

Joseph Hood Primary School: Handwriting Policy

At Joseph Hood Primary School our aim is to equip every child with the knowledge, learning power and character to ensure they can be the best that they can.

AIMS

In order to raise writing attainment for all pupils, we have a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting (Nelson Scheme) throughout the school. It should be the aim of every teacher, TA and volunteer to encourage all children to use a well-formed cursive style of handwriting. Teachers and TAs will lead by example and use a cursive script when writing on the whiteboard, flip chart or in children's books when giving feedback. The aim for children is to produce a fluent, consistently formed style of cursive handwriting with equal space between the letters and words as cited in the teaching resource books that are used across the school.

The aim of this policy is to give guidelines that will be helpful to teachers, TAs, and pupils throughout a pupil's journey at Joseph Hood Primary School

RATIONALE

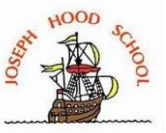
Within this technological, computer-literate age, good handwriting remains fundamental to children's educational achievement. If children are to achieve comfortable, legible handwriting styles, they need to be taught to form and join each letter efficiently in order to meet the age-related writing expectations by the end of key stage two. Children need good models to copy, lots of practice and feedback to help them fine-tune their performance.

PROVISION

At Joseph Hood Primary School, the children are taught to write legibly, fluently and at a reasonable speed. The pupils are taught to write in a cursive style (Nelson Handwriting Scheme) with correct letter formation as early as possible. Handwriting is planned for, taught and practised every day from Reception upwards. Every child has a separate, designated handwriting book in which to practise. Daily handwriting practice should include not just focus on the formation of letter formation and joins but also spelling patterns.

RECEPTION

In Reception, the children are taught how to use a 'tripod' grip using a variety of mediums. This is reinforced through pre-writing skills involving pattern work and other exercises to help develop fine motor skills. The pupils are then taught individual letters with exit strokes in order to make small words. Specific attention is given to pencil control, pencil grip and posture. The Read Write Inc. phrases are used to teach the letters e.g., Maisie Mountain for 'm' and to serve as a mnemonic for the children when writing independently. There is an expectation that the children will use the correct letter formation in everything they do, and bad habits should not be allowed to develop; instead, they must be and picked up quickly.



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KEY STAGE 1 & KEY STAGE 2

From Year 2 and once each child can form the basic letters, they are introduced to 'joining up' the letters throughout the Nelson scheme of work. The Nelson Handwriting Scheme is used to help all staff and pupils with a progressive and consistent approach to the formation of clear, upright style handwriting and a consistent approach to the joining of letters. All staff should be consistent in their approach and model handwriting at all given opportunities. Lessons will focus on modelling handwriting, linking the teaching of handwriting to the teaching of spelling patterns. All pupils should write with pen from the beginning of year three using the agreed handwriting pens that the school has purchased.

We do not join the letters: **b g j p q x y z**

Units of work inline with the Nelson Scheme of Work are as follows:

Year 1 Book 1A: unit 1 – 15

Year 2 Book 1B: unit 15 – 28 and Book 2 unit 1 – 28

Year 3 Book 3: unit 1 – 28

Year 4 book 4: unit 1 – 28

Year 5 book 5: unit 1 – 28

Year 6 book 6: unit 1 – 28

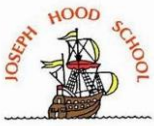
DIFFERENTIATION

Differentiation can be achieved in several ways:

- Children working individually with teachers or TAs may benefit from additional practice on dry-wipe boards
- Children who do aren't joining securely will benefit from extra practice of joins • Some children may benefit from using guidelines
- Higher attaining children can be challenged by higher expectations to control evenness and size of letters
- Children who experience problems writing can use pencil grips, thicker pencils and wider lines.

PENCILS AND PENS

Once pupils begin year 3, they will be awarded a handwriting pen. This is a whole school approach and should be adopted by all teaching staff unless a different approach for an individual pupil has been agreed by the English Coordinator. Biros should not be used by pupils across the school.



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POSTURE

Children should be encouraged to sit up straight with their feet on the floor. The non-writing hand must be used to steady the book or paper.

PEN GRIP

The pen or pencil should be gripped comfortably between forefinger and thumb (tripod grip) with the second finger below to steady it. If the child picks up a pen or pencil, which is lying on the table in front of them with the nib towards them in line with their forearm, they instinctively pick it up in the correct grip and then need to flip the pen or pencil back into the correct grip.

LEFT HANDERS

Special rules apply for left-handers. They must sit on the left-hand side of double desks or tables. They must be able to rest their left forearms on the edge of the desk. The book or paper must slope in line with the left forearm. As writing is completed down the page, the paper must be moved away from the body in the same line. The aim is to always keep the left arm in much the same position to avoid the elbow being cramped by the chest. Moving the paper away from the body avoids writing becoming cramped at the bottom of the page. The right hand must be used to control the movement of the page. The left hand should end up below the line of the writing to avoid smudging and to give a clear view of what is being written. Children should be discouraged from hooking their left hand above the line of writing to avoid smudging.

RIGHT HANDERS

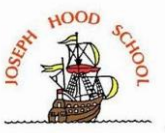
Right Handers do not face the same difficulty as left-handers, but many children find it difficult to slant the paper slightly and to move it away from the body as the page is completed. It is quite easy for right-handers to develop an attractive cursive style.

ASSESSMENT AND RECORD KEEPING

All teachers and TAs have high expectations of children regarding handwriting and presentation of all work in books and will encourage children to take pride in their work. The most effective assessment of handwriting progress is on-going and evidenced through a range of exercise books, not just handwriting books. Staff must all be attentive and speedy to pick up on errors as quickly as possible in pupils' work that are likely to impede a fast, fluent hand in the future. If a child's handwriting is to develop into a pleasing and consistent style, it is helpful to examine key pieces of writing in the light of the following criteria:

1. Eligibility – Are you able to read the work?
2. Shape - Are all letters properly formed and clear?
3. Joining - Are as many letters as possible joined consistently?
4. Spacing – Are spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate and consistent?
5. Size - Are letters consistent and reasonable size? Capitals can be too big, tall letters too tall, small letters too small.
6. Alignment - Do letters sit on the line? Words sometimes float above or sink below the writing line. This happens because the writing hand is not moving steadily across the page.

PEN LICENSES



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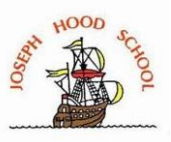
The school does not have a pen licence approach; pupils are all given a pen at the beginning of year three.

REQUIREMENTS

In line with the framework stating that children need to:

- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in most of their writing
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- use spaces between words that reflects the size of the letters

The school feels that children need to be able to accurately form their letters and demonstrate the appropriate ascenders and descenders within their work. Writing needs to be consistently joined within all aspects of work. Children therefore need to demonstrate their writing in both their English and topic books, not just within their handwriting books. Writing must be consistent, and so multiple pieces of work will need to demonstrate the consistent formation of the child's handwriting. Accuracy is crucial as the children will not be able to rectify mistakes easily. This means that regular crossing out and inaccurate spelling will need to be addressed.



Appendix 1: Nelson Handwriting Poster

READY REFERENCE GUIDE

The letter forms

The lower-case alphabet for Starter Level:
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

The lower-case alphabet for Books 1 to 6:
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

A letter slant of 8° from the vertical to the right is introduced in Pupil Book 3:
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

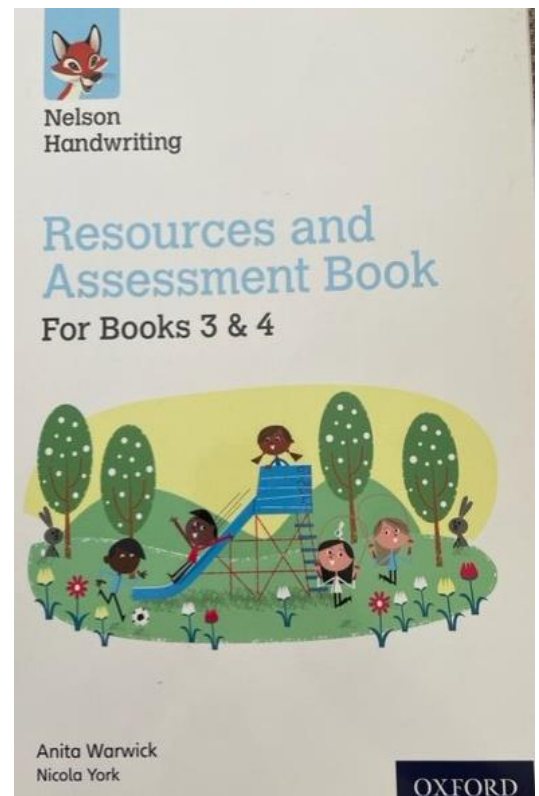
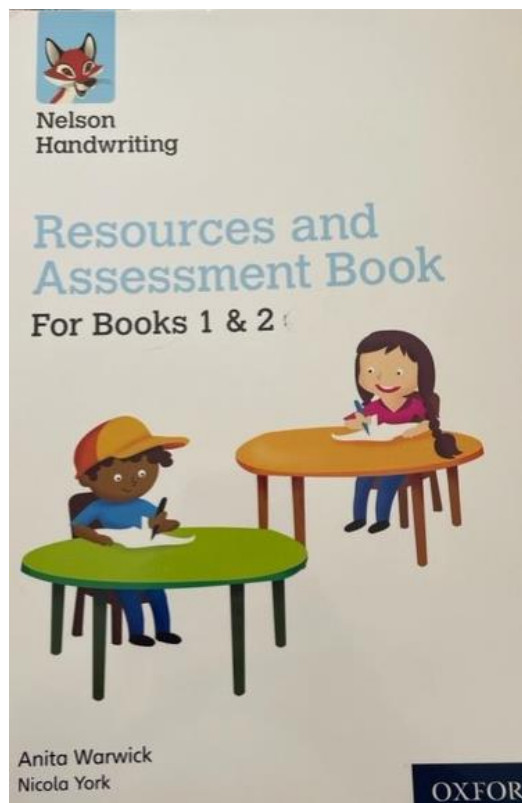
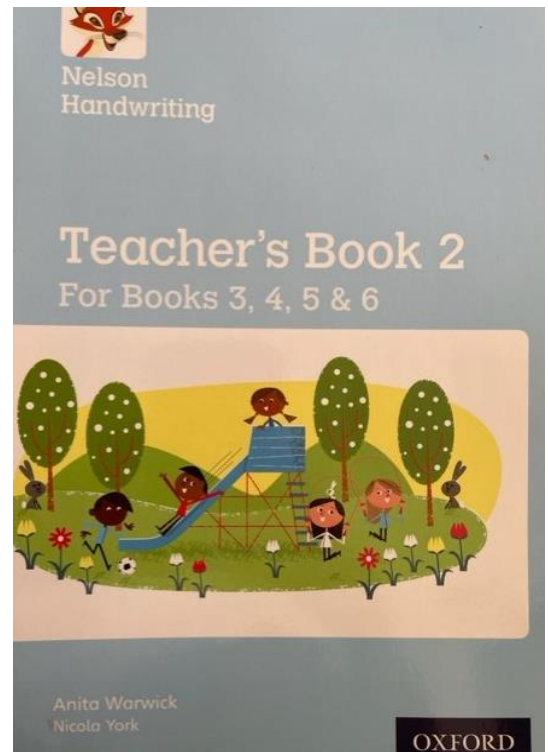
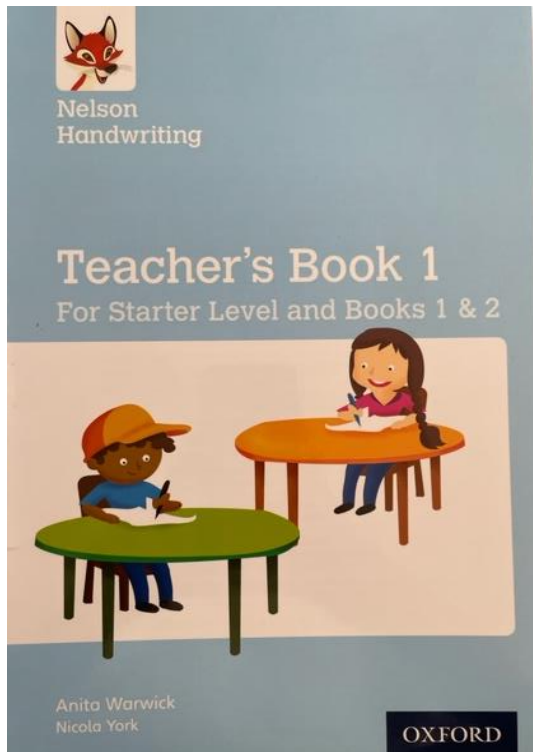
The lower-case print alphabet:
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

The capital letters and numerals:
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
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0



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Appendix 2: Teaching Books used in school:



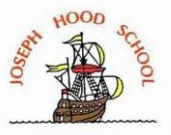
Appendix 3: Example Script

The image shows four handwriting practice cards arranged in a 2x2 grid. Each card has a dark grey header with a fox logo and the text 'Nelson Handwriting' and 'Words to practise'. The words are written in a cursive script.

Words to practise	Words to practise
century certain circle complete consider continue decide describe different	difficult disappear early earth eight eighth enough exercise experience
experiment extreme famous favourite February forward forwards fruit grammar	group guard guide heard heart height history imagine increase

Nelson Handwriting Resources and Assessment for Books 3 & 4
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Word list ISI



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Written	Date	Review Date
John Smith	10 th July 2022	July 2025



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