



YCW Pudong Primary Handwriting Policy and Procedures

At YCW Pudong, we believe that the teaching of “handwriting fluency” (HWT 2013) is a skill worth learning and therefore it is a part of our English curriculum.

Rationale

- Research shows that handwriting is a foundational skill that can influence student’s reading, writing, language use, and critical thinking (Saperstein Associates 2012).
- When children practice printing by hand, their neural activity is far more enhanced and “adult-like” (Bounds 2010).
- Research states that learning how to write by hand is a necessary motor exercise. (Saperstein Associates 2012; James and Gauthier 2006; James 2012; Berninger 2012).
- Research has shown that joined handwriting is faster than printing, and greater writing speed allows students to write better by lessening the burden on working memory. It allows them to learn to complete tasks quickly, such as note taking, which they will need to be able to do as adults (Peeverly, 2006).

(Handwriting Without Tears, 2013)

Scope and Sequence for Handwriting

Year	Writing Expectation	Instruction Via	Time Allocation*
1	Printing	Handwriting Without Tears (HWT) Book 1 (Letters and Numbers for Me)	30-45 minutes per week
2	Printing	Handwriting Without Tears (HWT) Book 2 (My Printing Book)	30-45 minutes per week
3 (Semester 1)	Printing	Handwriting Without Tears (HWT) Book 3 (My Printing Book)	30-45 minutes per week
3 (Semester 2)	Basic Joined Nelson Script	Nelson Red Level Developing Skills and Nelson Workbooks 5 & 6	30-45 minutes per week
4 (Semester 1)	Joined Nelson Script	Nelson Developing Skills Yellow level	30-45 minutes per week
4 (Semester 2)	Joined Nelson Script	Nelson Developing Skills Book 1 (Purple)	30-45 minutes per week
5	Joined Nelson Script	Embedded Practice** (Nelson Developing Skills Books 2,3,4 in sequence as needed by individual students)	
6	Joined Nelson Script		

* Time Allocation refers to time spent teaching or completing independent practice using specifically the *Handwriting Without Tears* or *Nelson* resources.

The above sequence shows the expected progression for a student who has been at YCIS Pudong from Year 1 to Year 6. Due to the international and transient nature of our student population it is essential that we remain flexible in the style of joined handwriting that we allow students to use. It is not in the best interest of the student for us to force them to use a different style of joined writing if they arrive having already learned another.

Instruction

Handwriting (both printing and joining) should be taught explicitly, in short, frequent sessions. It should be modelled by the teacher then supervised.

Teachers need to model good handwriting at all times, e.g. when writing on the whiteboard and when marking books.

Handwriting Without Tears comprises the books, the online tools and the resources (e.g physical resources, the iPad app, accompanying songs). These should be used in conjunction with each other.

Reinforcement of correct handwriting technique should be cross-curricular and ongoing-for example, reminding students about posture, correcting pencil grip, or use of helping hand to hold the paper.

In Y1, the mainstream teacher is responsible for handwriting instruction for all students, including those in EAL. In Y2-Y6, the EAL teacher is responsible for handwriting instruction as part of the EAL classes and curriculum.

Differentiation

Students learn at different rates. Differentiation and grouping needs to take place. This may include using a previous year group's resources for lower achievers. Students in Years 3 and 4 who have consistently displayed fluent, joined handwriting should not be asked to do handwriting tasks. Independent writing would be an appropriate alternative activity for these students during allocated handwriting times.

Children who cannot consistently print using correct orientation, letter formation, size and spacing are not ready to move on to joined handwriting.

**For some students, embedded practice alone will not be sufficient, and these students will require supplementary handwriting practice and instruction. The above sequence of instruction, and Nelson books 2-4 may be used for this purpose. Year 5&6 teachers should make use of the previous year's resources as appropriate.

The expectation in Years 5&6 is that handwriting independent practice takes place at home, following teaching input at school, and is only for students who need remediation.

Assessment

The *Handwriting Without Tears* screener should be used with all students in Years 1,2 and 3, at the start of the academic year, and should inform instruction for students who give cause for concern. For these students, the screener should be repeated at mid-year, to ascertain progress and next steps and finally at the end of the year.

Overall assessment of handwriting, and Identification of students who need extra support needs to be formative and ongoing. In the first instance, this should take the form of in class support, followed by referrals to Learning Support via the agreed process.

For Years 5&6, where there is no independent practice specifically of handwriting, it would be appropriate to choose an activity once a week where handwriting is an assessed area of focus.

Moderation

Moderation, in the form of sharing handwriting books and sharing samples of handwriting from work in other subjects, needs to take place within the Year Level to ensure continuity and focus. This is the responsibility of the Year Level Leader.

Embedded Practice

Outside of handwriting lessons, teachers should require that the standard of handwriting matches the purpose of the task. This applies across the curriculum. For example, the standard required for note-taking, would be different from that required for a published piece. Teachers should explicitly share their expectations with the class. Moderation, as detailed above, should ensure consistency of standards across the Year Level.

