La Mare de Carteret Primary School

Handwriting Policy

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Our Vision and Values



LMDCP working together with the entire community to ensure the rights of the child are met by providing a safe, nurturing and challenging education

Aims of the policy

To ensure that teaching staff and LSAs are promoting high standards of written communication across the curriculum.

To ensure that handwriting is taught progressively and consistently throughout the school, with teachers and LSAs teaching correct letter formation.

Principles of the policy

The overarching principle of the handwriting policy is to promote high standards of written communication across the curriculum. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility by the end of Key Stage 2. Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns. Cursive handwriting is taught with a progressive approach, beginning in Year 1. Handwriting should be taught regularly. Staff are expected to model cursive handwriting as per the 'Engaging Learning, Dynamic teaching and Informative Assessment' policy.

At La Mare de Carteret Primary School, we aim to ensure that all of our pupils:

- Have a preferred hand for mark making and writing.
- Can form their letters correctly.
- Can write with a flowing hand which is legible, clear and neat. Children should feel proud of their handwriting.
- Have a sound understanding about the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly.

We also aim to ensure that all of our teachers and LSAs:

- Provide children of differing abilities with appropriate and achievable handwriting goals.
- Model and maintain a high profile of handwriting and presentation skills and standards throughout the school.
- Have a clear understanding of the importance of teaching handwriting coherently and consistently throughout the school.

Teaching and Organisation

Children in Years 1 through to Year 4 will have twice weekly discrete handwriting lessons of 15 minutes each per week, with a focus on teaching and modelling cursive handwriting. Children in Reception are taught correct letter formation during their 'Letters and Sounds' sessions. They are therefore practising their handwriting daily. Teachers and LSAs use the 'Read Write Inc' letter formation rhymes to teach children how to form their letters correctly. As children are introduced to digraphs and trigraphs in Reception, these are modelled cursively so that the children can identify them as a combination of 2 letters representing one phoneme.

Left handed children should always sit on the left side of right-handed children, so their elbows don't bump. They are encouraged to find a comfortable orientation for their paper, usually slightly to the left centre of their body, and to have their fingers about 1.5cm from the point of their pencil.

Some pupils may need additional support with their handwriting. Children with specific learning difficulties can sometimes find cursive handwriting useful because the writing implement stays on the page for the majority of a word. Some children may need specific equipment such as a writing slope, in order to develop their handwriting effectively, or a pencil grip or sock to promote a good pencil grip.

"The dynamic tripod grasp (with the pen pinched between the ball of the thumb and the fore-finger, supported by the middle finger with the other fingers tucked into the hand) is recommended once the child is old enough to hold a writing implement."
National Handwriting Association, 2019

Progression through the School

Reception

"Accurate letter formation is an essential early skill that forms the basis of a fluent handwriting style."
Education Endowment Foundation, 2018

Children in Reception are taught correct letter formation during their 'Letters and Sounds' sessions. They are therefore practising their handwriting daily. Teachers and LSAs use the 'Read Write Inc' letter formation rhymes to teach children how to form their letters correctly (See Appendix 1). As children are introduced to digraphs and trigraphs in Reception, these are modelled cursively so that the children can identify them as a combination of 2 letters representing one phoneme. Throughout the year, children continue to practice forming their letters and are given the opportunity to practice CVC and High Frequency Words. They will also practice forming numbers and capital letters.

During their Reception year the children are given a wide range of opportunities to develop an understanding that writing conveys meaning, e.g. books, storytelling, signs, labels etc. Children experience a wide range of handwriting-related skills, e.g. letter and number formation in sand trays, through tracing, use of ribbons, with chalk, felt tips, pencils, crayons, writing over and under teacher models in various forms, word building with magnetic letters and pattern making in various media. This is in line with the 'Physical development: moving and handling' section of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Year 1 Term 1

During Term 1 of Year 1, children will spend their handwriting sessions consolidating their letter formation, building on their learning from Reception. They will also use this term to consolidate the correct formation of capital letters and digits 0 - 9, revisiting this throughout the year. Children who are showing signs of difficulty with their handwriting will receive specific targeted early intervention.

Year 1 Terms 2 & 3

At the beginning of Term 2, children will begin learning the 'cursive' handwriting style. Pupils will begin by learning the four joins (see Appendix 2 for full list):

Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ai, ar, un etc.
Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ou, vi, wi etc.
Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ab, ul, it etc.
Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ol, wh, ot etc.

Break letters do not join to other letters. The following are break letters: f, x, z
All capital letters are break letters.
Letters should not have 'lead ins' or 'entry strokes.'

Children will then practice words with these joins in, preferably high frequency words where possible.

In addition to their discrete twice weekly handwriting sessions, handwriting should also be being taught during their daily 'Letters and Sounds' sessions.

Appendix 3 outlines an example of how a handwriting session might be structured.

Year 2

Pupils will begin the year revisiting the four joins and will practice writing words which include these joins. In addition to their discrete twice weekly handwriting sessions, handwriting should also be being taught during their daily 'Letters and Sounds' sessions. It is expected that by the end of Year 2, most children should be able to join their handwriting consistently and correctly.

Key Stage 2

On entry into Year 3, it is expected that children will be able to consistently and correctly join their handwriting. Children who are unable to join should continue to receive some targeted intervention to develop their fine motor control and their cursive handwriting. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 will continue to have twice weekly handwriting sessions of 15 minutes each, focusing on the four main joins, words which include these, as well as sentence work to further develop speed and fluency.

During Year 3, the expectation is that all pupils will be able to use both pencil and pen as appropriate. They should practice writing in pen in their handwriting books. During Year 4, children will write more frequently in pen, continuing to maintain high standards of presentation.

All children in Years 5 and 6 will record in pen except during Maths

Role of the Literacy Coordinator

The Literacy Coordinator will:

- Strategically lead the development and direction of handwriting in the school;
- Keep up to date with developments in the teaching of handwriting;
- Support colleagues in the teaching of handwriting;
- Organise / deliver in-service training as appropriate;
- Manage resources to enable the successful teaching of handwriting;
- Monitor pupil achievement by observing lessons, sampling work, working with pupils and discussing with staff;
- In conjunction with the SLT, monitor the quality of teaching and provision through regular lesson observations, learning walks and work sampling
- Review the Handwriting Policy every two years.

Written by Mrs Juliet Ford, agreed by staff September 2019

Appendix 1 - Read Write Inc Letter Formation Rhymes

a a Around the apple and down the leaf.	b b Down the laces to the heel and around the toe.	c c Curl around the caterpillar.	d d Around the dinosaurs bottom, up his tall neck & down to his toes.	e e Lift off the top and scoop out the egg.	f f Down the stem and draw the leaves.
g g Around the girls face, down her hair and give her a curl.	h h Down the head, to his hooves and over his back.	i i Down the body and dot for the head.	j j Down his body, curl, dot for his head.	k k Down the kangaroo's body tail and leg.	l l Down the long leg.
m m Down Maisie, mountain, mountain.	n n Down Nobby and over his net.	o o All around the orange.	p p Down the pirates plait and around his face.	qu qu Round her head, up past her earring, down her hair,and flick.	r r Down the robots back and curl over his arm.
s s Slither down the snake.	t t Down the tower, across the tower.	u u Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle.	v v Down a wing, up a wing.	w w Down, up, down, up.	x x Down the arm and leg, repeat the other side.
y y Down a horn, up a horn and under head.	z z Zig-zag-zig.				

Appendix 2 - Four main letter joins

Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders - ai, ar, un, us, au, aw, er, ew, ir, ur, ss, as, ea, ae, ee, ie, se, ue

Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders - ou, vi, wi, ere, oe, re, ure, ve, we, oi, on, oo, or, ov, ow, oa

Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders - ab, ul, it, ch, kn, ll, sh, th, ed, de

Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders - ol, wh, ot

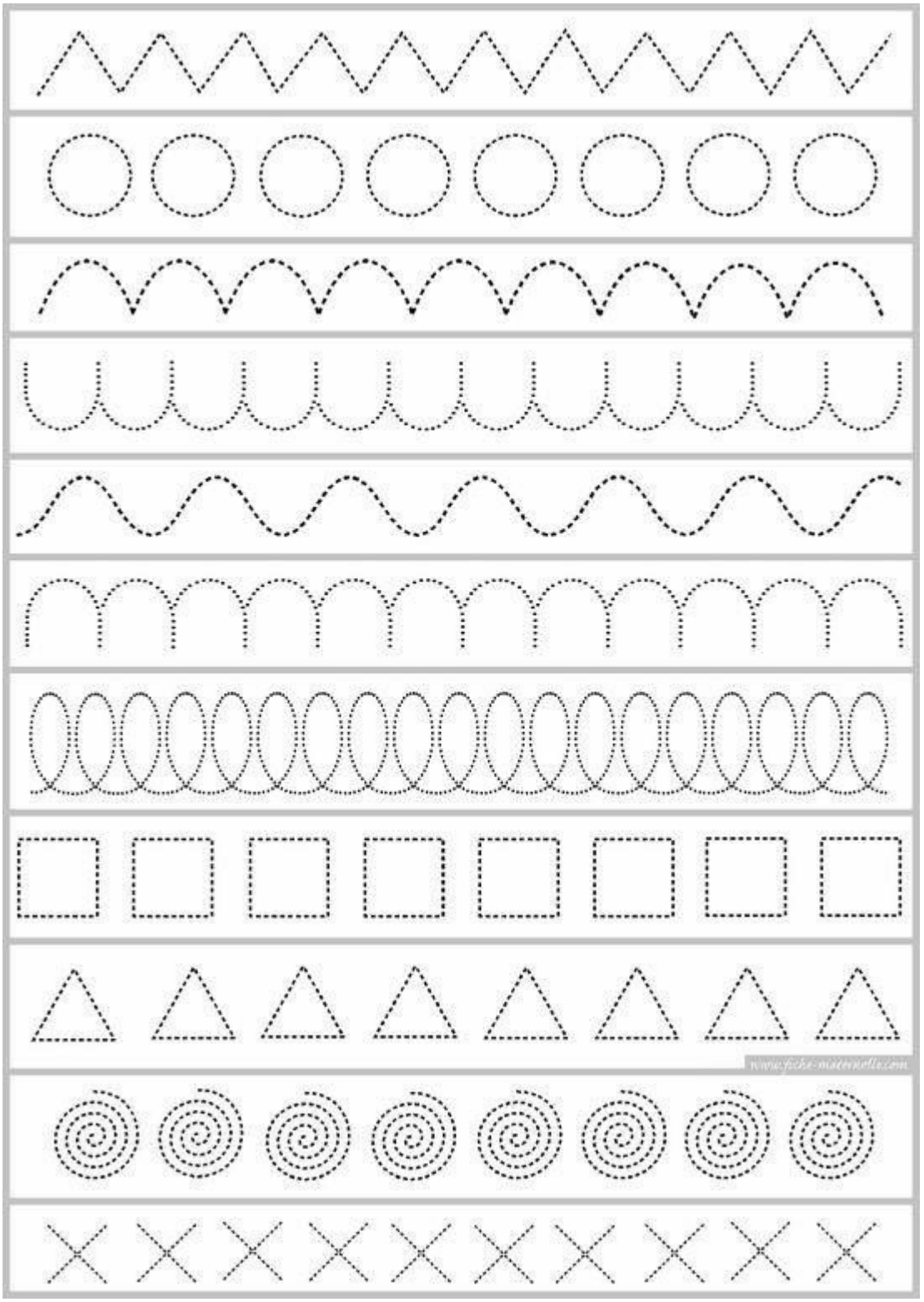
Appendix 3 - A Typical Lesson Structure

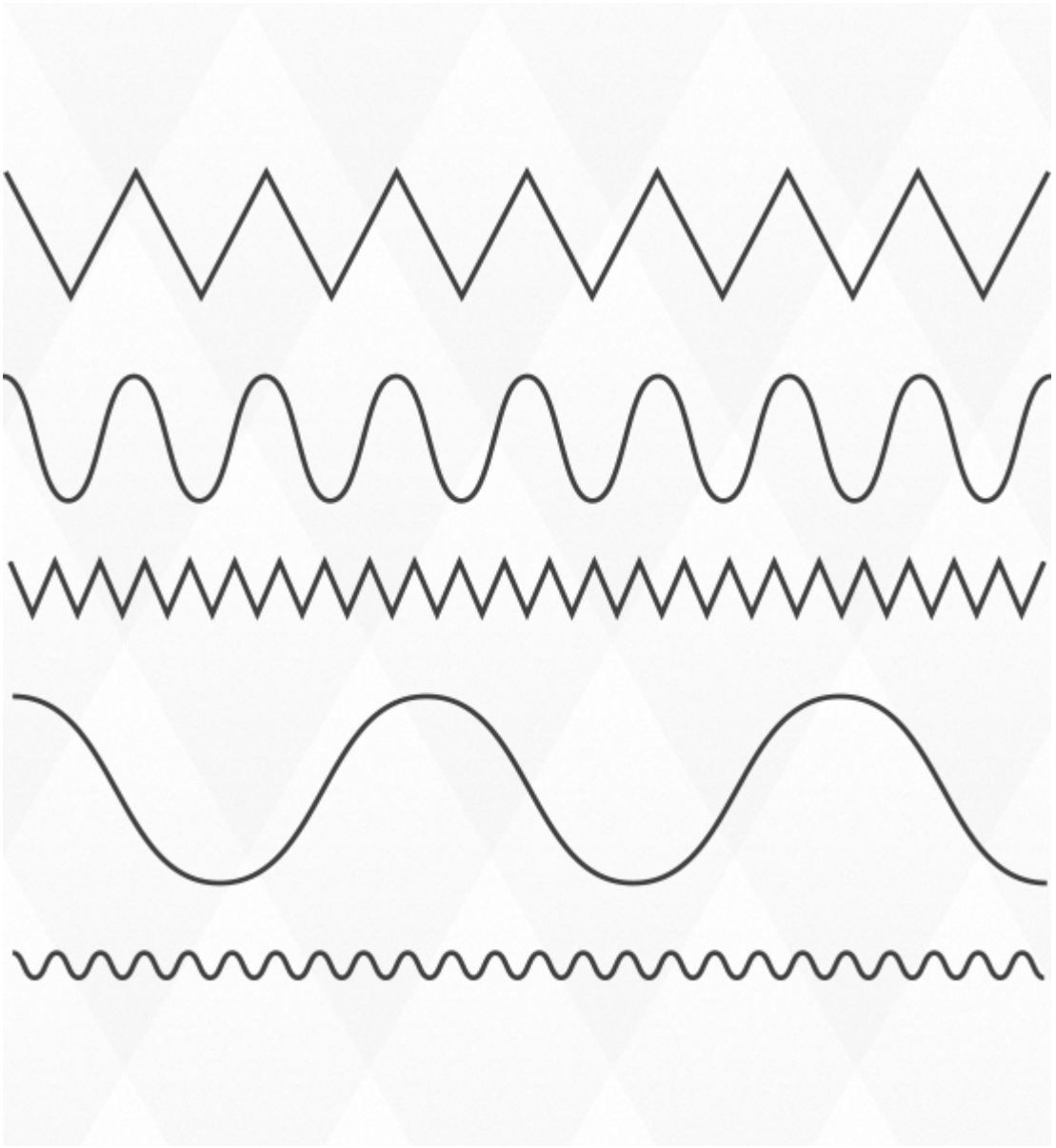
- **Warm up** - practise a particular pattern on a mini whiteboard, focusing on correct pencil/pen grip, correct posture and consistency in size
- **Introduce the main focus** (either through linking to their 'Letters and Sounds' focus or spelling focus or as a discrete lesson)
- **Teacher's turn** - teacher to model either on a flipchart or on an IWB, describing the actions they are making.
- **Child's turn** - teacher to offer advice and guidance, assessing the impact of their teaching.
- **Self assessment**
- **Teacher assessment**, offering immediate verbal feedback and re-modelling where appropriate

Feedback should be specific, accurate and clear to the child. The focus should be on exactly what aspect they achieved rather than 'your handwriting is getting neater.' Feedback should also focus on what they have improved on and should support further effort. Teachers and LSAs should also give clear guidance on exactly how they can improve.

Appendix 4

Examples of Handwriting Patterns





https://nha-handwriting.org.uk/ National Handwriting Association website

https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports
Education Endowment Foundation