



## Crooks Barn Primary Handwriting and Spelling Policy



### **Rationale**

Handwriting and Spelling are key aspects of the writing curriculum and make a significant contribution to the development of children as writers. Pupils need sufficient capacity in their working memory to plan, compose and review effectively. This requires transcription skills to be secure. As a result, fluent transcription skills should be a critical focus for the early years and key stage 1.

### **Aims**

By adopting a consistent approach to handwriting and spelling we aim for the children to develop confidence and accuracy across the curriculum. In doing so we aim to:

- Develop and teach the children to use a range of effective spelling strategies.
- Encourage creativity and the use of more ambitious vocabulary in their writing.
- Enable children to write independently.
- Encourage children to identify patterns in words and spellings.
- Promote a positive and confident attitude towards spelling and handwriting.
- Help children to use a dictionary and thesauri to spell more ambitious vocabulary.
- Help children recognise that spelling is a lifelong skill.
- Provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in spelling and handwriting.

### **Handwriting**

Handwriting is taught through discrete lessons, following the Little Wandle phonics scheme letter formation from Foundation Stage to Year 2. As they move into KS2, the children are taught to use a joined, neat style, using letter-join as a programme to support this. Lessons are taught three times a week in KS1 and at least weekly in Year 3/4, but often more regularly if the children need this. As they move into Y5/6, the teaching of handwriting will be less frequent as the children develop their own, joined, neat style. For those children that still need handwriting support, this will continue.

- In the foundation stage, children are taught to sit in the correct position, hold a pencil effectively, use the language needed to describe pencil movements, understand that letters are written on a base line and understand the different letter shapes. In Reception they focus upon a daily letter. Nursery and Reception children access a range of pre-writing activities to prepare them for writing and strengthen the relevant muscles.
- In Key Stage 1, children are taught to write legibly using upper- and lower-case letters, to leave the correct space between words, when to use capital letters and to form printed letters. As they move through year 2, the children are introduced to joined writing.
- During Key Stage 2, pupils are taught to improve the joining, quality, speed and stamina of their handwriting, ensuring letter size and word spacing is consistent.

### **Spelling**

Children in KS1, progressing from the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds scheme use the recently-created Little Wandle Bridge to Spelling unit to support transition from phonics to spelling. Spelling sessions in Key Stage Two follow a structure: Review, Teach, Practise, Apply through our subscription to Spelling Shed. Each lesson has a main objective from the National Curriculum for spelling. Children are taught using a range of strategies: sounds buttons, syllables, cloze sentences and both the morphology and etymology of chosen words. Taught spellings should be from the appropriate year group

for all children working at ARE. For children with SEND, spellings can be taken from the year group objectives from which that child is currently working for writing, depending on need. All children in Key Stage Two have a Spelling Shed account where they can practise their spellings at home and in school. Children progressing from Little Wandle Letters and Sounds will also use the recently-created Little Wandle Bridge to Spelling unit to support transition from phonics to spelling.

### Key Stage Spelling Lists

The 2014 National Curriculum identifies spelling lists that every child in each Key Stage of primary school needs to know by the end of that Key Stage. It is expected that by the end of Key Stage 1 children know the example words for year 1 and 2, as well as including almost all exception words which are used frequently in pupils' writing.

The word lists for Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 are statutory. These lists include a mixture of those words children use in their writing as well as those that are often misspelt. Some of these words are quite challenging but the 100 words in each list can easily be taught over the four years of Key Stage 2 alongside other words teachers find appropriate, particularly those relating to humanities and sciences.

### Handwriting Progression

#### Early Years Foundation Stage:

**Stage 1 (Nursery):** Develop a sense of controlled movement at whole body level.

**Stage 2 (Nursery & early Reception):** Develop controlled movement in the arm area, working towards controlled hand movements.

**Stage 3 (Nursery & Reception):** Strengthen hand movements.

**Stage 4 (Reception leading into Year 1):** Pupils should be taught to:

- Begin to sit correctly at the table, holding a pencil correctly and comfortably, develop pincer grip
- Begin to form all lowercase letters starting from the top, starting to flick off at the end of the letter
- Begin to form capital letters (and digits 0-9) in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
- Begin to use diagonal and horizontal strokes when focusing upon particular digraphs and trigraphs.
- Begin to use clear ascenders and descenders.
- Begin to use clear finger spaces.

#### Year 1:

- Continue to develop using diagonal and horizontal strokes, emphasising key spellings and phonics
- Continue to develop using clear ascenders and descenders.
- Continue to develop using more consistent clear finger spaces.
- Promote correct letter sizing
- Begin to form individual letters securely with the correct orientation establishing good handwriting habits from the beginning.

#### Year 2:

Pupils should be taught to:

- Form lower case letters of the same (& appropriate) size.
- Know capital letters are not joined.
- Use clear ascenders and descenders.
- To form individual letters securely with the correct orientation inclusive of entry and exit strokes establishing good handwriting habits from the beginning.
- To start letters from the line when ready
- Pupils should be taught to write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters.
- Use correct spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.
- Use diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and spelling patterns when ready
- Some may transition from pencil to pen

**Year 3:**

Pupils should be taught to:

- Use clear ascenders and descenders.
- Use appropriate sizing.
- Increase legibility and consistency of handwriting.
- Consistently use diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters.
- Know that capitals are not joined.
- Ensure lines of writing spaced sufficiently.
- More consistent use of pen when writing and for presentation

**Year 4:**

Pupils should be taught to:

- Consistently use diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters.
- Know that capitals are not joined.
- Increase legibility and consistency of handwriting.
- Ensure lines of writing spaced sufficiently.
- Ascenders and descenders do not touch.
- Use of handwriting pen

**Year 5/6**

Pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly, fluidly with increasing speed and style.
- Develop a personal style.
- Choose the appropriate writing implement best suited for the task.
- Use appropriate style and form depending on the task (e.g. labelling a diagram, writing an email address, algebra and filling a form in capitals)

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The English and the Phonic Lead will ensure all relevant programmes and resources are in place and staff know how to use them and receive all appropriate training.

Team Leaders will ensure all plans are followed appropriately.

Class teachers will follow the plans and request support when necessary.

Policy to be reviewed in September 2025.