



South Baddesley CE Primary School

Phonics, handwriting, modelled writing, & spelling policy

Rationale and aims:

Phonics

Phonics is an important part of the curriculum when your child starts school. At South Baddesley, our children learn to read and write effectively and quickly in small teaching groups using the *Read Write Inc.* phonics programme.

We aim to teach pupils to:

- Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
- Read 'tricky' red words on sight
- Understand what they read
- Read aloud with fluency and expression
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words
- Write confidently

Handwriting

The skill of handwriting needs to be taught and a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting needs to be established.

We aim to:

- have a **consistent cursive** approach across the school to ensure high levels of presentation.
- adopt a **common approach** towards handwriting by all adults when writing in books, on the whiteboard (including modelled writing), on displays and resources.
- enable children to achieve a **neat, legible style** with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting.
- enable children to develop **fluency and speed** whilst writing.

Modelled writing

Modelling is very powerful.

Modelled writing is when the teacher purposefully speaks aloud the inner dialogue that we want to encourage students to have as they are writing. By modelling, we demonstrate options for planning, accurate transcription, strategic problem solving, self-monitoring,

reviewing, revising and proofreading. We show how techniques can be used or applied; we work through challenges and teach for the importance of conventions. We do it all within the context of meaningful writing experiences.

We aim to:

- use the “think aloud strategy” to model what goes on in the head of the writer.
- explicitly talk about elements of the writing process and allow students to observe the way a writer crafts and records a text (including handwriting, spelling and grammar).
- offer purposeful instruction, which consolidates existing knowledge and extends it.

Spelling

Spelling is one of the essential components of effective writing and empowers our children to communicate effectively. The teaching of spelling begins in Gruffalo. Our systematic phonics programme begins to equip pupils with the skills they need to begin to spell confidently. As their competency grows and they progress from the Read Write Inc Phonics programme, children move to the Read Write Inc Spelling Zone programme. This programme introduces spelling rules and patterns linked to the national statutory requirements for each year group.

We aim to teach pupils to:

- use discrete spelling rules and patterns linked to national statutory requirements for their year group
- use spelling rules and patterns through a range of activities such as games and word making activities
- use a range of strategies to edit spellings
- to use a dictionary to support spelling

Further information

Phonics – Early Years and KS1

When our children begin in Gruffalo, we focus on the alphabetic code with daily speed sound lessons. Pictures and simple mnemonics help children to grasp these sounds quickly so that they can recall sounds promptly, enabling them to smoothly progress to putting sounds together – blending – in order to read ‘green’ words (phonetically decodable words). Pupils also have frequent practise in reading high

frequency words with irregular spellings – ‘red’ words. Terminology and teaching progression details can be found below and in the Reading and Phonics at SBS – parent presentation on our [website](#).

Children in Key Stage 1 continue with the Read Write Inc phonics programme until they are reading confidently, at which point, they move onto the Read Write Inc spelling programme, which is also used in Key Stage 2.

Pupils in Early Years and Key Stage 1 are assessed half termly, or in response to a need identified by their reading teacher or class teacher. Assessments are used to group pupils according to their progress in reading and to identify children in need of additional support. Pupils’ phonics ability is closely matched to the group they are in and the texts that they read so that, right from the beginning, they experience success and gain confidence as readers and writers. Children are taught in small groups of not more than 20 children, except for the first half term of Gruffalo, where the whole class are taught the first sounds together while they get to know the school and the staff.

We support pupils who find phonics and reading more difficult, including those who have identified special educational needs, for however long it takes until they can read. Children in Key Stage 1 receive additional Read Write Inc 1:1 tutoring to help them keep up and a class action plan includes additional recommendations to support these children in class. Pupils arriving in Key Stage 2 reading below their chronological age or with English as an additional language are assessed by the Reading Leader and appropriate support is put in place based on their particular need.

At South Baddesley, we aim for all children to be accurate and speedy readers by the time they enter Key Stage 2 as good readers are able to access challenging material that helps them learn well.

Read Write Inc: Sets of sounds

Set 1 (Reception)

All of the single letter sounds and six common two letter sounds (digraphs):

m, a, s, d, t, p, i, n, g, o, c, k, u, b, f, e, l, h, sh, r, j, v, y, w, th, z, ch, qu, x, ng, nk

Set 2 (Reception and Year 1)

This set provides one representation for each of the common sounds the children encounter when spelling:

ay, ee, igh, ow, oo, oo , ar, or, air, ir, ou, oy

Set 3 (Year 1 and 2)

This final of sounds provides the most common, alternative spellings for common sounds:

ea, oi, a-e, i-e, o-e, u-e, aw, are, ur, er, ow, ai, oa, ew, ire, ear, ure, kn, ph, e-e, oe

Using pure sounds

It is important that children learn the pure sound produced by each letter or combination of letters. For example, children should say a short, clear 't' rather than 't-er'. This helps when reading, for example, children sounding out c – a – t (cat) will find it much easier to blend these pure sounds than a child sounding c-er – a – t-er (ceratter). For advice on the pronunciation of pure sounds, please visit the [Read Write Inc website](#).

What are “Special friends”?

Special friends are two or more letters that go together to make a sound, e.g. ay, air, ee.

What are “Red” words?

Red words are words that cannot be 'sounded-out' but need to be learned by heart. They don't fit into the usual spelling patterns. In order to read simple sentences, it is necessary for children to know some words that have unusual or untaught spellings.

Phonics in Key Stage 2

Usually children will have progressed from the Read Write Inc phonics programme to the Read Write Inc Spelling Zone programme before they begin Key Stage Two. However, we will continue to support pupils who find phonics and reading more difficult, including those with identified special education needs. Pupils arriving in Key Stage 2 reading below their chronological age or with English as an additional language are assessed by the Reading Leader or SENCo and appropriate support is put in place based on their particular need.

Handwriting

The Continuous Cursive Script

As recommended by the British Dyslexia Association, we adopt a continuous cursive style of writing. The most important feature of this style of writing is that each letter is formed without taking the pencil off the paper. Consequently, each word is formed in one, flowing movement.

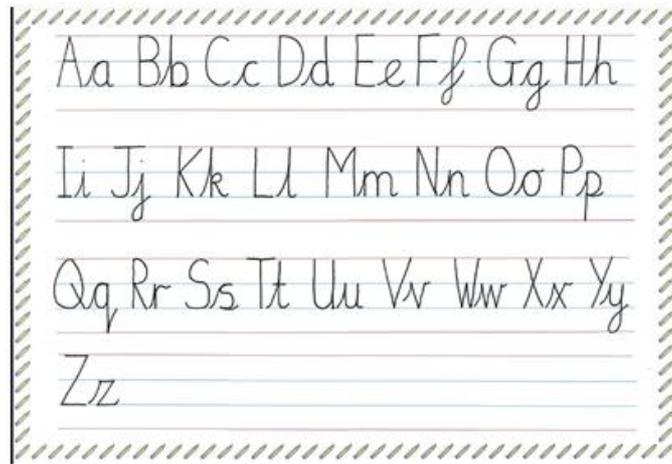
The key advantages of this script are:

- By making each letter in one movement, children's hands develop a 'physical memory' of it, making it easier to produce the correct shape
- The starting and finishing points for all Continuous Cursive letters are easier to remember (they all start on the line and, other than a few exceptions, all finish on the line)
- As letters and words flow from left to right, children are less likely to reverse letters which are typically difficult (ie b/d, p/q)
- There is a clear distinction between capital letters and lowercase
- The transition to joined writing is simple and occurs sooner, allowing children to concentrate on the composition of the writing, rather than thinking how to form the letters.
- Words written in one set of movements, without the pen being taken off the paper helps the motor memory store spellings.
- The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling.

Effective teaching of handwriting can only be achieved through modeling. Adults must use the cursive script consistently when writing in reading record books, marking books and writing signs and messages.

All adults must demonstrate letter formation and joins regularly and consistently. Children must practice by carefully copying and repeating. During discrete handwriting, it is important to observe children writing to ensure they are forming letters correctly.

Our agreed Continuous Cursive Script Pre Cursive



Letter Patterns

When children are ready for handwriting, we begin by teaching them the handwriting patterns. We begin these using big sheets of paper and easels or by working on the floor before transferring to smaller pieces of paper and then handwriting books.

The children develop muscle memory for each pattern, which is then easily coordinated into their letter formation.

The handwriting patterns include the:

- Wave Pattern
- Tooth Pattern
- Loop the Loop Pattern
- Bridge Pattern
- Up, Down and Around Pattern

Each pattern is referred to by name, which is then transferred to the individual letter formation at the appropriate time.

Teaching Letters in Groups

When teaching handwriting discretely i.e. in class handwriting sessions, we teach letters which are formed with a similar movement together e.g.

Wave Pattern Letters

c, a, d, g, o, q, s, f

Tooth Pattern

v, w, x

Loop the Loop Pattern

e,

Bridge Pattern

b, h, k, n, m, p, r

Up, Down and Around Pattern

i, l, t, u, j, y

z is taught on its own.

Continuous Cursive Script

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Pen hold

We will teach children the dynamic tripod grasp detailed in the picture below.



This should be reinforced at the start of every formal writing session in

EYFS and KS1 and handwriting lessons in KS2. In KS1 other grips should be corrected. A close eye needs to be kept on children developing an awkward grip and a plan put into place. Although the basic tripod grasp is often considered to be the preferred way to hold the writing instrument, there are a number of alternative grips, which also work well. If a child has established a grip that he or she finds reasonably comfortable for long periods, it often causes more problems than it solves to insist that they change it.

Delivering National Curriculum Expectations

Good handwriting relies on hand eye coordination and secure motor control. Therefore, during the Early Years Foundation Stage, we will provide lots of opportunities for the children to develop physical control through large-scale movements, manipulative skills and fine motor control. In addition, Funky Fingers and Dough Gym are incorporated into the routine from Reception.

In **Reception**, as they are physically and emotionally ready, children will:

- Begin to learn the letter patterns
- Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- Begin to form lower-case letters in the correct position, starting and finishing in the right place
- Form capital letters
- Form digits 0-9

Our aim is to make the transition into continuous cursive writing during Reception and Year One depending upon the ability of the children.

In **Years One and Two** children should be taught to:

- Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

Handwriting is taught discretely up to four times a week for 20 minutes in KS1.

In KS2 children should:

- 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
 - Years 5 and 6: Pupils should be taught to:
 - Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed

Handwriting is taught discretely up to three times a week for 20 minutes in KS2.

Each year group will have a tailored programme of handwriting exercises that focus on the expectation of each year group. Each year group will use handwriting text books and exercise books that show progression and support the fine motor skill development that is age appropriate.

Writing Tools

We write with Stabilo Easygraph pencils in KS1 until the children have a secure pencil grip and a defined style.

Posture, Paper and Position

Posture should be taught explicitly and children reminded at the start of every formal writing session until it becomes habitual. Children should sit with the upper body reasonably upright and squarely facing the writing surface, with feet on the floor and the non-writing hand supporting the work. Right-handers should rotate the surface slightly to the left. Avoid allowing pupils to rotate the paper further and further until the lines are virtually vertical, as this can become a habit difficult to break. Left-handers should either sit next to each other or on the left of a right-hander so that elbows do not clash. Left-handers should rotate the writing surface slightly to the right.

Please avoid children using their 'lazy hand' to support their head. Remind children that 'Up to the desk is how we work best'.

Links

There is a very natural link between handwriting, phonics, spelling, creative writing and modelled writing. Cursive script fully supports and enhances each of these areas of literacy (see the further information section in this policy for phonics, spelling and modelled writing).

Induction for New Staff and Pupils

New teachers and teaching assistants will be given a copy of the handwriting policy and training if necessary. The senior leadership team will monitor current and new staff during the monitoring process of lesson observations and work scrutinies. New children in EYFS, KS1 and Year 3 will be taught to use the continuous cursive style. In Years 4, 5 and 6 new children may use a different but equally acceptable style of cursive handwriting.

Support for Learning

Those children who are not yet ready or able to write will have a bespoke programme of intervention developed including Funky Fingers and Dough Gym. A variety of different pencil grips to suit particular needs are also available should they be needed and can be trialed to find the best fit for the child.

Parents

Parents are provided with a list of ideas to support children at different stages of handwriting e.g. pre-writing activities, a copy of the letter formation and handwriting patterns.

KS1: Copy of letter formation, handwriting patterns and phonics focus for the week and spelling rules and patterns.

KS2: Copy of letter formation, spelling rules and patterns and activities to support handwriting and spelling.

Assessment, Monitoring and Moderation

Children in EYFS are assessed on an ongoing basis through observation and handwriting forms part of this. Within Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, handwriting is monitored during work scrutiny and is assessed as part of the children's writing assessments. Assessment of handwriting will also be discussed based on age related tracking documents at learning reviews each term.

Modelled Writing

Modelled writing will be used as an embedded daily teaching strategy across all year groups:

In KS1, modelled writing will be used to support the children with:

- Handwriting - letter formation and patterns
- Handwriting – diagonal joining where appropriate
- Using punctuation based on Year 1 and Year 2 National Curriculum expectations
- Editing strategies such as adding punctuation, description and spelling
- Using phonics within word groups
- Using spelling words and patterns
- Composition of effective sentences and use of grammar based on Year 1 and Year 2 National Curriculum expectations

In KS2, modelled writing will be used to support the children with:

- Handwriting – letter formation and diagonal joining
- Spelling rules and patterns
- Grammar expectations for each year group
- Effective and varied sentence construction within different genres of writing
 - Use of punctuation
 - Editing strategies including impact on reader, punctuation, grammar and spelling

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