



### **English Intent**

At Neville's Cross, English and the teaching of English is embedded throughout our curriculum. English at Neville's Cross is not just a stand-alone lesson and instead we view it as a vital part of our children's whole development; we provide our children with many exciting, enjoyable opportunities and experiences, to develop their English skills throughout all subject areas. Our curriculum is designed to ensure that all of our children will be able to confidently communicate their knowledge, ideas and emotions through their reading, writing and language. We place great importance on providing our children with a variety of high quality texts, which will inspire them to develop as life-long readers, writers and linguists. Our texts are carefully chosen by staff to be progressive, varied and engaging so children are regularly exposed to a variety of authors, genres and styles, to broaden their wider vocabulary and interests. Texts are often linked to class projects for continuity of learning and children explore and analyse their texts in whole class reading skills and writing lessons as well as enjoying the simple pleasures of listening to their teachers read them their 'class novel' every day. We believe that reading is a key tool for life and teaching our children to become articulate readers is absolutely integral to what we do at Neville's Cross, ensuring that they possess the essential skills and enthusiasm to learn for the rest of their lives. We begin this in our Early Years Foundation Stage by teaching children the key skills in blending and segmenting through teaching daily phonics sessions, using the systematic 'Letters and Sounds' scheme alongside encouraging our children to read for enjoyment in our inviting classroom reading areas. We ensure that our children develop a secure knowledge base in English and set important foundations for spelling and grammar, following a clear pathway of progression from Nursery to Year 6, using the 2014 National Curriculum. We nurture a culture in which children can take pride in their writing, can write clearly and accurately and adapt their language and style for a range of contexts. We place high standards on presentation and we follow the 'Penpals' scheme for handwriting to ensure that children develop a clear and consistent cursive script, preparing them for their secondary education. We value the importance of this alongside their basic skills and children are encouraged to check their 'non-negotiables' in every piece of work that they complete, regardless of the subject area. We view writing as a creative process rather than as an end result and we ensure that our children at Neville's Cross can refine and edit their writing over time, developing their independence and resilience to improve their own work. We recognise every child as an individual and we do not place ceilings on what they can achieve in English; we ensure that every child is supported to make progress along their school journey with us and we always celebrate their successes.

This handwriting policy has been designed as a working document, which reflects the ethos and practice within the school in relation to the teaching of handwriting. It has been written with due regard to the requirements of the New English National Curriculum (2014) and it will be monitored and evaluated according to changes within these documents as and when they arise.

### **Our Aims:**

- To teach handwriting systematically throughout the school and to adapt a consistent whole school approach guided by The Penpals (Cambridge University Press) Handwriting scheme.
- For all children to develop a well-formed, legible style of handwriting in both joined and printed styles, with increasing fluency, confidence and speed.
- That all teachers and support staff must use and model the agreed cursive style of handwriting when writing on the board or marking work.
- That teachers, support staff and pupils use all opportunities for writing as handwriting practice in all writing across the curriculum.
- To make provision for left handed children to develop free flowing writing.
- For all children's skills in handwriting to be reflected in the presentation of their work and their joy of writing.

### **To develop our pupils as efficient hand writers we teach them:**

- To develop fine motor control,
- The importance of correct posture and paper position whether right or left handed,
- To use a pen/pencil and to hold it effectively,
- To write from left to right and top to bottom on a page,
- To start and finish letters correctly,
- To form letters of consistent size and shape,
- The language of writing and how to use the correct terminology, (e.g. ascenders)
- To put regular spaces between words,
- How to form upper and lower case letters,
- How to join letters correctly,
- How to write legibly in both joined and printed style,
- To use different styles of writing for different purposes,
- The importance of neat and clear presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.
- To develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident.



## Our Approach

All handwriting 'Penpals' lessons consist of a 15 minute whole class session followed by a 15-20 minute independent activity session. Children then apply their handwriting skills in English lessons and in any other writing opportunities across the curriculum. In KS1 and EYFS this is often broken up into smaller sessions per week for children to practise their new skills.

## Progression

'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 (EYFS F1 and F2).
- Correct letter formation is taught, practised, applied and consolidated (EYFS F1/Y1).
- Joining is introduced only after correct letter formation is used automatically (Y1/Y2/Y3).
- Joins are introduced systematically and cumulatively (Y2-Y6).
- As children practice joining, they pay attention to the size, proportion and spacing of their letters and words (Y3-Y6).
- Once the joins are secure, a slope is introduced in order to support increased speed and fluency (Y5).
- Children are introduced to different ways of joining in order that they can develop their own preferred personal style (Y6).

In using '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 writing down what they want to say'.

## Resources: 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 when writing on the interactive whiteboard.
- Art supplies including coloured pens and pencils for posters, displays and artwork.
- Sharp pencils for most writing until a pen licence is awarded.
- A handwriting pen for when they sustain a good level of presentation.

Children in Reception and Key Stage 1 use the Penpals practice books to write in then move to copying their handwriting into their own handwriting book in Year Two. If a child is struggling with their handwriting in Key Stage Two they will be offered a practice book alongside intervention.

## Our Pen Licence system

Children will be awarded a pen licence when children achieve all of these points every day for two weeks.

To be awarded a pen licence children must always:

- Have neat, legible handwriting
- Demonstrate a fluent, joined script using letter joins that have been taught
- Form letters in a consistent size
- Use their pencil smartly without chewing the end.
- Sit letters on the line with appropriate ascenders and descenders
- Represent and use upper and lower case letters accurately
- Present letters in the correct orientation
- Form letters accurately
- Include appropriate finger spaces
- Only make a few mistakes which they cross out neatly with a line.

## Neville's Cross Primary School and Nursery - Handwriting Policy



Class teachers should identify pupils who they feel have reached the required standard for a Pen Licence. Pen Licences will then be awarded to pupils by a Senior Leader and presented in assembly on a Friday. Pupils will need to maintain a high standard of presentation to retain their licence. Pen Licences will be renewed each academic year. When a Pen Licence is awarded, a laminated certificate will be presented to the pupil.

Please note that it may be appropriate for a specific child to use a supportive pen although they do not hold a pen licence. This will be agreed by the SENDCO.

### **Assessment and Home Learning**

Children undertake regular, informal handwriting assessments across the year. Teachers track children's progress in handwriting in school. Children who are not making progress are offered interventions and home learning materials to help them.

### **Equality and SEND**

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.