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Handwriting update

Having implemented a new handwriting scheme three years ago, the overall presentation of the children's work, across the school, has improved tremendously. Visitors always complement the high standard of presentation in the children's books. As a school, we wish to continue to improve.

Recently, the staff met to review the impact of our new style and the changes we made to our Master Scribe award system. Teachers shared a concern that some children become complacent having achieved Scribe or Master Scribe status. Consequently, their handwriting deteriorates and no longer matches the criteria for their level awarded. In order to address this, we have made a whole-school decision to have a 'pencil week' at the beginning of every new term. If in this week of pencil, the handwriting improves to match their level awarded, the children will automatically revert to pen or fountain pen the following week. However, for those children whose handwriting and presentation does not meet the standard, they will continue to write in pencil until their handwriting sufficiently improves. To kick this initiative off, we will have a 'pencil week' the first week back after February half term and again after the Easter holidays.

We recognise that children work very hard to attain these levels and may feel disappointed if they lose their pen or fountain pen for a short time. However, to maintain high presentation, we feel that this is one of those instances where we are not simply celebrating effort, but achievement that has to be proven and then sustained.

We do acknowledge that handwriting is challenging for some of our children. To support these children, identified by their teachers, we have invested in some pens that rub out. There are a few reasons why a teacher may recommend the use of these pens:

- to raise self-esteem;
- to enable some children's work to be legible;
- to give children the opportunity to write in pen before they leave us for secondary school.

We intend to continue to celebrate super handwriting and presentation through our awards for Apprentice Scribe, Scribe and Master Scribe and our 'Presentation of the Week' in Friday's Celebration assembly.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Pollock and Fiona Coking

