



# HANDWRITING POLICY



AIM: TO DEVELOP FLUENT, LEGIBLE AND EFFICIENT HANDWRITING

Handwriting, as in many other skills develops at different rates, so it is important to maintain handwriting sessions throughout the school consistently so that all staff have a clear understanding of the progression of skills and can remedy errors efficiently.

Here is an outline of our agreed policy:

***Teaching should be multi-sensory and meet the needs of the individual child.***

***Our handwriting should be taught as a print and the skills and movements should not change when the child is ready to join, it should be a matter of simple progression.***

***Handwriting "patter" can be used from reception onwards to help the correct letter formation.***

## Progression of Skills:

### At Stage 1 - Print:

- use a pencil
- hold in tripod grip
- spaces between words are accurate
- most letters formed and orientated correctly
- form recognisable letters with "kicks and flicks"
- uses spacebar on computer keyboard

Correct Letter Formation – Stage 1: children are taught to form letters correctly, paying attention to:

- the starting point for each letter,
- the direction of pencil movement,
- the shape and orientation of the letter
- the heights of the body of each letter
- the ascenders and descenders

### At Stage 2 – Pre-cursive:

- writing is legible
- upper and lower case letters are formed appropriately
- correct spacing within and between each word
- form and use 4 basic joins
- comfortable pencil grip
- spaces between words are accurate
- word process composition for display
- School Handwriting Pen Licence is awarded

Joining Letters Stage 2 – Pre-cursive: when children have mastered the correct formation of the shapes of individual letters, they can be introduced to joined handwriting

Joined handwriting is taught by joining vowel consonant digraphs – this also helps with the recall of spelling patterns.

Later they are taught the 4 basic handwriting joins:

- diagonal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. in
- diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. at
- horizontal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. on
- horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. the "ot" in "other"

### **At Stage 3 - Cursive:**

- all lower case letters are formed and joined
- legible "own style" has been developed
- word process composition for display
- School Cartridge Pen Licence is awarded

Joining Letters Stage 3 – Cursive: when children have mastered the correct formation of the initial join; they can be introduced to cursive handwriting (all lower case letters joined).

***\*Discourage children joining capital letters to lowercase.***

### **Points To Keep In Mind**

**Gross and Fine Motor Skills:** activities to develop gross and fine motor skills are essential to the development of good handwriting. Pattern sheets, doodle sheets and many other resources are available to support children developing their skills.

**Posture:** children should always be sat upright and correctly on their chair with their feet on the floor.

**Pencil Grip:** the "tripod" or "quadropod" pencil grips should be used. If children are finding this difficult, triangular pencils or pencil grippers can be used to support this.



**Tripod Grip**



**Quadropod Grip**



**Inclusion:**

In EYFS and Rainbow class, **WriteDance** is used to help children begin their mark making journey. Handwriting Books should be used during handwriting sessions. From Y1 upwards, children should all use the same handwriting books. (Differentiated handwriting sheets are available on the network for children having difficulty using their fine and gross motor skills.)

**Resources:**

Resources available to support the skills are available in the teacher's workroom. We follow Christopher Jarman's "Development of Handwriting Skills" to support pre-cursive and cursive development and there are Nelson Thorne publications to support this style as well.

**ICT:**

Three handwriting fonts are available to use in school which exemplify the 3 stages which handwriting should be taught.

## Stage 1 – Print

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

(Note the curly k – this might be one of the last letters addressed – some children might not achieve this but should progress to the next level, nevertheless.)

## Stage 2 – Pre-cursive

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

(Note the letters which do not yet join **to** another letter: b, g, j, p, q, s, x, y and z. Note the letters which do not join **from** another letter: c, h, q, r, t, y and z)

## Stage 3 – Cursive

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

(Note the letters can now be all joined together! F now has an ascender loop, g, j and y have descender loops!)

Handwriting

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n  
o p q r s t u v w x y z

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N  
O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Copy page 2

Stage 1

The family of letters which is formed from the first pattern. For the best results practise the letters the same size and shape as the line of pattern.



r n m h b p

r n m h b p

r n m h b p

r n m h b p

r n m h b p

r n m h b p

r n m h b p

Copy page 4

Stage 1

The family of letters which is formed from the second pattern. The basic 'c' shape, shown large on this page, should be traced several times and its particular oval form memorised. Before copying this page, pupils should have had several lessons on it from the blackboard or overhead projector.



c o a g d q e

c o a g d q e

c o a g d q e.

c o a g d q e

c o a g d q e

The family of letters which is formed from the third pattern. Remember that the descender of the y is only half the length of the body of the letter. Letter t is not as tall as the letter l, and the crosspiece of t is at the height of the small letters.



i u y l t u

i u y l t u

i u y l t u

i u y l t u

i u y l t u

i u y l t u

i u y l t u



## Copy page 8

## Stage 1

The family of letters which is formed from the fourth pattern. Note that the centre point of w is of equal height to the arms. Letter x may be formed with either stroke first, whichever is preferred.



Appendix 2 – Handwriting Paper – Use the thin lines to develop lower case bodies of script, allowing room to develop ascenders and descenders.

The image shows a handwriting practice sheet with 15 rows. Each row is defined by a solid top line, a solid bottom line, and a dotted midline. This layout is designed to help students practice the formation of lowercase letters, specifically focusing on the body of the script and the placement of ascenders and descenders.

## Appendix 3

### Potential Patter

YR "patter" to accompany correct letter formation

Curly "c" letters:

- c Curl around the caterpillar (Caterpillar)
- o All around the orange (Orange)
- a Round the apple, down the leaf (Apple)
- d Round his bottom, up his tall neck, down to his feet (Dinosaur)
- g Round her face, down her hair and give her a curl (Girl)
- q Round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair (Queen)
- s Slither down the snake (Snake)
  
- b Down the laces to the heel, round the boot (Boot)
- h Down the head to the hooves and over his back (Horse)
- l Down the long leg (Leg)
- k Down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg (Kangaroo)
- p Down the plait and over the pirate's face (Pirate)
- t Down the tower, across the tower (Tower)
  
- f Down the stem, and draw the leaves (Flower)
- j Down his body curl and dot (Jack in a box)
- i Down the body, dot for the head (Insect)
  
- m Maisie, mountain, mountain (Maisie and Mountains)
- n Down Nobby, over his net (Nobby and football net)
- r Down his back then curl over his arm (Robot)

u Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle (Upside down umbrella)

y Down a horn up a horn and under his head (Yak)

v Down a wing, up a wing (Vulture)

w Down, up, down, up (Worm)

x Down the arm and leg and repeat (Star Jump Exercise)

z Zig, zag, zig (Zip)

Appendix 4

Stage 2 Joins

Basic handwriting joins

There is no join after capital letters, or the following lower case letters: b, g, j, p, q, s, z

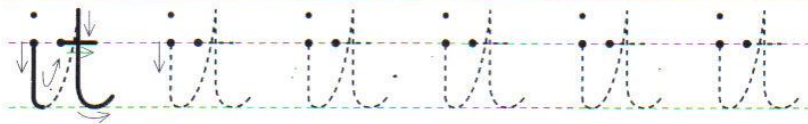
Horizontal join (from a letter which finishes at the top to a letter which starts at the top)



Diagonal join from a letter which finishes at the line to a letter which starts at the top



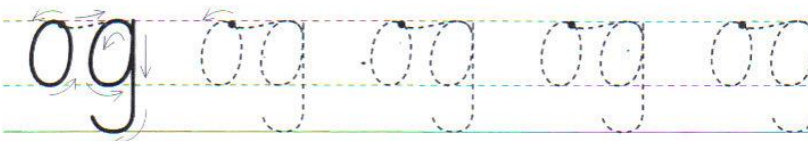
Diagonal join from a letter which finishes at the line to a letter with an ascender



Diagonal join from a letter which finishes at the top to a letter with an ascender



It also helps to teach separately horizontal and diagonal joins to "c" family letters, which require a reversal in the direction of movement:



## Appendix 5 – National Guidelines

### HOW DOES HANDWRITING FIT INTO THE NEW CURRICULUM?

The focus on handwriting in the new curriculum is much greater, highlighting its importance and making the connection between a child's handwriting and their composition and spelling ability. This we believe is a great step forward!

### FOUNDATION STAGE (4-5 YEARS OLD)

#### Early Learning Goal – Writing

Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

Typical behaviours that relate to handwriting for this learning goal:

- Uses some clearly identifiable letters to communicate meaning, representing some sounds correctly and in sequence
- Write own name and other things such as labels and captions
- Attempt to write short sentences in meaningful context

Core learning skills for handwriting:

- Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are formed correctly.

'Early years outcomes'; September 2013; Department of Education.

'Statutory framework for early years foundation stage' March 2014, effective September 2014; Department for Education.

### KEY STAGE 1 (5-7 YEARS OLD)

#### Statutory Requirements - Handwriting

Pupils should be taught to:

- sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- form capital letters
- form digits 0-9
- understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

#### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided.

Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.

## Year 2

### Statutory Requirements – Handwriting

Pupils should be taught to:

- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

## LOWER KS2 (YEAR 3 & 4)

### Statutory Requirements – Handwriting

Pupils should be taught to:

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should be joining handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

## UPPER KS2 (YEAR 5 & 6)

### Statutory Requirements – Handwriting and Presentation

Pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
  - Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
  - Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.

*'English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2 National curriculum in England'; September 2013' (updated for implementation September 2014); Department for Education.*