

### The Academy at St James

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**Head of School: Mr Chris Tolson**

**Handwriting and Presentation Policy**

**Reviewed and Approved by:-**

**Date of meeting:- 20/03/2020**

**Signature:- Mrs Parker and Mr C Tolson**

**Position:- English Lead and Headteacher**

**Date:-20/03/2020**

**Next review date:- 20/03/2021**

**English at The Academy at St James.**

We are passionate about delivering high quality teaching and learning of English. We are committed to helping children develop the necessary skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively with the world at large, through spoken and written language. Reading is at the heart of our curriculum, and we promote and emphasise reading for pleasure by exposing our children to a rich variety of carefully chosen literature, both in daily whole class reading sessions, our English units and our class reading books.

Each English learning journey always begins with a high quality text to encourage and enthuse children to write for different purposes. Every year group follows the National Curriculum Expectations for grammar, punctuation and spelling. Each of these strands are woven into each unit of work, to ensure that children have excellent writing outcomes.

We endeavour to provide many creative opportunities for spoken language through oracy opportunities, drama and visual literacy. We expose children a language rich environment to develop vocabulary acquisition from an early age. In Early Years and Key Stage 1, daily phonics is taught systematically using Read, Write Inc. We have found parental involvement very successful when they take an active role in helping with their child’s learning.

This policy for English lays out our approach to developing the positive attitudes and essential knowledge and skills necessary for children to become writers. This outlines how we interpret and deliver the National Curriculum programmes of study for writing and underpin our schemes of work and classroom practices.

**Aims and outcomes**

The overarching aim for English is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

Aims

Our aims are to ensure that all pupils:

* read easily, fluently and with good understanding
* develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
* acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
* appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
* write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
* use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Outcomes

We strive to produce children who are fully literate and articulate, and are prepared for their secondary education and later life. Through engaging lessons, we aim to foster a love of English and language and an enjoyment of learning. We challenge children of all abilities and in order to make good progress in all areas of the English National Curriculum. They are encouraged to have a growth mind-set and to develop the skills of perseverance and resilience. Through English, pupils are given a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually.

**Handwriting**

Aims

At The Academy at St James, ‘joined up’ handwriting (continuous cursive script) is taught with a sequential and progressive approach. Children are introduced to this style from Early Years as it is considered to be the most natural development of children’s earliest attempts at writing.

Teachers, Support Staff and students are expected to model the handwriting style.

Handwriting is a taught skill and it is important that teachers are seen to put a high value on teaching and sustaining good handwriting. We believe that children’s self-esteem and pride in their work can be raised by good quality presentation.

Our aim in this policy is to teach children correct letter formation, joining and good handwriting habits, so that they can write fluently and legibly and by the end of KS2 to begin to develop a distinctive style.

Each aim is considered equally important:

* To teach children to write with a flowing hand that is legible, swift and pleasant to look at.
* To enable children to develop their own style of handwriting as they progress through Key Stage 2.
* To support the development of correct spelling and to aid in the elimination of letter reversals by the learning of word patterns and the correct joining of letters.
* To ensure that children of differing abilities are provided with appropriate and achievable goals.
* To assist children in taking pride with the presentation of their work.
* To teach correct letter formation.
* To appreciate handwriting as an art form.
* To display excellent examples of handwriting in every classroom and around the school.
* To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children’s books, on the IWB, or on displays/resources.

Teaching and Organisation

We seek to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum 2014 and EYFS Curriculum. Planning is based on objectives taken from these, which ensures a progressive structure. In their short term planning teachers outline specific objectives for groups of children and individuals in order to ensure progress.

Handwriting is taught regularly and at least weekly, as a class and/or group lesson in all year groups.

During lessons we ensure that children sit, position their paper/book and hold their pen/pencil correctly using their other hand to hold their work firmly. Chair height is checked to ensure it is correct. It is important that in the Early Years and at Key Stage 1 children are observed closely during the lesson to ensure that letter formation is correct.

In addition to specific handwriting lessons children are expected to apply their learning in their exercise books and to show care for the presentation of their work. Regular opportunities for children to produce presentation work are also planned, for example in learning journeys or for display.

Staff model the handwriting style and use the appropriate joins, demonstrating the fluency and legibility of the style. Children are expected to show care for their workbooks, present their work with care, date work, underline where necessary and not make any marks on the covers.

Handwriting Progression

The 2014 National Curriculum says pupils should ‘start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters’ from Year 2. It also encourages schools to teach children ‘to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation’

Key Stage 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 (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and practise to these.

Key stage 2

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 unjoined.
* 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.
* 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. By choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

Expectations

Early Years Foundation Stage

During their Nursery and Reception years the children are given a wide range of opportunities to develop an understanding that writing conveys meaning, e.g. books, storytelling, signs, labels etc. Children experience a wide range of handwriting-related skills, e.g. letter and number formation in sand trays, through tracing, use of ribbons, with chalk, felt tips, pencils, crayons, writing over and under teacher models in various forms, word building with magnetic letters and pattern making in various media. (See Developing Early Writing)

Specific programmes have been introduced to develop fine motor skills and to help develop strong, flexible fingers, hands and arms. Promoting better hand-eye co-ordinations, differentiated movement and manual dexterity.

For those children that are ready for handwriting practice, large pencils can be used in conjunction with lined/unlined paper. Pencil grips for correction of pencil hold are also used where appropriate. As an introduction to the continuous cursive style of handwriting, patterns are practised with wide-lined paper and thinner pencils being introduced where appropriate. Teachers model correct letter formation and children practise this alongside their phonics programme. Correction of letter formation takes place on an individual basis. Children practise name writing in non-joined style.

Year 1/Key Stage 1

Children work on handwriting skills daily and in a variety of activities, e.g. writing in books, multi-sensory approaches, through phonic work and writing in their learning journals and duplicated practice worksheets. Wide-lined exercise books, handwriting paper and standard-size pencils are used. Children who struggle with letter sizing, spacial awareness and organisational problems will be given paper with highlighted yellow lines to help guide their letter formation. Practise takes place on a weekly basis.

Year 2/Key Stage 1

Children are encouraged to use joined-up handwriting in their daily work. Handwriting practise takes place weekly and the correction of mistakes is dealt with on an individual basis. Children are encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work. In addition, handwriting is often practised through the teaching and learning of phonics.

Key Stage 2

At this stage when teachers consider it appropriate, according to the stage of each child’s development, children will be allowed to work in appropriate handwriting pens. Handwriting practice takes place weekly and the correction of mistakes is dealt with on an individual basis. Children are encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work.

However, during spellings, children are expected to use print rather than joined in order to ensure every letter is legible. This ensures children are not penalised for handwriting during a spelling test and tests are marked fairly.

Pencils should continue to be used throughout the school for notes, drafting, all maths work, diagrams, charts and maps. Children should be encouraged to always write with a sharp pencil and to correct mistakes by crossing out using a single ruler drawn line.

Presentation in Books

Children must ensure that all work is presented neatly. The full date and title of all work must appear at the top of the page and must be neatly underlined. Any mistakes must be neatly crossed out. Any drawings in books must be done in pencil. Rulers should always be used to draw straight lines.

Provision for Left-Handed Children

At least 10% of the population are left-handed. All teachers are aware of the left-handed pupils in their class and make appropriate provision:

* paper should be positioned to the left for right handed pupils and to the right for left handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case;
* pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils’ line of vision;
* pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
* left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space;
* extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.

Teachers are aware of the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

Capital Letters

Capital letters stand alone and are not joined to the next letter. Children must practice starting sentences and writing names using a capital letter and not joining the subsequent letter. This should be modelled by the teacher during all Curriculum and Phonics sessions.

**SEN Provision**

Pupils identified as needing extra support in Handwriting will be given the appropriate help in the classroom. Providing for pupils with special educational needs should take account of each pupil’s particular learning and assessment requirements and incorporate specific approaches which will allow individuals to succeed, such as using texts at an appropriate level of difficulty and planning for additional support.

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and provision will be made for this in individual Learner Passports. Teachers of children, whose handwriting is limited, by problems with fine motor skills, should liaise with the SEND-CO to develop a programme designed for the individual child.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the English coordinator, in consultation with the staff, and as and when elements of English are identified or prioritised within the School Development Plan.