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MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST



# Thomas Whitehead CE Academy

# Handwriting Policy

# 2024-2026

<b>Policy type</b>	Local Academy Policy
<b>Adopted by the Trust Board</b>	February 2024
<b>For review</b>	Annual
<b>Person responsible</b>	Della Mitra – Deputy Headteacher

## **Vision**

Our vision responds to the words found in the scriptures and it is this flourishing in God's love, grace and wisdom that will enable our children to become wise, hopeful, and aspirational and live well together with dignity and respect.

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13.

## **Intent**

At Thomas Whitehead Academy we believe that neat, well-formed handwriting and the presentation of written work helps to raise standards. For children and teachers this aims to foster a sense of pride and respect in their work. Self-esteem is raised when children are able to communicate meaning accurately.

The focus on handwriting in the 2014 National Curriculum, and with the introduction of new National Standard expectations (see appendix), is much greater, highlighting its importance and making the connection between a child's handwriting and their composition and spelling ability. This, we believe, is a positive step forward.

An effective handwriting policy is based on a style that is quick and easy to learn. It should be neat, legible and fast. Pupils should eventually develop the ability to produce letters without thinking. An automatic style releases the brain to concentrate on other ideas i.e. spelling, syntax, grammar, style and content.

## **Implementation**

### **Early Years – Gross motor and fine motor**

Handwriting will need to be taught as a discreet subject as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, with emphasis not only on letter formation, but pencil grip and sitting position. Fine motor activities are presented in the learning environment through continual provision to strengthen fingers in preparation for writing such as funky fingers and doh disco. In Pre School and Nursery teachers model the formation of Phase 2 letters using the Little Wandle sound mats, which are accessible and evident in the writing area. In Reception, during Phonics (Little Wandle) children are taught how to form the graphemes and apply into their writing, modelled by the teacher.

### **KS1 – Letter formation**

In Year 1, children will have more formal mini lessons on handwriting with a focus on letter families. This will be taught for 20 minutes twice a week. This is to develop sizing, shape, direction and position. Children will be able to write all capital letters and lower case letters using ascenders and descenders by the end of Year 1. In Year 2, the introduction of cursive handwriting will be taught through mini lessons using letter families with a focus on continuous cursive ensuring horizontal and diagonal joins are developed.

### **KS2 – Cursive handwriting**

In Year 3, children continue to reinforce letter formation from the letter families from Year 2 through mini lessons 2x 20 minutes. In Year 4 and 5 children should be given short texts to copy in continuous cursive once a week. By Year 6 continuous cursive should be established in all areas of writing and focused upon through dictations.

## **Justification**

Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters in words as a series of continuous flowing movements or patterns. Words can be written without taking the pencil off the page. Continuous style provides a directional left, right movement. This flowing, rhythmical movement aids speed with the final product being neat and fast.

This cursive style also lessens the chance of reversing letters by eliminating the need to lift the pencil between letters. The spaces between words become distinct and distinction between upper and lower case is clearer.

Many pupils with specific learning disabilities find continuous cursive useful because the pencil stays on the page throughout every word, thus simplifying the movement. Many Children with motor difficulties learn a series of easy, rhythmical movements, which help to improve fine motor co-ordination.

In addition, the motor memory of the child's hand and fingers helps them to spell, as each word becomes one movement rather than many. Ideas, images and descriptions can flow more swiftly if fewer decisions need to be made about where each letter starts and how letters are formed.

## **Aims of this Policy**

- ✚ To raise standards in writing across the school.
- ✚ Pupils to achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting.
- ✚ Pupils to develop fluency and speed whilst writing, so that eventually the pupils are able to write the letters with confidence and correct orientation in their independent writing.

## **Left-handed pupils**

Teachers should be aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils 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 practise with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to right automatically.

## **Posture**

Chairs and desks within classrooms are matched to pupils' age and height.

- ✚ Pupils' backs should be straight and feet resting on the floor. A right-handed child should have their book slanted to the left. For a left-handed child the book should be slanted to the right.
- ✚ Always make sure that the hand which is not holding the pencil or pen holds the paper.

## Handwriting

As a school we follow the letter families from [Continuous Cursive letter choice 4 beginners \(teachhandwriting.co.uk\)](http://teachhandwriting.co.uk) and use [Writing Repeater - mobile friendly \(ictgames.com\)](http://writingrepeater.com) to model continuous cursive words.

### Family 1

#### Straight line - Continuous Cursive Letters



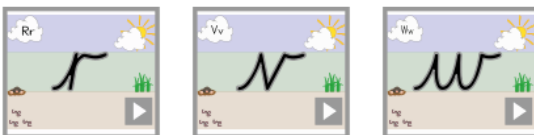
### Family 2

#### Curves to start - Continuous Cursive Letters



### Family 3

#### Top exit - Continuous Cursive Letters



### Family 4

#### Tunnel - Continuous Cursive Letters



### Family 5

#### Hooks, loops & lines - Continuous Cursive Letters



## Handwriting in the Curriculum

These are the National Standard handwriting descriptors for each year group:

### **Year 1:**

- ✚ 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 and form capital letters and 0-9
- ✚ understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

### **Year 2:**

- ✚ hold a pencil comfortably and correctly
- ✚ handwriting is legible with almost all lower case letters, capital letters and digits accurately and consistently formed and of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another
- ✚ words are almost always appropriately and consistently spaced in relation to the size of the letters and some diagonal and horizontal strokes are used to join letters

### **Year 3:**

- ✚ handwriting is increasingly legible and consistent, including diagonal and horizontal strokes used to join letters, when appropriate

### **Year 4:**

- ✚ 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; it is not always maintained when writing at efficient speed

### **Year 5/6:**

- ✚ legible, fluent handwriting is mostly maintained when writing at sustained, efficient speed