



Policy for HANDWRITING

November 2019



SCHOOL POLICY FOR HANDWRITING

School Aims:

1. All school staff, governors and parents work in partnership for the benefit of all pupils.
2. Teachers and support staff enable all pupils to achieve their full potential as independent life-long learners.
3. Our broad, balanced and enriched curriculum promotes challenge, enabling all pupils to make a positive contribution towards their own achievement.
4. We foster strong links with the community and encourage children to be responsible citizens, who are respectful and tolerant.
5. We encourage initiative within a happy, healthy and safe environment where all achievement is valued and celebrated.

Introduction

We believe all children should leave in Year 6 with the ability to write using their own style of fast, fluent, legible and sustainable handwriting, as well as other styles of writing for specific purposes. In addition to teaching handwriting during our regular handwriting lessons, we have high expectations that what is taught and practiced in handwriting lessons will be used in all writing activities. We believe that handwriting is integral to a child's personal development and know that children's engagement and self-esteem can be improved by their satisfaction and pride in good quality presentation.

Aims

Handwriting is a taught skill that develops at different rates for different children. All of the teachers in the school put a priority on teaching handwriting and have high expectations for handwriting across the curriculum. Our school uses *Penpals for Handwriting* to ensure that:

- The importance of handwriting is recognised and given appropriate time.
- The progression of handwriting is consistent across the school.
- Handwriting is acknowledged to be a whole body activity and emphasis is placed on correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting.
- Expectations of left-handed children are equal to those of right-handed children, and appropriate advice and resources are available to ensure that they learn to write with a comfortable, straight wrist.
- Handwriting is linked into grammar, punctuation and spelling in order to practise and contextualise all of the transcriptional and stylistic skills for writing.

- Children learn to self-assess their own writing and develop understanding and responsibility for improving it.
- Children learn to write in different styles for different purposes such as print for labelling a diagram, illustrated capitals letters for creating a poster, swift jottings for writing notes, making a 'best copy' for presentation and fast, fluent and legible writing across the curriculum.

Progression of skills

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 such as Dough Gym, Funky Fingers and Write Dance (EYFS Nursery and Reception).
- Correct letter formation is taught, practised, applied and consolidated (EYFS and Yr1).
- Joining is introduced only after correct letter formation is used automatically (Y1 (summer term) /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 (Y4).
- 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'.

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.

Handwriting is always introduced and practised in handwriting books and on lined paper so that children quickly learn about letter orientation including ascenders and descenders. As children's fine motor skills improve and their letter formation or joining becomes increasingly accurate, the width between the lines they write on gradually decreases.

Equality of opportunity

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.

Handwriting Font Model Used

Penpals for Handwriting. Font CD Rom available on all staff laptops and ipads.

Teaching

The basic letter shapes are introduced in this order (**Appendix 1**)

Techniques for teaching letter formation

- Adults model good handwriting all the time
- Demonstrate and talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Pupil forms letter in the air
- Finger trace over tactile letters
- Write over yellow letters or dotted letters
- Draw round templates
- Write in the sand with finger or stick
- Write with chalk on chalkboard
- Form letters with plasticine
- Finger trace

As motor skills increase the size of the writing will decrease. Pupils will start writing on plain paper, then as their writing improves lined paper is introduced. Lined handwriting books are introduced in the Summer term in Reception.

Staff should use the program ***Penpals for Handwriting*** to show examples of word processed script in the classroom.

The Handwriting alphabet is displayed in all classrooms and in KS2 an example of text showing the correct formation of handwriting.

The teacher should model the writing **with the pupil watching** for the pupil to see the correct formation. The use of Writing Repeater (ictgames.com/writingRepeater/index.html) is a useful tool to use in lessons to model letter formation continuously freeing the teacher to intervene and support individual pupils.

Ask the pupils to write the letter in the air, on the table, on their hand, on their partners back to develop the physical action of the letter.

The pupils are prepared for handwriting lessons through the introduction of a writing warm up which the teacher demonstrates and children copy to ensure the correct posture for writing.

- Pencil on paper, ready to write, pencil sharpened pointing towards you
- Move chair out a little from the table
- Hands together, elbows sticking out, count to five out loud with the class
- Clasp and pull, count to five again
- Hug yourself for the count of five
- Arms straight in the air for the count of five
- Move chair back in and place hands flat on the desk, raise shoulders for a count of five
- Pick (with the thumb and forefinger) and flick the writing implement. Teacher ensures all children have the correct pencil grip at this stage.

The pupils then write a line of letters and self-assess their handwriting by drawing a smiley face above the letter they think is their best one.

Phrasing for how to form each letter is detailed in the Penpals for Handwriting scheme.

Pencil grip

Children should write with a thick pencil in Nursery and Year R moving onto a thinner pencil. In Year 4 children receive their 'pen licence' certificate when they are ready to use a Handwriting Pen. They hold their writing implement using a tripod grip.

Young children usually develop their pencil grasp in the following sequence:

Palmar grasp: this is where the child's whole hand wraps around the pencil, so it's grasped in the palm of the hand. This usually develops between 12 and 18 months.

'Hand on top of the pencil' grasp: Here, the child begins to grip the pencil with their fingers, with their wrist turned so that their hand is on top and the palm pointing towards the paper. They start to control their movements from the elbow, rather than the shoulder, and begin to be able to copy simple shapes like lines and circles. Children usually reach this stage between two and three years of age.

Static tripod grasp: Somewhere around three and a half to four years, children start to hold their pencil with a rudimentary three-fingered grasp, using the thumb and index finger to pinch the pencil with the middle finger behind. The ring finger and little finger stay still, which limits their hand movement, but they are able to exert more control over their pencil, writing over dotted letter patterns and drawing simple people.

Dynamic tripod grasp: This is the ideal pencil grip for smooth, fluent and effortless handwriting, and develops around five years of age. The thumb and first two fingers hold the pencil, while the ring and little fingers curl into the palm, creating a circular grasp. The movement of the pencil is controlled by the fingers, rather than the wrist or elbow. Children are now able to practice and perfect their letter formations.

Pictures showing the correct pencil grip are displayed in all EYFS and KS1 classrooms.

Right handers

Hold the pencil/pen lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point. The paper should be placed to the right, slightly tilted to the left using the left hand to steady the paper.

Left handers

Hold the pencil/pen lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point. The paper should be placed to the left, slightly tilted to the right using the right hand to steady the paper. Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partner.

Intervention Strategies

For EYFS and KS1 pupils that struggle with their handwriting an intervention programme called '*Write from the Start*' by Ion Teodorescu and Lois Addy can be used. This consists of two books which contain the Teodorescu Perceptuo-Motor Programme, for developing the fine motor and perceptual skills for effective handwriting. It develops the muscles of the hand to help children gain the necessary control to produce letter forms alongside the perceptual skills required to orientate and organise letters and words. There are a number of carefully graded exercises and activities which develop hand-eye co-ordination, form constancy, spatial organisation, figure-ground discrimination, orientation and laterality.

For KS2 pupils '*Speed Up!*' by Lois Addy is a tried-and-tested programme designed specifically for children aged 8-13, whose handwriting is slow, illegible or lacking in fluency.

Other resources

- Penagain Pencil 'Y' shape
- Move easy pens
- Stabilo easy original rollerball
- Berol handwriting
- Pencil grip
- Writing slopes
- Easygraph pencils (triangular design non slip grip mould)
- Easy grip pencils
- Success with Scissors by Alison Harris and Janet Taylor

Handwriting in the Curriculum

The focus on handwriting in the curriculum highlights its importance and making the connection between a child's handwriting and their composition and spelling ability.

EYFS

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

Key Stage 1

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 practice 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 practice 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 practice 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 an 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’ (up-dated for implementation September 2014); Department for Education.

Timetabling and use of Penpals handwriting books

Nursery

Each term 5 mins x 5 times per week - Dough Gym and Funky Fingers

Continuous provision of gross motor activities and mark making.

Letters in penpals print taught in Phase 2 Letters and Sounds order.

Reception

Autumn Term 5 mins x 5 times per week for Dough Gym and Funky Fingers

Spring Term 5 mins x 5 times per week for Dough Gym and Funky Fingers

Summer Term Handwriting Book with dashed middle line spacing, introduction of letter families 10 minutes 5 times per week.

All terms continuous provision activities for fine motor skills

KS1

Year 1 Each term Handwriting taught 10 mins x3 times per week. Recorded in their Handwriting book following Penpals Book 1. Begin to join in summer term.

Ongoing continuous provision activities.

Year 2 Handwriting book following Penpals Book 2. Set 1 further challenge using Penpals Book 3 in English lessons for those children able to join their writing confidently.

Year 3

Weekly handwriting session following Penpals scheme recorded in little purple handwriting books.

Dictation weekly for spellings appropriate to needs of the children.

Years 4, 5 and 6

Dictation activity links handwriting and spelling. Recorded in their Spelling Journal x1 per week.

Assessment

Written work is marked in accordance to the DPS Feedback on Learning Policy. Where errors are made in the formation of letters and/or numbers in **any** piece of written work this is identified by the teacher to the pupil; the pupil then practises the correct formation of the letter/number or word following an example given by the teacher.

Where additional needs are identified by the teacher, intervention strategies are put in place. These are monitored by the class teacher and outlined on the Year group Provision Map. The Provision Map is reviewed at least termly by the Year group and Inclusion Manger and discussed at accountability meetings between the Year Leader and SMT.

Information for Parents/Carers

Parents are provided with 'Messages for Parents Penpals for Handwriting' information sheets at Parent Induction meetings in September (see Appendix 2). These are also available on the school website along with the Handwriting Policy.

Scope and sequence

Units introducing new letters or joins are flagged with coloured dots.

Foundation 1/3–5 years

Developing gross motor skills

- 1 Whole-body responses to the language of movement
- 2 Large movements with equipment
- 3 Large movements with malleable materials
- 4 Body responses to music

Developing fine motor skills

- 5 Hand and finger play
- 6 Making and modelling
- 7 Messy play
- 8 Links to art
- 9 Using one-handed tools and equipment
- 10 Hand responses to music

Developing patterns

- 11 Pattern-making
- 12 Investigating dots
- 13 Investigating straight lines and crosses
- 14 Investigating circles
- 15 Investigating curves, loops and waves
- 16 Investigating joined straight lines and angled patterns
- 17 Investigating eights and spirals

Foundation 2/Primary 1

Term 1

- 1 Dots
- 2 Straight lines and crosses
- 3 Circles
- 4 Waves
- 5 Loops and bridges
- 6 Joined straight lines
- 7 Angled patterns
- 8 Eights
- 9 Spirals
- 10 Left-to-right orientation
- 11 Mix of patterns
- 12 Review of patterns

Term 2

- 13 Introducing long-legged giraffe letters: *l*
- 14 Practising long-legged giraffe letters: *l, i*
- 15 Practising long-legged giraffe letters: *u, t*
- 16 Practising long-legged giraffe letters: *j, y*
- 17 Introducing one-armed robot letters: *l, i, t, u, j, y*
- 18 Practising one-armed robot letters: *r*
- 19 Practising one-armed robot letters: *b, n*
- 20 Practising one-armed robot letters: *h, m*
- 21 Practising one-armed robot letters: *k, p*
- 22 Practising all the one-armed robot letters: *r, b, n, h, m, k, p*

- 23 Practising all the long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters
- 24 Reviewing all the long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters

Term 3

- 25 Introducing curly caterpillar letters: *c*
- 26 Practising curly caterpillar letters: *a, d*
- 27 Practising curly caterpillar letters: *o, s*
- 28 Practising curly caterpillar letters: *g, q*
- 29 Practising curly caterpillar letters: *e, f*
- 30 Practising all the curly caterpillar letters: *c, a, d, o, s, g, q, e, f*
- 31 Practising all the curly caterpillar, long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters
- 32 Introducing zig-zag monster letters: *z*
- 33 Practising zig-zag monster letters: *v, w, x*
- 34 Practising all the zig-zag monster letters: *z, v, w, x*
- 35 Practising all the curly caterpillar and zig-zag monster letters
- 36 Reviewing all the curly caterpillar and zig-zag monster letters

Year 1/Primary 2

Term 1

- 1 Practising long-legged giraffe letters
- 2 Writing words with *ll*
- 3 Introducing capitals for long-legged giraffe letters
- 4 Practising one-armed robot letters
- 5 Practising long-legged giraffe letters and one-armed robot letters
- 6 Introducing capitals for one-armed robot letters
- 7 Practising curly caterpillar letters
- 8 Writing words with double *ff*
- 9 Writing words with double *ss*
- 10 Introducing capitals for curly caterpillar letters

Term 2

- 11 Practising long-legged giraffe letters, one-armed robot letters and curly caterpillar letters
- 12 Practising zig-zag monster letters
- 13 Writing words with double *zz*
- 14 Mixing all the letter families
- 15 Practising all the capital letters
- 16 Practising all the numbers 0–9
- 17 Writing words with *ck* and *qu*
- 18 Practising long vowel phonemes: *ai, igh, oo*
- 19 Practising vowels with adjacent consonants: *ee, oa, oo*
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Numbers 10–20: spacing
- 22 Practising *ch* unjoined
- 23 Introducing diagonal join to ascender: *ch*
- 24 Practising *ai* unjoined
- 25 Introducing diagonal join, no ascender: *ai*
- 26 Practising *wh* unjoined
- 27 Introducing horizontal join to ascender: *wh*
- 28 Practising *ow* unjoined
- 29 Introducing horizontal join, no ascender: *ow*
- 30 Assessment

Year 2/Primary 3

Term 1

- 1 Practising diagonal join to ascender: *th, ch*
- 2 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: *ai, ay*
- 3 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: *ir, or*
- 4 Practising horizontal join to ascender: *wh, sh*
- 5 Practising horizontal join, no ascender: *ow, ou*
- 6 Introducing diagonal join to *e*: *ie, ue*
- 7 Introducing horizontal join to *e*: *oe, ve*
- 8 Introducing *ee*
- 9 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: *le*
- 10 Writing numbers 1–100

Term 2

- 11 Introducing diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: *ea*
- 12 Practising diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: *igh*
- 13 Practising diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: *dg, ng*
- 14 Introducing horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: *oa, oa*
- 15 Practising horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: *wa, wo*
- 16 Introducing mixed joins for three letters: *oar, oar*
- 17 Practising mixed joins for three letters: *oar, oar*
- 18 Practising mixed joins for three letters: *ing*
- 19 Size and spacing
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Building on diagonal join to ascender: *ck, al, el, at, il, ill*
- 22 Building on diagonal join, no ascender: *ui, ey, aw, ur, ar, ip*
- 23 Building on horizontal join to ascender: *ak, at, ab, ad*
- 24 Building on horizontal join, no ascender: *oi, oy, om, op, ov*
- 25 Building on diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: *ed, ce, eg, ic, ad, ug, dd, ag*
- 26 Building on horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: *or, og, od, va, vo*
- 27 Introducing joins to *s*: *as, es, is, os, ws, ns, ds, ls, ts, ks*
- 28 Practising joining *ed* and *ing*
- 29 Assessment
- 30 Capitals

Appendix 1: KS2

Year 3/Primary 4

- Term 1**
- Practising joining through a word in stages: no ascenders or descenders
 - Practising joining through a word in stages: parallel ascenders
 - Introducing joining from s to ascender: *sh, sl, st, sk*
 - Introducing joining from s, no ascender: *sw, si, se, sm, sn, sp, su*
 - Introducing joining from s to an anticlockwise letter: *sa, sc, sd, sq, so, sq*
 - Introducing joining from r to an ascender: *rb, rh, rk, rl, rt*
 - Introducing joining from r, no ascender: *ri, ru, rm, rp*
 - Introducing joining from r to an anticlockwise letter: *ra, rd, rg, ro*
 - Introducing joining from r to e: *are, ore, ure, are, ire*
 - Introducing break letters: *g, j, y, f, b, p, x, z*
- Term 2**
- Introducing joining to *f, if, of, of*
 - Introducing joining from *f* to an ascender: *fl, ft*
 - Introducing joining from *f*, no ascender: *fe, fi, fu, fr, fy*
 - Introducing joining from *f* to an anticlockwise letter: *fo, fa*
 - Introducing *ff*
 - Introducing *rr*
 - Introducing *ss*
 - Introducing *qu*
 - Revising parallel ascenders and descenders
 - End-of-term check
- Term 3**
- Revising joins: letter spacing
 - Revising joins: spacing between words
 - Revising joins: consistency of size
 - Revising joins: fluency
 - Revising joins: parallel ascenders
 - Revising joins: parallel ascenders and descenders
 - Revising horizontal join from *r* to an anticlockwise letter: *rs*
 - Revising break letters
 - Assessment
 - Revising capital letters

Year 4/Primary 5

- Term 1**
- Introducing diagonal join from p and b to ascender: *ph, pl, bl*
 - Introducing diagonal join from p and b, no ascender: *bu, bi, be, pu, pa, pe*
 - Introducing diagonal join from p and b to an anticlockwise letter: *pa, po, pu, ba, bo, bs*
 - Revising parallel ascenders and descenders: *bb, pp*
 - Break letters: *x, z*
 - Spacing in common exception words
 - Consistent size of letters
 - Relative size of capitals
 - Speed and fluency
 - End-of-term check

Term 2

- Revising parallel ascenders
- Revising parallel ascenders and break letters
- Relative sizes of letters
- Proportion of letters
- Spacing between letters
- Spacing between words
- Writing at speed
- Improving fluency
- Speed and fluency
- End-of-term check

Term 3

- Consistency of size
- Proportion
- Spacing between letters and words
- Size, proportion and spacing
- Fluency: writing longer words
- Speed and fluency
- Revising break letters
- Print alphabet: presentation
- Assessment
- Capital letters: presentation

Year 5/Primary 6

- Term 1**
- Introducing sloped writing in letter families
nb, nd, ht, st
 - Practising sloped writing: diagonal join to ascender: *th, sh, kn, er, ic, et*
 - Practising sloped writing: diagonal join, no ascender: *ai, ay, letter: ac, sc, bo, da, ea, ho*
 - Practising sloped writing: diagonal join to an anticlockwise letter: *wh, ud, of, ot, of, ob*
 - Practising sloped writing: horizontal join, no ascender: *ai, ay, au, op, ve*
 - Practising sloped writing: horizontal join to an anticlockwise letter: *oa, oa, wa, wa, va, va*
 - Practising sloped writing: joining from *r*: *ra, re, ri, ro, ru*
 - Practising sloped writing: joining from *s*: *sh, su, sc, sl, su, sp*
 - End-of-term check
- Term 2**
- Practising sloped writing: proportion – joining from *f* to ascender: *ff, ft, fa, fe, fi, fu, fu*
 - Different styles for different purposes: writing a paragraph
 - Practising sloped writing: speed: *ff*
 - Practising sloped writing: speed and legibility: *rr*
 - Practising sloped writing: size, proportion and spacing: *ss*
 - Practising sloped writing: building speed: *qu*
 - Different styles for different purposes: decorative alphabets
 - Different styles for different purposes
 - End-of-term check

Term 3

- Sloped writing: proportion, joining p and b to ascenders: *ph, pl, bl*
- Handwriting for different purposes: joining from p and b, no ascender: *bu, bi, be, pu, pa, pe, pr*
- Practising sloped writing: parallel downstrokes: *pp, bb*
- Practising sloped writing: all double letters
- Practising sloped writing for speed: *tud, cid*
- Practising sloped writing for fluency
- Personal style
- Handwriting for different purposes: print alphabet
- Assessment
- Capitals

Year 6/Primary 7

Term 1

- Style for speed: crossbar join from *t*: *th, ti, tr, ta, tt*
- Style for speed: looping from *g*: *gl, gi, gr, ga, gg*
- Style for speed: looping from *j* and *y*: *jc, jo, jr, ya, yo*
- Style for speed: looping from *f*
- Style for speed: different joins to *s*
- Style for speed: looping from *b*
- Style for speed: joining from *v, w, x* and *z*
- Handwriting for different purposes: abbreviations
- Spacing between words
- End-of-term check

Term 2

- Improving handwriting: the importance of consistent sizing
- Improving handwriting: the importance of proportion
- Improving handwriting: the importance of spacing
- Improving handwriting: the importance of consistent sizing of parallel ascenders and descenders
- Improving handwriting: the importance of closed and open letters
- Improving handwriting: pen breaks in longer words
- Handwriting for different purposes: annotations
- Handwriting for different purposes
- Choice of handwriting tools
- End-of-term check

Term 3

- Handwriting for different purposes: fast-joined and print letters
- Handwriting for different purposes: note making
- Handwriting for different purposes: neat writing
- Handwriting for different purposes: print letters for personal details
- Different styles of writing
- Handwriting for different purposes: presentation
- Handwriting for different purposes: decorated capitals
- Handwriting for different purposes: layout
- Assessment
- Handwriting for different purposes: handwriting patterns

Appendix 2: Foundation Stage



At Foundation stage, your child will be focusing on developing the necessary fine and gross motor skills in readiness for handwriting. They will practise a range of patterns including dots, waves and zig zags to prepare them for letter formation.

Preparation for handwriting involves developing four key areas:

- 1. Gross motor control:**
The control and co-ordination of the big movements the body can make.
- 2. Fine motor control:**
Being able to fine-tune the movements of the arm, hand and fingers.
- 3. Visual control:**
Making sure hand and eye movements are working well together.
- 4. Spatial control:**
Helping children to be able to move themselves confidently in a space with an awareness of direction (left/right) and plane (horizontal/vertical) and eventually helping them to transfer that sense of space on to paper.

As part of developing confidence in these key areas children begin to explore patterns and basic letter shapes. We experiment with the following six basic patterns and their variations as they provide excellent preparation for more formal work on letter formation:

- Investigating dots.
- Investigating straight lines and crosses.
- Investigating circles.
- Investigating curves, loops and waves.
- Investigating joined straight lines and angled patterns.
- Investigating eights and spirals.

Here are some things you can do at home to develop these key areas:

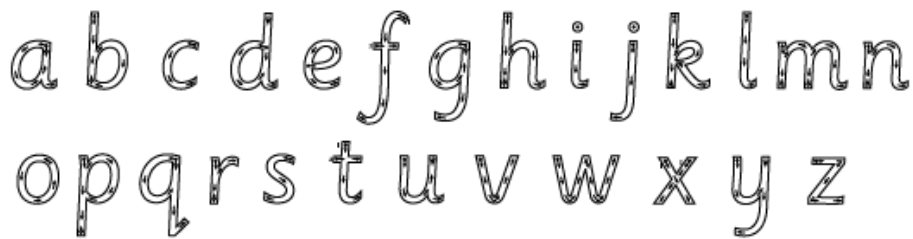
- Play with a ball, e.g. kick, catch, throw and bounce.
- Play with hoops, frisbees and stilts (the upside-down flowerpot kind).
- Encourage play on climbing frames, slides and swings in the park.
- Play with large scale building kits.
- Enjoy finger rhymes.
- Encourage your child to make things and model things (e.g. cutting, sticking, moulding, cooking, sewing and threading) using a range of materials (e.g. dough, Plasticine®, wood).
- Encourage your child to experiment with a range of tools and equipment (e.g. pens, pencils, crayons, felt tips, scissors, hole punches and tweezers).
- Share jigsaw puzzles and board games.
- Provide opportunities for painting, colouring and 'making marks' on different sizes of paper.
- Enjoy household tasks together (e.g. mixing ingredients with implements or hands, using a dustpan and brush, scooping compost into plant pots and digging in the garden).





During this year, correct letter formation should become an automatic habit. Don't encourage your child to write too small or too quickly. Trying to enforce small handwriting too soon can lead to a very cramped style, which is then difficult to make fluent. At the very end of this year, children will begin to join some pairs of letters within a word.

As a reminder, correct letter formation for lower-case letters is as follows. The arrows show the direction of your child's pencil:



Capital letters are formed as follows:



Letter families

Your child will still be thinking about the four letter families (similar letter shapes grouped together to help children form letters consistently).

Long-legged giraffe *l i t u j y* *ll* *L I T U J Y*

One-armed robot *r b n h m k p* *R B N H M K P*

Curly caterpillar *c a d o s g q e f* *ff ss* *C A D O S G Q E F*

Zig-zag monster *z v w x* *zz* *Z V W X*

Letter combinations *ck qu* *ai igh oo* *ee oa ow* *ch wh*

Joins

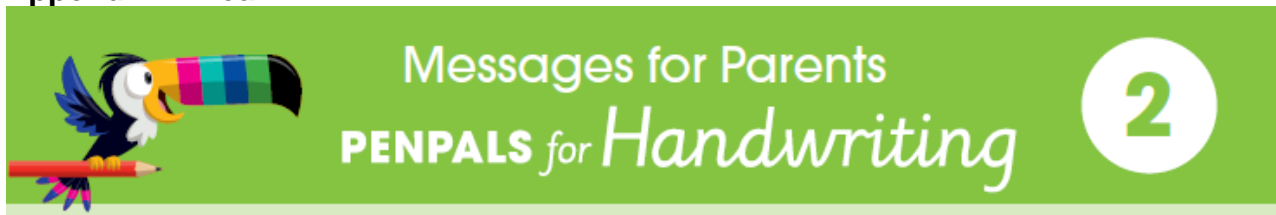
These four joins are introduced at the end of the year, so if your child is keen to start joining, then these are a good place to start.

Diagonal join to ascender *ch* Diagonal join, no ascender *ai*

Horizontal join to ascender *wh* Horizontal join, no ascender *ow*



Appendix 2: Year 2



During this school year, your child will learn all of the basic handwriting joins. However, if your child isn't confident forming all their letters yet, they should concentrate on this before they worry about joining. Your child will gradually be introduced to more pairs of letters that are joined in the same way. At first, they are only asked to copy joins that they have seen before, but gradually they are encouraged to explore and experiment joining more and more letters with the joins they know. This should be encouraged if they begin to naturally explore - there's no point in holding them back. For example, the movement for the join *wh* (i.e. horizontal join to ascender) is exactly the same as for joining *oh, ot, ot, ob* and so on - so your child may naturally begin to discover this.

Once a join has been introduced between pairs of letters (e.g. *wh*), your child will always be expected to copy the model showing those joined letter pairs whenever they write those letters. In this way, they will gradually be introduced to the idea of joining more than one pair of letters within a word.

In the final term of Year 2, your child will be introduced to other pairs of letters that are joined using the same joining strokes, if they have not already begun to identify and use them.

In this year your child may well sit a test or check. In England the SATS test for Y2 occurs in the Summer Term and handwriting is part of the English test. Although the formal English papers don't include a writing test, children's writing will be assessed by their teacher. Pupils will be asked to write a short piece and their teacher will look at their handwriting as part of this. They need to show legible writing including:

- Forming lower-case letters correctly, using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.
- Writing capital letters of the correct size and relationship to lower-case letters.
- Spacing their words correctly.
- To be awarded 'working towards' or 'working at expected' standards, pupils do not need to demonstrate joined up handwriting.
- To be awarded 'working at greater depth' at the end of key stage 1, pupils must demonstrate joined up handwriting, using the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in most of their writing.

| Join | Letters in this box | To letters in this box | Joins taught |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|---|
| Diagonal join to ascender | <i>a c e i l t</i> | <i>h k l t</i> | <i>ch, th, ck, al, el, at, il, ill, ok, ot, ob, ol</i> |
| Diagonal join, no ascender | <i>a c d e i k l n t u</i> | <i>e i n r y</i> | <i>ai, ay, ir, er, ie, ue, ee, le, ar, ur, in, ui, ey, aw, an, ip</i> |
| | | <i>a c d g s</i> (anticlockwise letters) | <i>ea, ig, dg, ng, ed, cc, eg, ic, ad, ug, dd, ag, as, es, os, ns, ds, is, ls, ts, ks</i> |
| Horizontal join, no ascender | <i>o v w</i> | <i>e i n p r u v w y</i> | <i>ow, ou, oe, ve, or, oi, oy, on, op, ov</i> |
| | | <i>a c d g o s</i> (anticlockwise letters) | <i>oo, oa, wa, wo, oc, og, od, va, vo</i> |
| Horizontal join, to ascender | <i>o w</i> | <i>h</i> | <i>wh, oh</i> |

Break letters

These letters do not join: *g j x y z*

We do not join from these letters yet: *b f p q s r*

Appendix 2: Year 3



Messages for Parents

PENPALS for Handwriting

3

During Years 3 and 4, your child will be introduced to the idea of joining most of the letters in a word and to trickier joins such as joining from *r*, *s* and *f*.

As the movement for joins becomes more familiar and fluent, the focus moves to develop a neat and even style by looking at size and proportion, parallel downwards strokes and spacing.

Joining letter sets for Year 3/Primary 4

Diagonal join to ascender (e.g. *at*)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

a b c d e h i k l m n p s t u

to letters in this box.

b f h k l t

Diagonal join, no ascender (e.g. *da*)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

a c d e h i k l m n q s t u

to letters in this box.

e i j m n p r u v w y

**a c d g o q s*

Horizontal join, no ascender (e.g. *wɔ*)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

f o r v w

to letters in this box.

e i j m n p r u v w y

**a c d g o q s*

Horizontal join to ascender (e.g. *sh*)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

f o r v w

to letters in this box.

b f h k l t

Break letters

These letters do not join.

g j x y z

These letters do not join yet.

b p

* anticlockwise letters

Appendix 2: Year 4



During Years 3 and 4, your child will be introduced to the idea of joining most of the letters in a word and to trickier joins such as joining from *r*, *s* and *f*.

As the movement for joins becomes more familiar and fluent, the focus moves to develop a neat and even style by looking at size and proportion, parallel downwards strokes and spacing.

Joining letter sets for Year 4/Primary 5

Diagonal join to ascender (e.g. *at*)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

a b c d e h i k l m n p s t u

to letters in this box.

b f h k l t

Diagonal join, no ascender (e.g. *da*)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

a c d e h i k l m n q s t u

to letters in this box.

e i j m n p r u v w y

** a c d g o q s*

Horizontal join, no ascender (e.g. *wɔ*)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

f o r v w

to letters in this box.

e i j m n p r u v w y

** a c d g o q s*

Horizontal join to ascender (e.g. *sh*)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

f o r v w

to letters in this box.

b f h k l t

Break letters

These letters do not join.

g j y

These letters do not join yet.

x z

* anticlockwise letters



This year we are working on a more sloped style to enable speedier writing. All of the letters and joins taught previously will be revisited to enable your child to practise the slope in familiar contexts. We will also focus on issues of proportion, size, legibility and different styles for different purposes.

For reference, here are the lower-case letters in the more sloped style:

*abcdefghijklmnopq
rstuvwxyz*

Capital letters are written as follows:

*ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO
PQRSTUVWXYZ*

Joining letter sets for Year 5/Primary 6

Diagonal join to ascender (e.g. at)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

a b c d e h i k l m n p s t u

to letters in this box.

b f h k l t

Diagonal join, no ascender (e.g. da)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

a c d e h i k l m n q s t u

to letters in this box.

e i j m n p r u v w y
** a c d g o q s*

Horizontal join, no ascender (e.g. wv)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

f o r v w

to letters in this box.

e i j m n p r u v w y
** a c d g o q s*

Horizontal join to ascender (e.g. sh)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

f o r v w

to letters in this box.

b f h k l t

Break letters

These letters do not join.

g j y

These letters do not join yet.

x z

* anticlockwise letters



Our emphasis this year is on developing a personal, fast, fluent and legible handwriting style. Children are given opportunities to practise a range of ways of joining, with the expectation that they will develop a style that 'works' for them. Additionally, children continue to focus on key issues for legibility and speed as well as styles and writing tools for different purposes.

At the end of this year there may well be a test before children begin secondary education. In England the SATs test for Y6 occurs in the Summer Term and handwriting is part of the English test. Although the formal English papers don't include a writing test, children's writing will be assessed by their teacher. Pupils will be asked to write a short piece and as part of this, their handwriting will be assessed. They should be:

- Producing legible joined handwriting.
- Maintaining legibility, fluency and speed in handwriting by choosing whether or not to join specific letters.

Joining letter sets for Y6/P7

Diagonal join to ascender (e.g. at)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

abcdefghijklmnopstu

to letters in this box.

bfhkl t

Diagonal join, no ascender (e.g. da)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

abcdefghijklmnopqstu

to letters in this box.

eijnpruvwy
**acdgoqs*

Horizontal join, no ascender (e.g. wo)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

foruv

to letters in this box.

eijnpruvwy
**acdgoqs*

Horizontal join to ascender (e.g. dh)

This join is used to join letters in this box ...

foruv

to letters in this box.

bfhkl t

Personal style

It is possible to experiment with new letter formations and joins to develop a personal style.

Break letters

Joins are not usually made from these letters, but you may wish to try.

g j y *g j y*

Joins are not usually made to or from these letters, but you may wish to try these style variations:

x z *x 3*

Alternative letter shapes and joins

lt ff m th va wa

* anticlockwise letters