

Eastgate Academy Handwriting

Intent

At Eastgate Academy we recognise that handwriting not only produces well-presented work but empowers the student to write quickly and without discomfort. It fosters self-esteem and begins to develop confidence in an otherwise reluctant writer. Children who struggle with their handwriting often consider themselves 'bad writers' and thus it is vital that handwriting is an important and integral part of developing confident and competent writers.

Aims

To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by:

- Having a correct writing posture and pencil grip
- Form letters and numbers correctly

EYFS

Early learning goal - Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.

Pupils should be taught to:

- sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- begin to form lower case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- form capital letters correctly
- form digits 0-9 correctly

Year One

Handwriting requires frequent and discreet, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters and numbers correctly and confidently.

Pupils should be taught to:

- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters
- form digits 0-9

Year Two

Pupils should revise and practice correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely and with correct orientation.

Pupils should be taught to:

- continue to re-enforce sitting correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

Year 3 & 4

Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught weekly to the whole class with additional small support groups if necessary. The aim is to increase the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say.

Pupils should be taught:

- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting. Ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; the lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.
- Small group 'top-up teaching will be given to pupils who require additional support

Year 5 & 6

Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems in forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear what standard of writing is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final 'best copy'. They should also be taught when it is appropriate to use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and for capital letters for example, filling in a form.

Pupils should be taught:

- to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed
- to choose which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding, as part of their personal style, whether not to join specific letters
- to choose the writing implement which is best suited to a task

- Small group 'top-up teaching will be given to pupils who require additional support

School guidelines

EYFS

In order to perform the mechanics of writing confidently children must develop their hand control. In order to achieve this we promote the development of both gross and fine motor control through a range of experiences e.g. chalks, patterning, ribbons, playdough and using tweezers etc.

At Eastgate Academy we have devised a prompt sheet to teach letter formation which is rooted in the 'sounds write' programme. There is a spoken prompt sheet to support the formation of letters. In Reception the handwriting program is followed as part of whole class and small group teaching session every week.

The children must be allowed to pick up their own writing implement and decide which hand they prefer. Only then are they given help with the pencil hold, and pencil grips provided as appropriate.

In order to correct pencil grip the whole school use the 'pick and flick' method. Children will be reminded at every opportunity (Appendix 1).

In the EYFS practitioners will consider the developmental stage of children when correcting pencil grip (Appendix 2). Children will write on lined paper or lined whiteboards.

Year One

Handwriting is taught as part of whole class and small group teaching session every week. Taught sessions follow the 'Sounds Write' programme to teach letter formation. There is a spoken prompt sheet to support the formation of letters.

All teachers and assistant teachers will be expected to correct letter formation using agreed model and correct pencil grip.

In order to correct pencil grip the whole school use the 'pick and flick' method. Children will be reminded at every opportunity (Appendix 1).

Practitioners will consider the developmental stage of children when correcting pencil grip (Appendix 2).

Children will write on lined paper or lined whiteboards.

Year 2 – Year 4

Handwriting is taught as part of whole class and small group teaching session every week. Children will be taught to join appropriately through the exploration of handwriting families.

Sessions will have the following format:

- Correct seating, posture and orientation of book/board (Handwriting Penpals provides slides to assist with this)
- 2 min Warm up (Handwriting Penpals provides slides to assist with this)
- Correct holding of pencil/pen
- Writing pattern modelled by the teacher and then practiced with an emphasis on control, sizing, spacing and fluency.
- Letter modelled by teacher and then written 5 times with the best effort circled by the pupil.
- If appropriate model writing joined – selecting words which contain previously taught letters.
- Practise writing is on lined paper in 'Handwriting Books', but should be encouraged beyond the handwriting lessons. Especially when writing long writes into their 'best' books.
- Finally write a sentence that contains the letter. This is an opportunity to reinforce the teaching of sentence types – statement – question – command – exclamation. Ask the pupils to ensure that they have used capitals correctly for the start of the sentence, any proper nouns and the personal pronoun 'I'. In addition ask them to judge what type of sentence this is and choose the appropriate sentence ending. Modelling how to form these correctly if necessary.

Year 5 & 6

Handwriting is taught as part of whole class and small group teaching session every week. Children will be taught to join appropriately through the exploration of handwriting families or particular letter joins as is needed.

Sessions will have the following format:

- Correct writing posture and pencil grip continues to be closely monitored and adjusted when necessary
- Whole class sessions should follow the format for Years 2-4. Most effective sessions will be for targeted support to focus on a specific need and can be taught as 'top-up teaching'.
- Whole class sessions should promote fluency and speed. Children should develop their own writing styles within the parameters of the school policy.
- Children should be encouraged to choose appropriate writing tools and styles to meet the need of their writing task.

Left handed children

These children are noted, and given guidance to ease the process of writing by the implementation of these strategies

- They are seated on the left of right handed children, so their arms do not clash;
- Their paper is tilted clockwise so they can see what they have written;
- To avoid smudging their work they are encouraged to position their fingers about 1.5 cm away from the end of the writing implement.

Children with Special Needs

Teachers and assistant teachers should be sensitive towards the needs of children who may have physical or learning disabilities which make writing more challenging. Children with dyslexia, dyspraxia and other specific needs may need individualized support and this should be discussed with the SENCO and recorded on their learning plan.

Resources

Appropriate writing tools should be supplied in each class.

EYFS and Year One should have a wide variety of writing tools in the classroom to encourage the development of mark making and writing.

EYFS and Year One should be supplied with pencils which promote the development of a good tripod grip.

Writing should be on lined paper/boards with the following spacing:

EYFS – 2cm gap

Year 1 – 1 cm gap

Year 2 to 6 - 1 cm gap

The learning environment

Children are introduced to a variety of writing tools and equipment throughout their time at Eastgate Academy. EYFS and Year One has an informal writing area, equipped with a variety of writing tools and materials, to encourage and motivate children to write for their own pleasure and enjoyment, and to give them opportunity to practise handwriting skills. Handwriting is an important part of the writing process and children are given opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. Writing is displayed across the school in order to celebrate and share the learning that is taking place.

In year 2 children are introduced to drafting and editing in order to refine their writing and develop their presentation skills.

A child is ready to join letters when:

- They have learnt to form letters correctly
- Letters are of a consistent and suitable size
- Letters are positioned appropriately on the writing line as well as in relation to one another.

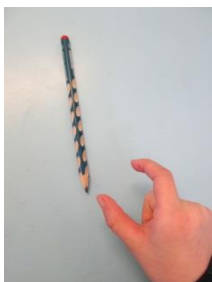
At KS2 handwriting is encouraged to be fluent and speedy as children develop their own preferred styles within the agreed parameters. By the end of KS2 children are skilled writers who can choose appropriate writing tools and adjust handwriting suited to the requirements of the writing task.

Monitoring

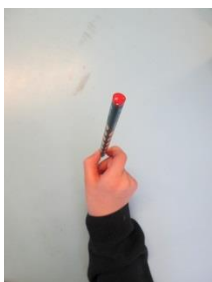
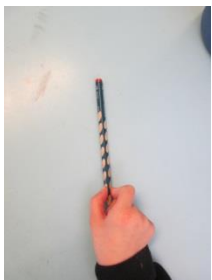
Handwriting will be monitored regularly by PHASE and subject leaders through book scrutinies.

Appendix 1

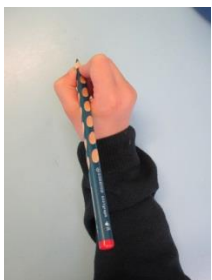
Pick and flick method



Tommy Thumb and
Pointy Peter to pick
up the pencil near
to the end.



Flick the pencil.





Correct pencil grip at the end.

Appendix 2



Stage 1 of Pencil Grip Development

When the child first picks up a crayon they will hold it in the same way as they pick up a knife and fork, other than the crayon tip will be facing downwards.

Through the initial mark making process it is normal for their arm and elbow to stay rigid, with the crayon movement coming from the shoulder.



Stage 2 of Pencil Grip Development

With improved arm and hand control the child will start to hold the crayon in the palm of their hand, with their thumb securing it in their hand. Note that the thumb is now close to the tip and not the end of the crayon. The grasp is similar to that of using a knife and fork to cut food.

The increased arm strength allows the elbow to be slightly away from the body, providing greater flexibility.



Stage 3 of Pencil Grip Development

The child will hold the pencil with all five fingers resulting in the wrist being off the table. The grip is similar to a darts player holding the dart with all five fingers.

Movement of the crayon now comes from the wrist but as the hand strength improves there will start to be some finger movement.



Stage 4 of Pencil Grip Development

The child will usually start to use the three finger, or **tripod grip**, by the age of 6.

Initially the fingers will be held rigidly but, as your child improves their control of the finger muscles, the fingers will start to move the pencil.