



# Stebbing Primary School Handwriting Policy

Created/updated October 2018

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Due for review autumn 2020

## **Introduction**

At Stebbing Primary School we believe that regular handwriting practice is necessary to develop a fluent handwriting style. Our aim is for all pupils to achieve this before entering secondary school.

Handwriting and letter formation is taught throughout the whole school. In Reception children have opportunities to practise forming their letters using a variety of different tools and methods. In year 1, once children are confident with letter formation, regular handwriting sessions take place. Joins will be introduced as children progress through the Letters and Sounds phonics programme. These are continued into year 2. Once children reach KS2 there are regular opportunities to practise their handwriting skills independently and as a class. These sessions revisit the different joins and may incorporate weekly spellings, including spelling patterns. There are a number of different resources which teachers use to teach handwriting including the appendices to this policy.

## **The Early Stages of Writing: Developing fine-motor skills**

Throughout a child's schooling-although particularly in Reception and Key Stage 1-we ensure children have a wide range of opportunities to develop their gross and fine motor skills. Developing gross motor skills (such as physical activities to strengthen and develop muscles in the shoulders and arms) will help develop children's fine motor skills. This will ensure that once they have had many opportunities to strengthen these muscles they will be ready and confident to write.

Montessori methodology is firmly embedded in our Reception and Key Stage 1 classes. Practical Life equipment, which helps to develop dexterity, is incorporated into daily sessions, with children freely choosing such activities from the shelves. Practitioners act as guides to support children in their muscular movements and assess their ability and confidence.

The Montessori equipment available for children to use in other areas of learning, such as Maths or Cultural based learning also helps children to develop key muscles. Equipment is often small and beautifully crafted. Children show an eagerness to touch and take time to use the equipment. All of these activities will have a positive impact on developing children's muscular movements.

## **Gym Trail**

Gym trail is offered to children who may benefit from extra support with fine and gross motor developments. These children have been chosen because they may find it difficult to concentrate for extended periods of time, may have poor spatial awareness or struggle with gross and fine motor movements. A small number of children from each class take part in these sessions. Teaching Assistants have been trained and work in very small groups. They carry out short activities which help to develop their spatial awareness, balance and coordination. They also focus on developing gross motor movements. Close assessments are recorded with regular feedback to teaching staff and our SENCo.

## **Assessment**

Handwriting is assessed in line with our school writing assessment grids and the interim assessment frameworks for end key stage 1 and 2. In the Foundation Stage handwriting and letter formation are assessed through the Early Learning Goals and Writing strand of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

## **Partnership with parents**

Parents are invited to attend a welcome meeting when their child first starts school in Reception. Here, handwriting is discussed and a formation sheet is given showing how to form the groups of letters.

Parents would also have the chance to discuss handwriting throughout their child's schooling either through family consultations or a separate appointment.

### **Letter formation (APPENDIX A) (This sheet is handwritten)**

Letter formation is taught from Reception to year 6. A letter formation sheet is included. This shows the way each letter should be formed. Please refer to the blue sheet. (This sheet is available as a hard copy on request and not included in the online version)

### **List of joins/no joins (APPENDIX B)**

Children are taught to join when the teacher feels it is appropriate. Our aim is that all children will have an opportunity to learn to join early in key stage 1, however, this will usually follow a child mastering the correct letter formation. It is important prior to joining that children are confident to orientate and position letters correctly on the page. Size and spacing are also considered before introducing joins. Handwriting sessions are taught frequently and joins are introduced when it is appropriate.

Please refer to the yellow sheet to show joins from a letter and joins into a letter. This outlines how we teach across the school to ensure there is a consistent approach. It is the responsibility of all teaching staff to ensure this approach is set out and followed.

### **4 joins and examples (APPENDIX C)**

There are four joins which children need to be taught:

- Diagonal join
- Diagonal join to an ascender
- Horizontal join
- Horizontal join to an ascender

Please refer to the pink sheet to show each of these joins.

### **Resources available**

Resources will be found in each classroom.

This policy can be accessed by visiting the school's website: [www.stebbingprimary.co.uk](http://www.stebbingprimary.co.uk)

Which letters do we join in KS1?  
(APPENDIX B)

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		

Joining (APPENDIX C)  
(PLEASE NOTE THIS SHEET IS HANDWRITTEN)

There are 4 basic joins:

Diagonal join

Diagonal join to a tall letter

Horizontal join

Horizontal join to a tall letter