pupils take pride in and have a sense of ownership of their work. It also encourages the quality and quantity of children's writing and accuracy of their spelling.

AIMS

- To help children write legibly and fluently
- To ensure the size and shape of letters are formed correctly and consistently
- To encourage pupils to take pride in the presentation of their work
- To use a fluent joined handwriting script by the end of Year 2 and to receive a Pen Licence during Year 4

The importance of handwriting in the curriculum

Handwriting is a movement skill and one which is best taught directly by demonstration, explanation and regular practice. The principal aim is that handwriting becomes an automatic process, which allows pupils to focus on the compositional skills rather than motor skills. The correct formation of all letters needs to become automatic and may require a lot of practice. In order for this to occur, handwriting is taught in ways that enhance fluency and legibility. Skills taught within handwriting lessons are reinforced across all subjects. It is a requirement that all teachers model good handwriting within their subject to support Thomas's Fulham's high expectations for presentation. In light of this, handwriting and presentation form part of our monitoring and evaluation schedule.

Handwriting Scheme

Thomas's Fulham uses the Scholastic Handwriting Scheme with the following letter formation.

The five joins are:

1. End-low diagonal joins
2. End-low drop-on joins
3. End-high horizontal joins
4. End-high drop-on joins

Children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units before learning to join.

The role of the teacher

- To adhere to the school policy to support each child in developing a fluent and legible handwriting style
- 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 pupils when using whiteboards, interactive whiteboards and when marking books

Handwriting Lesson Structure

- The children will begin with a fine or gross motor skill activity to get them warmed up for the handwriting lesson.
- The teacher will identify the type of letter shape and join (if involved).
- The teacher will model writing the letter shape or join on the whiteboard, ensuring they demonstrate best practice.
- The children will air-write and trace the letter shape.
- The children will then complete the appropriate handwriting worksheet to apply their learning.

Seating and Posture

Developing a good posture is as important as developing a good pencil grip. Correct posture is taught in line with the guidelines in the handwriting scheme. Children will be able to sustain writing for longer if they become used to sitting comfortably.

- Ensure that they have a good pencil grip
- Chair and table should be at a comfortable height
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Encourage children to sit up straight
- The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor
- The paper should be tilted slightly
- Rooms should be well lit

Pencil grip

- Children should write with a pencil (or pen when pupils receive their Pen Licence in Prep School) with a rounded nib. Pencils should be reasonably sharp.

For right handers

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point
- The paper should be placed to the right tilted slightly to the left
- Use the left hand to steady the paper

For left handers

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger

- Hold about 3cm from the tip
- The hand should be kept below the writing line
- The paper should be tilted slightly to the right
- Use the right hand to steady the paper

It is very important to note that a right-handed child is not to be seated on the left hand side of a left handed child as their elbows will collide!

Assessment

Children should be observed as they write during handwriting practice; the teacher and teaching assistant must circulate, monitor and intervene where necessary. Teachers also monitor and mark whole pieces of writing. The following should be considered:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child apply the correct movement when forming and/or joining letters?
- Are the joins formed correctly?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Are any letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
- Is the writing legible?
- Is the pupil's handwriting development in line with the assessment criteria?

Handwriting Support

Thomas's Fulham expects the vast majority of pupils to write legibly, fluently and in a joined script by the time they reach Year 6. However, some pupils may require further support. Teachers whose pupils demonstrate handwriting difficulties should liaise with the Head of Learning Support and Enrichment to develop and plan a programme designed for the individual child. Extra handwriting sessions are provided with access to extra resources where necessary.

Resources:

- Scholastic Handwriting Teacher Resource textbooks Rec-Year 6

LOWER SCHOOL

Reception: Daily support and guidance to develop correct and sound letter and number formation

Year 1: 30 minutes per week with consistent reinforcement

Year 2: 30 minutes per week with consistent reinforcement

EARLY YEARS

The emphasis in Early Years is on gross and fine motor skills in order to facilitate correct letter formation with the aim of achieving handwriting fluency. Children will be taught to understand that writing is a whole body process that involves fingers, thumb, wrist and elbow as well as neck, shoulders, hip and trunk. As a result, they will undertake a variety of gross and fine motor activities including:

Gross Motor Skills

- Crab walking
- Skipping
- Hopscotch
- Jumping
- Hopping
- Throwing and catching

Fine Motor Skills

- Playing with Lego
- Paper tearing
- Winding wind-up toys
- Using scissors
- Drawing patterns in the sand
- Finger painting

Alongside developing their gross and fine motor skills, pupils will practise correct letter shape and formation. Letter formation (starting at the correct entry point and then moving in the right direction) learned at this stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility. To aid fluency, close attention is also given to the pencil grip, correct posture, positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space.

Letter formation is practised in the same order as letters are introduced in the *Letters and Sounds* phonics programme and will be taught using 'letter stories.' There are four letter groups which make up the 'letter stories': straight down; down, up and over; up, backwards and around; zooming shapes. Throughout Reception, pupils will practise letter formation in A4 wide-lined exercise books or on handwriting sheets.

LOWER SCHOOL

Building on the Early Years, pupils in Year 1 will continue to develop a comfortable and efficient pencil grip, correct letter orientation, formation and proportion using the Scholastic handwriting scheme. The basic joins are introduced towards the middle of Year 2 as soon as children are able to confidently form letters with the correct orientation. The expectation is for the vast majority of pupils to be writing in a joined script by the end of Year 2. In Years 1 and 2, children write in wide-lined A4 books, and the line guides will reduce in size as they begin to write with greater accuracy and confidence.

PREP SCHOOL

Years 3 and 4

In Year 3 the children consolidate their use of the five basic handwriting joins, ensuring consistency in size, proportion and spacing of letters. At the start of Year 3, they continue to use exercise books with line guides to reinforce good letter formation and size. By the end of Year 3 joined script should be used at all times unless specific forms are required. In Year 4, handwriting speed, fluency and legibility are consolidated through practice and it is anticipated that all children will be awarded a Pen Licence during Year 4. Pupils can use either an ink pen or a rollerball pen but blue ink must be used.

Years 5 and 6

By Years 5 and 6, it is expected that all children will be writing fluently, legibly and in a joined script. In these year groups the emphasis is on developing a consistent and personal handwriting style whilst writing with increasing speed. The children are also encouraged to develop their presentation skills and learn how to adapt their writing for different purposes.

Handwriting Achievement

Pupils receive recognition for handwriting progress and achievement through the following means:

- Good Book (Lower School)
- Commendation Book (Prep School)
- Pen Licence (Year 4)
- Head's Award

See also: [Curriculum Policy](#)

This policy will be reviewed annually			
Reviewed: July 2018	By:	Susannah Bell, Curriculum Deputy Head	
Latest Review July 2020	By:	Susannah Bell, Curriculum Deputy Head	Changes made
Next Review: June 2021	By:		