



Handwriting Policy

Dated: January 2019

Review: September 2021

Firs Primary School Handwriting Policy

Firs Primary School has a significantly higher than average rate of pupil transience with around half of all pupils starting or leaving the school within each academic year. Our expectations of handwriting and presentation take into account the varied prior learning experiences of our diverse pupil community.

Handwriting Scheme

We teach handwriting using the 'Improvement in School through Handwriting and Art' (ISHA) handwriting scheme. This is based on the Nelson handwriting scheme. However, we appreciate that many of pupils who start the school (particularly in Key Stage 2) have different prior schooling experiences and may arrive at Firs Primary having already learned to use a different style of cursive writing. **If children are proficient in another handwriting style, we believe it is counterproductive to their progress in writing to change this.**

However, should number formation in another handwriting style potentially disadvantage a student during formal maths assessment, this will be addressed on an individual basis.

Introduction to Formal Handwriting

Children are taught formal handwriting letter formation once they are developmentally ready—usually during the last term of the reception year. We use a handwriting assessment based on 'Handwriting Development' (*South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust, Children Young People and Families OT Team*) to support this judgement.

During the EYFS children are supported to develop the foundations of handwriting skills through Squiggle While you Wiggle, Dough Disco and regular fine motor skills activities

Frequency of Handwriting Instruction

Handwriting is taught for 15 minutes daily in the first week of each half term across Key Stages 1 and 2. It is then taught 2-3 times per week in Key Stage 1 and 1-2 times per week in Key Stage 2.

Teacher modelling

Teachers should always model good handwriting practice based upon the ISHA scheme whether in pupil books or on working walls. Teacher handwriting should model the developmentally appropriate expectations of their class i.e. cursive handwriting should only be modelled by the teacher once it is being taught.

Expectations for presentation

It is expected that 'best' handwriting (using either ruled handwriting lined paper or guidelines behind plain paper as developmentally appropriate) is used for; English and topic work to go on display in the school halls and end of unit extended writing ('warm' and 'hot' writes).

In day to day writing we expect pupils to concentrate on the content of their written work. Many of our pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and benefit from reduced demands on working memory during writing tasks where presentation is not the learning objective.