

Handwriting

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Aims

- To share information on how and why we teach handwriting at Shoreham
- To show examples of good handwriting across the year groups
- To provide pointers and access to materials to support handwriting at home

What is handwriting?

An ancient art?



...or a modern day tool?



A universal skill?



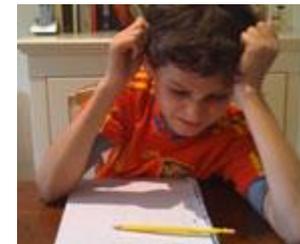
...or something personal?



**Something we
Take for granted?**

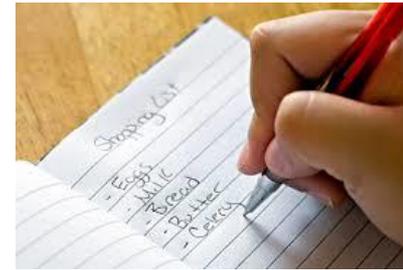
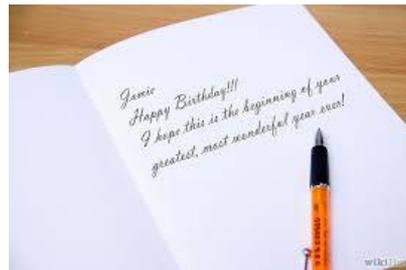


**...or a skill many
struggle to master?**



Why is Handwriting Important?

To write is to be human.



Aims of our Handwriting Teaching:

- All pupils develop a fluent, neat and legible style of handwriting of which they can be **proud**
- All pupils understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly
- All pupils are able to write quickly for all practical purposes and to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively
- All pupils should take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement

Getting started – how to sit

Your position will affect how you use your hands to write. Make sure that:

- Your bottom is right back in the seat
- The seat reaches to just behind your knee
- Your feet are flat on the floor
- The table reaches to just above your elbow
- The chair is pulled in close to the table
- You are sitting with a straight back, not lying over the page

Getting started – pencil grip

Once you have established if your child is right or left-handed, this rhyme can help:

Tommy Thumb Pencil Grip Rhyme Words

Writing time, writing time, what do I do?

Call Tommy Thumb, Tommy Thumb,
I need you!

Peter Pointer, Peter Pointer, I need you!

Greet Tommy Thumb, Tommy Thumb,
How do you do?

Toby Tall, Toby Tall, I need you!

Curl in a bit, curl in a bit,

We'll rest on you!

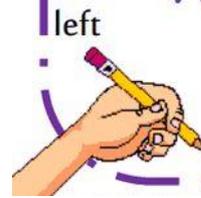
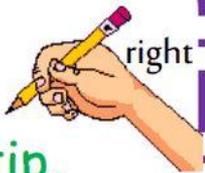
Ruby Ring, Baby Small stay asleep!

Snooze awhile, snooze awhile,

Do not peep!

How to hold my Pencil

My thumb is bent,
Pointer points to the tip,
Tall man is at the side.
Tuck the other fingers in
And take them for a ride!



Continuous Cursive Style

At Shoreham Village School, our handwriting style is 'continuous cursive'. All pupils learn this style.

It is joined-up writing where each letter is formed without taking the pencil off the paper and consequently, each word is formed in one, flowing movement.

In Reception, pupils learn how to form the letters correctly and are not required to join them up until they are ready.

Teaching pupils to write in this handwriting style ensures a smooth transition to joined writing.

Key Features

- By making each letter one movement, children's hands develop a 'physical memory' of it, making it easier to produce the correct shape.
- All lowercase letters start on the line with an 'approach stroke'.
- The pencil does not leave the paper until the word is complete.
- Letters 't and x are crossed and i / j dotted when the whole word is complete.

Key advantages

- Research shows that teaching cursive handwriting helps pupils in learning to read and write.
- Children are a lot less likely to reverse letters b/d p/q as in cursive writing, these letters require a huge difference in directionality.
- It enhances spelling ability as hand movements create some muscle memory that retains a spelling pattern
- It develops internal control systems that can be used as a tool for learning – the neuron connections in the brain responsible for organising other kinds of information and skills are greatly strengthened.

Key advantages (continued)

- Helps left-handed children instead of using the 'hook' position, they write from bottom up and turn paper clockwise.
- Used as a tool to put thoughts on paper quickly and easily.
- The British Dyslexia Association recommends that pupils learn the continuous cursive style. Previous teaching of print style followed by cursive style added a layer of difficulty and caused confusion.
- It is most helpful if a child can learn to use a single system of handwriting from the start.

Letter Groups

The alphabet is organised into stroke-related groups for ease of learning:

Joins

- There are four basic joins that pupils are taught:
- Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders eg ai, um
- Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders eg ou wi
- Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders eg ab it
- Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders eg ol wh

Progression

- In EY / Reception, pupils focus on letter formation
- In Y1 pupils continue to practise letter formation, begin to work on letter size, orientation and proportion. They are also introduced to basic joins.
- In Year 2, pupils are introduced to all the joins and continue to practise their joining and legibility
- In Years 3 and 4, pupils consolidate the joins, fluency, legibility and speed.
- In Years 5 and 6, children work on increasing speed, developing presentation skills and how to use different styles for different purposes.

Helping your child at home

The best way to support your child is to practise, practise, practise.

- Motivate your child by providing a variety of tools such as felt-tips, chalk, and paint.
- Lined paper helps children to practise the letter formation as the key feature of our handwriting style is that lowercase letters always start on the line.
- Give children a purpose for writing eg shopping lists, weekend schedules, thank you letters, response to letters received from friend / relative

If you are concerned...

Are the concerns about the handwriting shared by the teacher, the parents and the child?

What are the main areas of concern?

- **Legibility** (All or most of the words written can't be read out of context.)
- **Neatness** (The handwriting is messy or poorly controlled.)
- **Comfort** (The child is experiencing pain, strain or discomfort when writing.)
- **Pressure** (S/he is pressing too hard or not hard enough, or pressure within one piece of writing is variable.)
- **Speed** (S/he writes very slowly, producing too little writing, or too fast, becoming inaccurate.)
- **Motivation/enjoyment** (S/he is reluctant to write or gives up too easily.)

If you are concerned:

Please note the following important points:

- Changing handwriting takes a lot of time and effort.
- Encouragement is essential.
- Short, regular, frequent periods of practice are much more effective than long sessions.
- Make sure that any teaching at home does not set up conflicts for the child between home and school.

Help at Home

Visit the following websites for more ideas and practise sheets:

www.teachhandwriting.co.uk

www.nha-handwriting.org.uk

www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/parent/help-with-handwriting

<http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/handwriting-worksheets>

<http://www.cursivewriting.org/handwriting-worksheets.html>