

# Handwriting Policy for Kew Riverside Primary School

## Intent

We strive for all our children to have the ability to write effectively. It is a fundamental skill that supports learning across the curriculum. This policy aims to promote high standards of handwriting in our school, ensuring that all children can write legibly and fluently, developing an automaticity in their handwriting process. Across the curriculum, practitioners model and embed our Kew Qualities which places an emphasis on being proud in how we present our work. We achieve this by:

- Instilling a passion for writing and a sense of pride in the quality of handwriting.
- Ensuring consistency in the teaching of handwriting across all year groups.
- Supporting children in developing their fine motor skills and writing proficiency as outlined in the Writing Framework.
- Providing a clear progression in handwriting skills as outlined in the 2014 National Curriculum.
- Facilitating the automatic process of handwriting, enabling children to focus on content and ideas rather than letter formation.

## Objectives

### 1. Standards of Handwriting

1. All children will achieve a neat, legible style of handwriting by the end of Year 6.
2. Handwriting will be monitored throughout the academic year to ensure progress. This is across all curriculum areas.

### 2. Teaching and Learning Approach

1. Children will be taught handwriting instruction from Reception to year 6 using the Little Wandle and Nelson Handwriting Scheme, focusing on letter formation and correct posture, progressing to cursive script and linking to writing tasks as appropriate.
2. Teachers will model handwriting consistently during lessons, ensuring children are aware of letter size, spacing, and slant related to the Writing Framework.

3. Further support needed for children who display specific difficulties with handwriting will be identified and supported through the use of handwriting tools and/or small interventions.
3. **Curriculum Integration**
    1. Handwriting will be integrated into all subjects, ensuring children practice their skills regularly across the curriculum, utilising the techniques from the Little Wandle and Nelson scheme.
    2. Opportunities to write across different subjects will be provided to reinforce handwriting skills in context.

## Implementation

### Teaching Methodology

- **Reception:** Focus on pre-writing skills, letter formation, and pencil grip using the Little Wandle and pre-writing elements from the Nelson Handwriting Scheme.
- **Key Stage 1:** Introduction of cursive handwriting with the Nelson method, focusing on correct letter joins and maintaining proper posture, linked to writing objectives.
- **Key Stage 2:** Refinement of cursive handwriting using the Nelson system, with emphasis on speed and fluency, incorporating writing skills from the Writing Framework.
- Handwriting sessions will be taught as a whole -class for 15 minutes a minimum of three times a week, with additional practice integrated into other subjects. The lesson to be structured as follows:
  - 3 minutes: Brief warm up exercises led by teacher: children to check the 3 p's (paper, pen, posture). Reception children: dough disco, finger exercises, go-noodle, DISCO (see below for warm up ideas).
  - 4 minutes: Teacher models letter formation of letters in isolation, joins or words.
  - 8 minutes - silent, independent work. The teacher circulates and intervenes to secure understanding and progress.

### Resources

- Handwriting books aligned with the Nelson Handwriting Scheme will be provided for practice.
- Teachers will have access to the Nelson system to support handwriting instruction and writing skills.
- A selection of writing tools (pens, pencils, grips) will be made available to suit the needs of all learners.

## **Monitoring and Progression**

- Regular monitoring of handwriting will happen throughout the year with teachers providing regular verbal feedback to the children.
- Teachers will provide intervention groups to children who need it. These may be children who are struggling with letter formation, joins or legibility.
- Children who develop a clear, legible and consistent handwriting style will be awarded a pen licence. This is primarily in KS2, however children in Year 2 can also be awarded a pen license.
- Pen licenses will be awarded in assembly to encourage and celebrate improvement.
- As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to take creative risks with their own handwriting style, including elements of calligraphy, note-taking etc.
- Teachers will use their professional judgement and can provide additional guidance to parents with home learning to be provided as necessary.

## **Professional Development**

- Regular training sessions for staff on effective handwriting instruction within the Nelson framework and its links to the Writing Framework will be scheduled.
- Sharing of best practices between teachers will be encouraged to improve overall school standards in handwriting.

## **Engagement with Parents**

- The school will provide parents with information on how to support their child's handwriting development at home, particularly through the Nelson Handwriting Scheme and writing tasks.
- Information for parents will be offered to share techniques and resources for encouraging good handwriting habits.

## **Review and Updates**

This policy will be reviewed annually, with input from staff, parents, and students to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.

## **Summary of Expectations Based on Ofsted Framework**

Under the current Ofsted framework, schools are expected to demonstrate:

1. **Quality of Education:** Schools should provide a well-sequenced curriculum that ensures knowledge is built over time and allows for the development of essential skills, including handwriting, aligned with the Writing Framework.
2. **Behaviour and Attitudes:** A positive culture around handwriting is cultivated, where children take pride in their work and exhibit excellent behaviours towards their learning.
3. **Personal Development:** The handwriting policy contributes to the development of pupils' personal skills, fostering resilience and motivation to improve.
4. **Leadership and Management:** Senior leaders are expected to ensure that the handwriting policy is implemented effectively and consistently across the school, with regular evaluations of its impact on students' progress.

By adhering to these guidelines and utilising the Nelson Handwriting Scheme, linked to the Writing Framework, our school aims to provide a high-quality handwriting education that meets and exceeds the expectations set by Ofsted.

## **Appendices**

The 3 P's:

- paper
- pen grip
- posture

### **Physical Environment for handwriting**

Attention to posture and seating arrangements is important. To this end, all teachers need to ensure the following are in place:

- Paper or books should be slanted at 11 o'clock for right-handed children or 1 o'clock for left-handed children.
- Chair and table should be at a comfortable height (height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor). -
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor.
- Children should be encouraged to sit up straight and not slouch.
- Tables should be free of clutter.
- Rooms should be well lit.
- Left-handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners.
- Children who display specific difficulties with handwriting will have these addressed through such interventions as slanted writing boards, rubber pencil grips, using alternative writing media etc.

### **Pen Grip**

A comfortable pencil grip is taught in Reception and consistently applied throughout the school. This generally consists of thumb and forefinger gripping the pencil with the middle finger supporting it. Other writing grips may be applied for children who may struggle with this grip. Writing grip triangles may be attached to the pencil if children find this comfortable and an aid to their natural pencil grip. The focus is for a comfortable recognised grip which maintains legible handwriting. Left-handed children are encouraged to position their fingers about 1.5 centimetres from the end of the writing implement to avoid smudging their work.

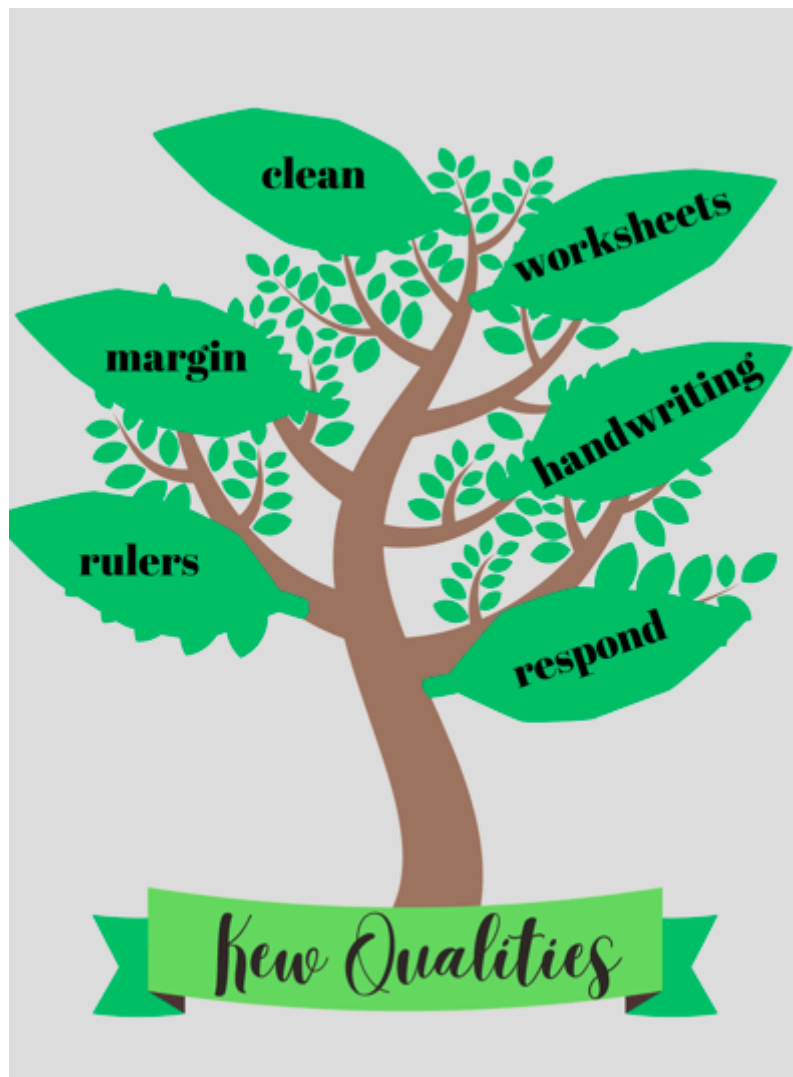
### **PEN LICENCES**

- All children in Year 6 will be given an appropriate pen to use.
- When a child in Year 3 – 5 is assessed by the Class Teacher and English Subject Leader 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 Leader.
- The English Leader will monitor and update records of who currently holds a pen licence.
- Each child will receive a certificate in 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?

### **Presentation across the curriculum**



## Glossary of Terms

ascender	a letter that goes above the x-height
ascender line	the line that ascenders go up to
baseline	the line on which most letters rest.
crossbar	the horizontal line through these letters: A E F f G H T t
descender	a letter that goes below the baseline. Letters that go below the baseline are: f g j p q y.
descender line	the line that descenders go down to. If there were a line across the bottom of f g j p q y, that would be the descender line.
downstroke	any movement downward with the writing instrument.
stem	the vertical line in a letter: B b D d F f g H h I i J j K k L l M m N n P p R r T t u Y
upstroke	any movement upward with the writing instrument.
x-height	also called the midpoint, it is the height of all letters that are not ascenders or descenders
<p>Letters that do not go above the x-height are: a c e m n o r s u v w x z.</p> <p>Letters that go above the x-height are: b d f h k l t and all CAPITAL LETTERS.</p>	

### **Handwriting in Reception:**

Within our early years provision, we follow a robust and systematic approach to phonics following the Little Wandle programme. Following advice from our Little Wandle specialist, we have adapted a blend of approaches. This entails children in the Early Years being exposed to the handwriting programme that Little Wandle follows within the phonics programme. This ensures consistency with children following the letter formation rhymes from the programme. In addition to this, the children will follow the Nelson Handwriting Scheme early handwriting programme of tracing patterns to support their early fine motor skills and supplement their handwriting development. Kew Riverside's Early Years Practitioners will use their teacher's judgment as to which additional practise the children may need.

### **Nelson Handwriting Scheme:**

At Kew Riverside Primary School, we use the Nelson Handwriting Scheme from Year 1 to Year 6 to help children develop their handwriting. Children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units before learning to join. Letter formation as per the scheme, and the 'Twinkl Cursive Unlooped' font, is as follows.

#### Lower case letters

**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**

#### Capital letters

**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**

#### Numbers

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0**



### Letter sets


The Nelson Handwriting Scheme groups letters into five overlapping 'sets', as follows.

Set 1	a c d e h i k l m n s t u	Twelve letters with exit flicks, plus 's'.
Set 2	a c d e g i j m n o p q r s u v w x y	Nineteen letters which start at the top of the x-height.
Set 3	b f h k l t	Six letters which start at the top of the ascender.
Set 4	f o r v w	Five letters which finish at the top of the x-height.
Set 5	b g j p q x y z	Eight letters after which no join is ever made. Joins are not made to or from the letter 'z'. Note that f, g, j and y do NOT have loops.

### Letter joins

Basic join	Set 1 → Set 2	to letters without ascenders	in ma ki
Second join	Set 1 → Set 3	to letters with ascenders	ab if
Third join	Set 4 → Set 2	horizontal joins	oa fo we
Fourth join	Set 4 → Set 3	horizontal joins to letters with ascenders	ob fl wh

Warm up Ideas:

<p><b>I Don't Know!</b> Shrug shoulders up, down, forwards and backwards, as if you were saying 'I don't know!'</p>	<p><b>Crocodile Jaws</b> Raise your arms in the air with one above the other. Then snap your hands together like a crocodile snapping its jaw. Take turns having the left and right arm above each other for this activity.</p>	<p><b>Air Traffic Controller</b> Start with your elbows bent and your hands in a fist in front of each shoulder. Then straighten your elbows, moving one arm out from the body and the other arm to the side of your body. Alternate arms back and forth.</p>
<p><b>Butterfly</b> Begin with your arms straightened in front of your body. Link your thumbs together to make an "X" and turn your hands facing out. Using the shoulders to move, make small circles with the hands, moving from left to right (remember to do this movement from the shoulders, not the fingers or hand).</p>	<p><b>SHOULDER, HAND AND FINGER WARMUPS FOR HANDWRITING</b></p> 	<p><b>Finger Push-Ups</b> Place the tips of your fingers together and straighten the fingers while pushing the finger tips against each other.</p>
<p><b>Piano</b> Drum your fingers on the table or desk as if playing the piano. Make sure each finger touches the desk. You can also work on fast vs. slow movements with this. "How slowly can you play the piano?" "How fast can you play the piano?" "Can you use both hands together to play the piano?" (works on bilateral coordination skills).</p>	<p><b>Baton Twirling</b> Get your pencils out and start to twirl them in the air like a baton, spinning them both horizontally and vertically in the air. This combines some shoulder and finger exercises together.</p>	<p><b>Imaginary Gloves</b> Pull on your "gloves" by applying firm pressure to the fingers and back of each hand. This provides proprioceptive and tactile feedback and prepares the muscles for movement.</p>

