The Bellbird Primary School
Handwriting Policy

Introduction
All teachers have high expectations with regard to the presentation of work in all areas of the curriculum. Across the school a consistent approach is used. All staff, including teaching assistants, are expected to model the cursive Letterjoin handwriting style when modelling writing and when writing comments on children's work.

Across all key stages, handwriting is taught in a structured and multi-sensory way. Where teachers are undertaking word level work, links with correct letter formations are reinforced.

Teachers ensure that there is a balance between the teaching and practicing of letter formations and joins and children are expected to apply taught formations and joins to their work.

The English Curriculum 2014 sets out year by year statutory requirements for handwriting.

The Aims of Handwriting

- To adopt fluent, legible, joined and, eventually, speedy handwriting.
- To adapt lettering styles for different purposes.
- Pupils take pride in the presentation of all their written work.

The School Font

The school uses the letter-join 6 font from the Letterjoin programme. (See Appendix 1)
The Letterjoin Handbook contains a suggested teaching order for Key Stages 1 and 2.
There are a range of resources on the Letterjoin site including worksheet generator for teachers to use.

Foundation Stage and KS1

- Formal handwriting practice to be undertaken regularly in the Foundation Stage. When children are taught graphemes, they are taught the correct letter formation for those graphemes and they are expected to use this.

- When digraphs are introduced at the end of Phase 2 in Letters and Sounds, children begin cursive handwriting. If the child is not secure with the basic letter formation, they should not be expected to use lead -ins.
• The staff have agreed a prompt for each letter to support with the formation of letters.

• Children are taught how to grip a pencil correctly and where appropriate, pencil grips and specially adapted pencils are provided for children to use. Triangular pencils with rubberised grips are located in the stationery cupboard. The SENCo has a selection of pencil grips for children to try out.

• Advice is to be requested from other relevant agencies to help with specific individual problems.

• To support the development of the fine motor and perceptual skills necessary for effective handwriting teachers can use Write from the Start by Ion Teodorescu. This is located in the Foundation Stage area.

• Children are taught the importance of correct posture when writing.

• In Years 1 and 2, correct letter formations are taught and reinforced on a daily basis within the daily phonics session. In addition to this, at least 3 times a week letter formations and joins are modelled and the children are given the opportunity to practise these joins. It is recommended that short sessions on a regular basis work better than long sessions just once or twice a week.

• It is recommended that handwriting sessions start with a warm up. Teachers can continue to use the handwriting warm ups contained in the Penpals scheme. Staff can also use the warm ups recommended by FirstClass@writing.

Teaching Sequence

• Hand and finger strength
• Tracing
• Patterns
• Over teacher's writing (highlighter)
• Under teacher's writing (directly under words, Write in large letters, leave large spaces between words)
Key Stage 2

- Pencil grips, thicker pencils and wider lines will be used by children who experience problems with writing. There is a copy of Write from the Start by Ion Teodorescu in the Magpies room.

- When using the Babcock Spelling Programme links with handwriting are made.

- During some handwriting sessions, children should be given the opportunity to use pen. This gives them the opportunity to use a pen before being given a pen licence. This can also apply to children in Year 2.

General Teaching Guidance

- Children across the school have a daily handwriting session which lasts approximately 10-15 minutes.
- The teaching sequence of teach, practice and apply is also recommended.
- Children should have the opportunity to practise formations and joins with and without line guides for example, once children have completed a line of joins in their handwriting book immediately they complete a line of the same join in their English book. This approach ensures that children apply taught formations and joins to their class work.

Use of Pens and Erasers

- The school will issue all the children in years 3 - 6 with a black Berol pen. Children who struggle to grip these pens properly will be given the opportunity to use an Easy Grip pen. All pens need to have the child’s name clearly marked on them.
- The pen will be used in handwriting sessions. This enables the child to practise with a pen before gaining a pen licence. Year 2 children can be given pens to practise in their handwriting books.
- When children have reached a good standard of handwriting in all areas of their work, they receive a pen licence from the class teacher. In order to receive a pen licence, the child needs to consistently demonstrate that they can:
  - form lower case letters of the correct size relative to one another.
  - can write capital letters of the correct size and orientation.
  - can use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters.

The licence is displayed in the classroom and it entitles the child to use a pen in class for all of their written work. If the child does not maintain
the high standard of writing already reached, they will need to revert back to pencil. Licences will be reviewed every half term.

- The use of an eraser is discouraged in school. Pupils should draw a neat line through errors.

**Handwriting Awards**
At the end of each term class teachers will choose 1 or 2 children from the class who have made outstanding progress with their handwriting and presentation. The children will be awarded a special certificate in a Friday assembly and a piece of their written work will be displayed outside of their classroom. The winners of the termly award will also be mentioned in newsletters home to parents.

**Learning Environment**
Letter formations are displayed prominently in all classrooms and are referred to by the class teachers and teaching assistants. In all class rooms, there are typed and handwritten notices. Typed notices, where possible, should be devised using the school cursive font. Prompts showing BBC (bottom back of chair) and FFF (feet flat on floor) will be shared and displayed in the classroom. Children will regularly be reminded of the importance of correct posture.

**Lettering Styles for Different Purposes**

- Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to recognise the importance of clear and neat presentation when they are communicating to others. They are also taught to recognise when speed is more important than presentation (e.g. draft work, note taking).

- Pupils are taught to write in print or capital letters where the purpose of the writing supports this, (e.g. map labels, newspaper headlines, and advertisements). They are taught technical terms for forms of lettering (e.g. upper case, lower case, italics).

- In ICT pupils are shown how to present lettering in different ways to add effect (e.g. Word Art). In displays around the classrooms and corridors, a wide variety of lettering styles is used to enhance the work being displayed.

**Home/School Support**
Copies of letter formations are in the parent section of the school website

To be reviewed in June 2017