Rutherford House School

LEARN ENJOY SUCCEED

Handwriting Policy

Signed:	
Chair of Trust Board: Approved:	Claire Delaney 1 September 2025
Renewal:	Every 2 years
Review Date:	September 2027

Bellevue Place Education Trust – Our commitment

Learn. Enjoy. Succeed.

Every BPET child and staff member enjoys a broad (LEARN) and enriched (ENJOY) learning experience, enabling them to achieve far greater individual success (SUCCEED) than they might previously have thought possible.

Our Mission

To grow hubs of like-minded, autonomous schools with a strong support network, all of which combine academic rigour with highly enriched opportunities that deliver a personalised approach to education and exceptional outcomes for all.

Our Difference

We are leading the way in delivering high quality education through skills-based and knowledge rich curricula, applying the best of the independent and state sectors to deliver breadth of opportunity and pupil enrichment. We empower all our schools as individual entities that best meet the needs of the communities they serve and have a strong relationship with families, who are our key partners in delivering the vision.

Our Promise

Every child is an individual. Our role is to nurture pupils' potential through a personalised approach to learning. BPET children are happy, independent, confident all-rounders. Our focus is ensuring an exceptional provision for all our children with supportive, accessible learning that enables every child to make progress, including high quality inclusion for children with Special Educational Needs. We encourage a 'be interested and be interesting' attitude in children and staff alike. We don't just teach; we want our pupils to have a passion to learn.

Introduction

We aim for our children to leave in Year 6 with the ability to write using their own style of fast, fluent, legible and sustainable handwriting, as well as other styles of writing for specific purposes. In addition to teaching handwriting during our regular handwriting lessons, we have high expectations that what is taught and practised in handwriting lessons will be used in all writing activities. We believe that handwriting is integral to a child's personal development and know that children's engagement and self-esteem can be improved by their satisfaction and pride in good quality presentation.

Aims

Handwriting is a taught skill that develops at different rates for different children. All of the teachers in the school put a priority on teaching handwriting and have high expectations for handwriting across the curriculum. Our school uses *Penpals for Handwriting* to ensure that:

- The importance of handwriting is recognised and given appropriate time.
- The progression of handwriting is consistent across the school.
- Handwriting is acknowledged to be a whole body activity and emphasis is placed on correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting.
- Expectations of left-handed children are equal to those of right-handed children, and appropriate advice and resources are available to ensure that they learn to write with a comfortable, straight wrist.
- Handwriting is linked into grammar, punctuation and spelling in order to practice and contextualise all of the transcriptional and stylistic skills for writing.
- Children learn to self-assess their own writing and develop understanding and responsibility for improving it.
- Children learn to write in different styles for different purposes such as print for labelling a diagram, illustrated capitals letters for creating a poster, swift jottings for writing notes, making a 'best copy' for presentation and fast, fluent and legible writing across the curriculum.

Progression of skills

Penpals enables us to teach and secure the development of handwriting throughout the school:

- First, children experience the foundation of handwriting through multi-sensory activities (Reception).
- Correct letter formation is taught, practised, applied and consolidated (Reception, Year 1).
- Joining is introduced only after correct letter formation is used automatically (Year 1, Year 2, Year 3).

- Joins are introduced systematically and cumulatively (Year 2–Year 6).
- As children practise joining, they pay attention to the size, proportion and spacing of their letters and words (Year 3 – Year 6).
- Once the joins are secure, a slope is introduced in order to support increased speed and fluency (Year 5).
- Children are introduced to different ways of joining in order that they can develop their own preferred personal style (Year 6).

By following *Penpals*, we ensure that our children follow the requirements and recommendations of the National Curriculum. We share the aspirations that children's handwriting should be 'sufficiently fluent and effortless for them to manage the general demands of the curriculum' and that 'problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their ability to communicate in writing'.

Handwriting tools

Throughout their time in school, children use a range of tools for different purposes and styles of handwriting including:

- A wide range of tools and media for mark-making in the EYFS.
- Whiteboard pens throughout the school.
- Fingers/pen when writing on the interactive whiteboard.
- Art supplies including coloured pens and pencils for posters, displays and artwork.
- Sharp pencils (Reception and KS1).
- Pencil grips and larger pencils are provided in every classroom for pupils who require extra support with fine motor skills where this impacts upon their handwriting.
- Writing slopes for pupils who upon assessment require additional support to their posture and comfort when writing.
- A handwriting pen for when they sustain a good level of presentation (from Year 3).
- It is expected that all pupils will be using a handwriting pen by the time they reach Year 5; however, this is not guaranteed until good presentation is consistently sustained.

Handwriting is always introduced and practised using the *Penpals* Interactive programme which is available in every classroom in the school. Handwriting is rehearsed and perfected on whiteboards, IPADS and in handwriting books so that children quickly learn about letter orientation including ascenders and descenders. Handwriting is taught once a week where a new skill is taught from the scheme. A second and/or third session is taught where children have further opportunity to embed, rehearse and perfect joins. A worksheet is sometimes taken

from the Penpals Teacher book and/or Penpals Practice book to facilitate this. Every session begins with handwriting warm up activities taken from Penpals Interactive available in all classroom computers. As children's fine motor skills improve and their letter formation or joining becomes increasingly accurate, the width between the lines in their books will gradually decrease. Highlighted yellow lines are printed in books and sometimes drawn to support children with additional handwriting needs.

Equality of opportunity

All of our children have equal access to handwriting lessons and to the resources available. We recognise that some children take longer to develop the necessary skills and we cater for those children by providing additional opportunities for skills development. Children who need specific fine motor or handwriting interventions are identified early and the impact of interventions is carefully monitored. Children with a physical disability are catered for, and progress is monitored, according to their individual action plans.