



# OLD BUCKENHAM HALL

*A leading co-educational preparatory school for children aged 2-13 years*

## **Handwriting and Presentation Policy**

**OBHP51**

Policy owner: Deputy Head Academic  
Date last reviewed: August 2022  
Next review due: August 2024

‘High standards of presentation and handwriting ensure a writer is able to convey meaning with clarity, confidence and a respect for the reader’.

At Old Buckenham Hall School we believe that children should place a consistently high value on the presentation of their work and handwriting. This ensures that their understanding of the task they are completing is immediately reflective of their ability and commitment to their learning. Good handwriting and presentation are intrinsically linked and should be taught in a systematic way. The aim of this policy is to ensure a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting and acceptance of written work, from Pre-Prep through to Year 8.

### **Aims:**

- To ensure high standards of writing throughout the school
- To have a consistent approach to handwriting and presentation across the key stages
- For staff to adopt a common approach towards writing in children’s books, on the white board and on displays
- For all children to achieve a neat, legible continuous cursive style
- To develop the flow and speed of children’s writing so that each individual is able to write with confidence.

### **Presentation**

The following expectations outline the presentation standards of all written work across all subject areas and including Prep tasks. In the Pre-Prep this expectation may be supported by an adult, however, by the end of Year 2, all children are expected to present their work independently to this standard:

- All work in written subjects to be dated and underlined. In maths a short number date may be recorded
- All work to be titled and underlined
- A clear indication is to be recorded to show if the work was completed as a Prep task; with support or independently
- Children to complete their written work in pencil until they are awarded their Pen Licence, after which all written work is to be completed in blue ink pen
- Felt tip may not be used in children’s books
- Any sheets should be neatly presented on the page
- Numbers are to be placed in the margin
- Paragraphs will be indicated either by leaving a blank line or indenting
- Where appropriate – and in consultation with Learning Success (and senior school) – some pupils will have access to a laptop or scribe

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## Handwriting

Handwriting is a skill which must be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, the correct modelling of an agreed style is very important; it is not sufficient to require pupils only to copy models from a published scheme or worksheets. It is essential that consistency in attitudes is displayed, the methods employed and models provided will ensure success. Teaching strategies can include a mixture of whole class, small group or individual teaching.

We are teaching children to write in Continuous Cursive:

- Capital letters **do not** join the main body of the word
- The starting point for all letters is the same; on the writing line
- The finishing point for all letters is also on the writing line; except for o, r, v and w which have a top exit stroke.
- The single letter formations are taught in Reception with the entry and exit strokes, this makes the transition from single letter formation to joined handwriting very straightforward and allows it to occur sooner.
- We plan to introduce joining complete words in Year 1.

See **appendix 1** for examples of this handwriting style.

The Twinkl Handwriting font is an excellent example of pre-cursive and looped joined handwriting. It is free to download – the stylistic set will need to be changed to ‘2’ to include the ascenders.

## Foundation Stage

Children will have access to a wide range of different pens and pencils for mark making. It is recognised that children need to develop arm muscle strength from the shoulder and elbow to develop secure pivot movement. The development of fine motor skills is encouraged through a wide range of activities and opportunities including playdough, tweezers, painting, tracing and threading. When developmentally ready children should be encouraged to develop a tripod grip and where necessary be given an appropriate pencil grip to ensure good writing habits are established early.

Children are introduced to models of the correct handwriting pattern through the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme. Using pre-cursive letters, which are linked to RWI, the handwriting rhymes are introduced and reinforced regularly to ensure these are embedded. Children are taught to join the 2 letters of a digraph together. See **appendix 2**

Children are also given a variety of different opportunities to apply and develop their writing skills in both adult led and child initiated play activities. At this age when engaged in adult led tasks children are to be encouraged to develop good writing habits including a secure and steady writing posture with feet anchored to the ground.

Left-handed pupils will be taught strategies to ensure that they are forming letters correctly, sitting with a balanced posture and that they are aware of the correct positioning of exercise books and or paper.

## **Years 1 and 2**

Handwriting is taught through regular discreet handwriting sessions and is reinforced through high expectation in all written tasks. Children should be given opportunities to correct and reinforce correct letter formation to ensure 'bad habits' are not established.

Letter formation is taught in a variety of ways including letter families (see **appendix 3**) to consolidate motor memory. Handwriting patterns are also used to develop the skill necessary to become confident and fluent writers.

From the start of Year 1 children are taught to join full words. This is left to the teacher's discretion for individual pupils.

Pupils in Year 2 will continue to practise the basic joins and begin to develop a fluent cursive handwriting style. By the end of Year 2 children should be expected to form their letters with a consistency of size and shape.

Formal handwriting is done with an HB pencil; children also have access to a variety of writing implements including highlighters pens etc.

## **Middle School**

In years 3, 4, pupils should consolidate their use of the continuous cursive handwriting joins ensuring that the following is achieved:

- Size of letters is consistent throughout words and sentences
- Spacing of words is consistent throughout words and sentences
- Speed and fluency of writing increases year on year
- Writing is well formed and legible

In Year 3 all pupils should obtain their 'pen licence', this may happen when the first two above criteria are met. Pen licenses should be awarded by the Headmaster in assembly, as a sign that the school upholds handwriting as an essential life skill which is highly valued.

By Year 4 it is expected that all pupils will be using cursive handwriting in all lessons, except where teaching staff have specified otherwise, for labelling maps diagrams etc.

## **Year 5 and 6**

In Year 5 and 6 pupils consolidate the achievement of a fluent and legible joined script. The principles of good handwriting should continue to be encouraged, based on the teaching in previous years. At this point the pace of handwriting should be stepped up so that pupils can become efficient note takers. It is important not to lose legibility at this stage. All pupils should be encouraged to use a good quality fountain pen during the year.

## **Year 7 and 8**

It is important that the staff are clear about their expectations regarding the presentation of work in Years 7 and 8. Pupils should always be encouraged to produce their **very best** in exercise books and be encouraged to use rough books for drafts. Teaching staff should expect and maintain high standards of written work for each student within an understanding of their ability.

## **Handwriting and Spelling**

At OBH we believe that spelling and handwriting are intrinsically linked. Therefore, in order, to write and express themselves meaningfully, pupils need to be confident spellers. It is important that the school spelling policy is also adhered to in the development of confident, fluent and concise writers.

Policy written: January 2018, Gemma Gillott and Caroline Rice

Policy reviewed: November 2019, Camilla Webster; 2021 and 2022, Freddie Auld

## **Appendix 1**

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Continuous Cursive Handwriting

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj  
Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt  
Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

**Appendix 2**

Set 2 digraphs & trigraphs

sh ch th ng nk qu ay ee igh ow oo ar  
or air ir ou oy

**Appendix 3**

Rockin' Round Letters	<i>c a g q d o s</i>
Climb and Slide Letters	<i>i l t u y j</i>
Tunnel Letters	<i>r n h b p k m</i>
Loop and Hook Letters	<i>e f</i>
Square Letters	<i>x z</i>
Zig Zag Letters	<i>v w</i>