



Sunnymede Junior School

Handwriting Guidance for Parents and Carers

Updated June 2022



At Sunnymede Junior School, we are committed to improving the quality of writing across the school, given the importance of this skill set to our children in future years. Handwriting remains a vital skill, despite the digital age in which we live. It will continue to be essential for our children to produce neat handwriting in the future, no matter what career paths they eventually take. Indeed, our children are still required to use paper and pen / pencil throughout the school day and exams continue to be completed manually. As such, we ask that you encourage your child to write manually at home on a regular basis. This is not to suggest that the use of computers for writing is not valued but simply to request that a balance is struck. Indeed, there is much pleasure and self-satisfaction to be gained by seeing a page of beautifully crafted writing!

As a school, we use the *Nelson* handwriting scheme. In the Infant school, the children are taught to form letters using upstrokes and exit flicks. We build on this in the juniors, teaching the four key joins systematically, along with different aspects of presentation. Where children continue to have difficulty forming any individual letters correctly, they will continue to receive support with this and, if necessary, join a handwriting intervention group to support them further.

So that you can best support us in ensuring your child is using the correct letter formations when writing at home, along with the correct method for joining, a *Handwriting leaflet for Parents* is available for parents and included in your induction pack on joining the school. It sets out the correct letter formations in lower and upper case form, as well as numerals. It also sets out the four handwriting joins and a handwriting checklist that you can use at home. This leaflet gives general guidance only; if you would like to know the next steps in handwriting and presentation for your own child, please do make an appointment to see your child's teacher and they will be happy to give you further advice.

We have decided that when children join us in Year 3, they will begin by writing with pencil. Teachers will regularly review the progress each child is making in developing the neatness and fluency of their script. Once they are making a concerted effort to join their writing and have demonstrated that it is consistently legible and neat, they will be issued with a 'pen licence'. This will take the form of a certificate which will be awarded in an assembly to recognise the significant achievement they have made. In order to activate their pen licence, they will need to bring in a good quality black rollerball pen to use at school. Pens vary in quality but we recommend the uni-ball Eye micro UB150 rollerball pen (0.5 mm tip). To make this process easier, we keep these pens in stock in the school office and they can be purchased from us at a cost of only £1.30. If you purchase the pen from us, we will also label it with their name using an indelible marker. Once your child has brought their pen to school, they will be able to use it to write all lessons except for Maths, some Science lessons and music lessons. For children who have been writing with pen for some time, they will continue to write in pen, provided that the pen they bring to school is of a suitable quality and their handwriting does not deteriorate. In Year six, all pupils will write in pen to prepare for secondary school, regardless of whether they have been awarded their pen licence.

Where children write in pencil (all children use pencil for Maths), we provide HB pencils for children to write with. A number of children, however, prefer to bring in their own pencils. If they choose to

