



Foxyards Academy Handwriting Policy

Intent

The ability to write fluently and legibly gives children a means to communicate their thoughts and ideas efficiently. Handwriting is a skill which must be learnt in order to provide a style which becomes simple to produce and easy to read. We teach handwriting as part of the English curriculum through discrete handwriting lessons four times a week (Key Stage 2). In EYFS and Key stage 1 handwriting is also taught as part of our Phonics scheme (Read, Write, Inc..) Handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from physical development to readiness for handwriting through to letter joins and practising flow and fluency.

Kinetic Letter aims to support learning by:

- ❖ Automaticity – Formation, orientation and placement of letters becomes automatic which frees up space in the working memory.
- ❖ Achievement – Fast, legible and fluent handwriting underpins success in every curriculum area.
- ❖ Confidence – Good handwriting creates a positive initial judgement.
- ❖ Creativity – When handwriting is automatic, the brain can concentrate on content.
- ❖ Reading – Writing and reading are reciprocal skills, so improvement in one, helps the other.
- ❖ Phonics and Spelling – legible handwriting means children can read and correct spelling.

Handwriting and presentation permeates all curriculum areas in our school. Our curriculum is designed to enable each pupil to:

- ❖ Have equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in handwriting.
- ❖ Produce clear, concise, legible handwriting in all areas of the curriculum.
- ❖ Develop accuracy flow and fluency.
- ❖ Recognise that handwriting is a form of communication and as such should be considered important in order for it to be effective.
- ❖ Develop confidence and self-esteem.
- ❖ Have the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation.
- ❖ Writing clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- ❖ Having a comfortable and efficient pencil hold and working position.
- ❖ Take pride in their work.
- ❖ Recognise that handwriting as a life-long skill and will be a fundamental element of all forms of written communication throughout their lives.

Implementation

Our objective is to help pupils enjoy learning and developing their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride. We aim for our pupils to develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style that leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing.

Handwriting is of fundamental importance to educating our pupils because pupils who learn to read and write fluently and confidently are significantly more likely to achieve

to their full potential. The mastery of handwriting is therefore one of the key priorities of the school.

Handwriting is a physical activity that involves movement and recognition skills that need to be learnt and become part of the automatic cognitive skill set of the pupil. To achieve this, Foxyards implement the Kinetic Letters handwriting programme.

The Kinetic Letters programme has four key threads.

- ❖ Making bodies stronger
- ❖ Holding the pencil (for speed, comfort and legibility)
- ❖ Learning the letters
- ❖ Flow and fluency

The key principles of the programme are:

- ❖ Building physical strength underpins handwriting and concentration. This knowledge informs the working positions that children use for writing and the strengthening targets they work on.
- ❖ The different components of writing are mastered individually before being used in combination.
- ❖ Letters are learnt as movements, not as visual shapes, and movement remains central to developing automaticity in letter formation, flow and fluency.
- ❖ Posture is important in developing the correct position for handwriting and so children are taught how to organise their working position and paper position to enable comfortable and fluent writing from the start.
- ❖ Correct pencil hold is taught from the start (as soon as a three friend approach is developmentally appropriate).

The Kinetic Letters programme commences in EYFS and is used throughout the school. By the end of KS1 children will be using some of the strokes needed to join letters which the children will begin to learn once they join KS2.

In Early Years Foundation Stage children will access a range of learning opportunities to develop essential pre-writing skills.

- ❖ Movements to enhance gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern making, dancing.
- ❖ Development of balance skills/upper body strength, puzzles or crayons and paper on the floor while in Lizard Position. Squeezing wet sponges, finger painting, water play, sand play, play dough, rice play, gloop, cooking, cornflour and water activities encourage strong wrist and hand control.
- ❖ They will develop fine motor skills, fastening buttons, pull up a zip, threading, tweezers, cutting, pinching clay. The children will access a range of activities that requires them to grasp small objects: Making collage pictures using pieces of wool or string, decorating iced biscuits with small cake decorations, posting small items into narrow necked bottles.
- ❖ The children will access a range of learning opportunities that will support the development of their shoulder, elbow, wrist stability and bi-lateral use of their hands. They will also develop control of writing implements and develop hand

eye co-ordination and fine motor strength. They will learn directional sequences and movements.

Importance of physical development.

Handwriting requires more than just hand muscles.

- **Strong core muscles** allow children to sit at tables correctly and comfortably when writing.
- **Strong shoulder muscles** allow children to be able to control the lower parts of the arm
- **Strong wrists** enable children to hold the pencil correctly and for longer periods of time.

Children will move through air-whiteboard-practise patch methodology. Children in Nursery and Reception will learn the letter shapes through the characters of Bounce and Skip (Kinetic Letter monkeys). Children who require more support will be identified as “spotlight” children and will have extra handwriting intervention sessions during walk into learning time. Children will be reminded of handwriting posture and how to hold the pencil throughout all of their learning across the curriculum.

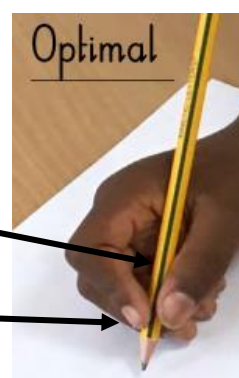
Kinetic Letters font will be used on all SMART Notebooks by teachers when modelling and on displays within classrooms to embed the handwriting approach. Children will also learn that there are different types of font as books, computers etc all produce a wide range of writing styles. For the purposes of learning letter sounds – recognition of the letters - children will be shown regular print but when the formal writing takes place this will be in Kinetic Letters.

The ‘three friends’ pencil hold.

Children will be taught how to grip a pencil correctly using the optimal ‘three friends’ pencil hold. They will position the pencil between their ‘holding fingers’ which rest on their ‘pillow finger.’

The thumb and first finger sit on top of the pencil. These are the ‘holding fingers’.

The third finger is called the ‘pillow finger’ and sits underneath the pencil.



By the end of the foundation stage, most children should be able to use a pencil, holding it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed using Kinetic Letters.

Learning the letters.

- Large scale movements are integrated with small letters.
- Letters are learnt in groups according to their movements.
- Letters are taught in a progressive order.
- In Early Years, KS1 and lower KS2 the writing tools for handwriting sessions always begin with pens and whiteboards. Children quickly move onto using a pencil when they can demonstrate the ability to use the correct movement.

As part of the Kinetic Letters programme, children are introduced to two character monkeys 'Bounce' who is a 'Brave Monkey' and 'Skip' who is a 'Scared Monkey'. Bounce and Skip live on a tree. (See diagram below) All three character elements are integral to the fidelity of the programme.



The starting point for each letter is either at the higher monkey (Brave Monkey) or the lower monkey (Scared Monkey). This allows for fluidity in writing, and supporting children to regulate letter size and shape.

Throughout the programme children are taught the formation of the letters in family groups. These are first introduced in EYFS through the Kinetic Letter family stories.

See below for formation and families of letters.

Kinetic Letter groups.

Jumper Family: h b n r m p

Abracadabra Family c o a d g q s

Special Squirter e

Window Cleaner Family: l t i u

Fisher Family: g j y f

Slider Family: v w x z k

Pushing numbers:

2 3 5 7

Pulling numbers:

6 8 9 0 1 4

The Jumper Family.

Jumper Family - Letter Trails

h | | | | |
down-bump *back up (half way)* *push over* *down-bump* *flick*

b | | | | |
down-bump *back up (half way)* *push over* *down, pull in and hug the tree*

r | | | | |
down-bump *back up* *push over*

n | | | | |
down-bump *back up* *push over* *down-bump* *flick*

m | | | | |
down-bump *back up* *push over* *down-bump* *back up* *push over* *down-bump* *flick*

p | | | | |
down *on down into the pit, see the spider (ahh!), back up* *push (the webs away)* *pull in and hug*

Kinetic Letters

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The Abracadabra Family.

Abracadabra Family - Letter Trails

c | | | | |
pull around *down* *push*

a | **c** | **abracadabra** | | | | |
write c (pull around) *up like a helicopter* *down* *bump* *flick*

d | **c** | **abracadabra** | | | | |
write c *up like a helicopter with a big engine* *down-bump* *flick*

g | **c** | **abracadabra** | | | | |
write c *up like a helicopter* *down* *on down* *pull around for a tail*

q | **c** | **abracadabra** | | | | |
write c *up like a helicopter* *down* *on down* *flick*

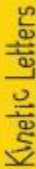
o | **c** | **abracadabra** | | | | |
write c *push up and stop* *flick*

s | **c** | **abracadabra** | | | | |
write a small c *and pull* *round*

Kinetic Letters


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The Special Squirter Family.





Kinetic Letters

Special Squirter - Letter Trails




Made by the Scared Monkey under the low branch.







start in the middle




push across



up



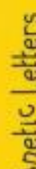
pull



down and push around


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The Window Cleaner Family.





Kinetic Letters

Window Cleaner Family - Letter Trails




Made by the Brava Monkey who reaches up as high as the high branch because he stands on the ladder.







down-bump




flick




down-bump




flick




push




down-bump




flick




put a dot on




down-bump




push



up



down-bump



flick

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For pupils in EYFS and KS1, they will have opportunity to handwrite as part of the Read, Write, Inc programme. When each new sound is taught, the formation of the letter is rehearsed on day 1. The continued sounds will be taught following the Kinetic Letter pattern.

Sessions will be taught to the whole class; reinforcement may take place in small groups and/or individually or interventions carried out where needed. The formation of the letters will be taught in set groups, reinforced by using the Kinetic Letter stories and resources.

In Key Stage 2 pupils' handwriting speed, flow, fluency, and legibility are built up through practise. Children will work towards using joined handwriting for all writing unless other specific forms are required, e.g. printing on a map, note taking, posters etc - appropriateness to the task being paramount. Children will begin to use a handwriting pen when they form all letters in a Kinetic Letters style (not joined)..

In the discrete teaching of handwriting, each lesson should have a clear and simple focus (eg the correct formation of a single letter or letter family, revision of a group of letters such as those requiring clockwise movements, the introduction of a particular aspect of linking such as hooks, or the practice of linking letters in commonly found patterns). Letters should be taught in letter family groups and their similarities and differences should be stated clearly as this reduces the amount of new information to be learned as each new letter or type of linking is introduced.

Impact


All adults in school are the most important role models for presentation and high expectations. They are responsible for modelling good practice, ensuring all children understand and follow handwriting expectations and intervene to ensure all children present their work to the best of their ability.

Therefore, **all staff must:**

- Have high expectations of children's work and the way it is presented
- Regularly remind children of expectations for handwriting, posture, pencil grip and presentation.
- Identify misconceptions when marking children's work and highlight these for children to correct
- Communicate clearly to children expectations for the presentation of their work
- Monitor children's handwriting daily and provide adequate time for them to respond to feedback and marking
- Encourage children to monitor their handwriting, presentation, edit their own work and provide strategies for presenting it appropriately
- Ensure that children are following the school handwriting policy in all pieces of work
- Model the school handwriting script at all times including on the board and in marking

Teachers ensure the application of handwriting skills by:

- Reminding children of standards of writing and presentation at the beginning of lessons across the curriculum
- Comparing handwriting in handwriting books with writing in other books across the curriculum
- Ensuring children improve the presentation of their work if it falls below school expectations
- English Subject Leader and/or Senior Leadership Team to monitor handwriting and presentation in books from across the curriculum regularly and provide feedback to teachers
- Teachers/Support staff model good handwriting skills at all times
- Teachers/Support staff follow the handwriting policy when writing comments in children's books.
- Focused handwriting lessons are planned for target groups and/or individuals who require additional support. The number of lessons needed is dependent upon the needs of the children.
- Children are rewarded by their teacher as follows:

 Kinetic Letters Handwriting Awards	
Level 1 - Certificate	I can hold my pencil correctly using the 3 friends hold. I can adopt the different animal positions to help strengthen my body.
Level 2 - Certificate	I sit correctly at the table to write and most of my letters and numbers are formed correctly. My letters are grounded and a similar size.
Level 3 – Certificate Sparkly Pencil awarded	All of my letters and numbers are formed correctly, they are the correct height using the monkey tree as a guide. I have good spacing between my words – not too far apart or close together – just right! My writing looks neat and tidy.
Level 4 – Certificate Mechanical pencil awarded	All of my letters and numbers are formed correctly, they are the correct height using the monkey tree as a guide. I have good spacing between my words. My letters have flicks and I snuggle them together to start to make them join. All of my books are at the same standard.
Level 5 – Certificate Pen Licence awarded	All of my letters and numbers are formed correctly, they are the correct height using the monkey tree as a guide. I have good spacing between my words. My letters have flicks and I snuggle them together, I use the correct joining method. All of my books are at the same standard for every piece of work completed. My works looks beautifully presented and I am proud to share it.

Inclusion

All children will have the opportunity to develop their handwriting skills of legibility and fluency. However, some pupils may need more support and a specific individual, (Individual Provision Map) or group programme would be implemented and monitored

closely by the class teacher and Senco. Outside agencies, such as Occupational Therapy would be consulted as necessary.

It is recognised that it is essential for all children, especially those pupils with specific learning difficulties, to be closely observed when learning the correct formation of individual letters. This will ensure that posture, pencil grip and pressure, letter formation and placement are monitored and supervised to avoid the development and reinforcement of unhelpful habits.

Pupils who experience difficulties in fine motor movement will be given lots of opportunities to develop control through rehearsal with large body movements.

Left-handed children.

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision. It is particularly important that left-handed children are seated on the left of a right-handed child so they are not competing for space. Teachers are aware that it is difficult for left handed children to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers or Support Staff demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis using their left hand as appropriate.

Left-handed children should be encouraged to organise their handwriting position so their whiteboard/book is sloping downhill, and their right hand is used to support the whiteboard/book by pushing it up when needed.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by SLT, staff and directors.