**Handwriting Rationale 2023 Holmes Chapel Primary School**

**Intent**

At Holmes Chapel Primary School we intend our children to have the skills to be able to write fluently, legibly, and with automaticity and speed. We want confident writers who can successfully form letters with correct and relative size, form different strokes to join adjacent letters, and eventually make conscious decisions to join or understand when letters are best left un-joined. We want our children to take care with their handwriting and being proud of their work, knowing it is presented adequately for the job it is intended (display, note-taking, etc).

**Implementation**

**Early Years:**

Early handwriting is taught daily through a variety of methods, following the mnemonic from Little Wandle, in a variety of methods:

* In Reception, teachers raise awareness of patterns and shapes in the environment and developing the vocabulary for them.
* Teachers model and explain vocabulary of movement by talking about the movements children make, such as going round and round, making curves, etc.
* To develop gross motor skills teachers model and encourage the children to make shapes with their body/ movements to help them remember patterns and shapes, make large movements in the air with their arms, hands and shoulders, encouraging use of both sides, and use warm up activities to build core strength in order to help posture and necessary muscle memory.
* To develop fine motor skills and dexterity teachers provide the children with activities, such as pegs, threading, construction, play dough, cutting, use of tweezers, etc.
* Teachers model correct letter formation (print) using the correct positional language to reinforce orientation and help memory recall.
* Children make patterns and letter shapes in the air, on each other’s backs, sand, flour, wipe off chalk boards/ floor with water paint brushes
* Teachers model correct pencil grip and correct/ support where necessary.
* Teachers model correct posture for sitting and correct paper orientation.
* Teachers provide triangular-shaped equipment (pencils and whiteboard pens) as much as possible, and explore the use of different grips to aid a comfortable grip.
* Formal handwriting and letter formation practice in books / on paper is taught seated at a table of appropriate height where possible.
* In Reception, where children are identified to struggle with fine motor skills, we provide fine motor interventions on building muscle strength, orientation, pressure as applicable.

**Key Stage 1:**

* In Key Stage 1, handwriting lessons are taught 2-3x per week, using the Letterjoin scheme.
* Teachers model correct formation of lower case, capital letters and numbers 0-9, differentiating where they start and finish.
* Letters are introduced and revised in letter families with vocabulary modelled to reinforce shape and direct of those families, following the Little Wandle rhymes.
* Teachers revise horizontal strokes for joining and introduce diagonal strokes for joining.

**Key Stage 2**:

* In Lower Key Stage 2, handwriting is taught 2x per week focusing on strokes for joining, legibility, consistency and quality of writing.
* In Upper Key Stage 2, handwriting is assessed and where common errors occur, whole class lessons are planned to address these errors.
* In Upper Key Stage 2, handwriting is practised in word form linked to spellings 2x per week or ongoing through common errors in their writing.

**Whole School:**

* All year groups provide suitable equipment for children of good size and quality. Teachers provide additional ergonomic equipment where necessary (larger pens, grips, books with larger lines, and other aids advised by Occupational Therapists, etc)
* Interventions are put in place for children who struggle to meet age-related expectation (Peg to Paper, Write from the Start, Shine handwriting amongst other bespoke interventions based on individual needs).

**Assessment**

The national curriculum end of key stage assessment in key stage 1 and 2 assesses handwriting as part of the writing element through the ‘*pupil can’* statements. At Holmes Chapel Primary School, in each year group, we assess children’s handwriting through their ability to apply their handwriting in their everyday writing. We will look at work in everyday books, work for displays and specific handwriting books but not these alone.

Where a child struggles to meet the end of year writing expectation because of handwriting alone, ‘a particular weakness’ may be applied where the child has specific needs inhibiting the ARE in handwriting. In order to apply the ‘particular weakness’ as reason to achieve the ARE for writing, the teacher MUST provide evidence that every endeavour has been made to address this issue and help the child to improve over time. This particular weakness may be as a result of a physical need that affects the child’s gross/ fine motor skills.

**Key Stage Overview**

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| **Early Years Outcomes / Programme of Study** |
| **EYFS**  ELG: Fine Motor Skills   * Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases; * Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery (Writing tools) * Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.   ELG: Writing   * Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed; * Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters; * Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others. |
| **Year 1**  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 * form digits 0–9 * understand which letters belong to which handwriting ‘families’ and to practise these |
| **Year 2**  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 and * understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined * 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 |
| **Years 3-4**  Pupils should be taught to:   * use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined * increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch |
| **Years 5-6**  Pupils should be taught to:   * write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: * choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters * choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task |