

## Handwriting Policy

Our aim is for children to develop legible, fluent, efficient handwriting.

In handwriting, as in other skills, children will develop at different rates; for that reason, it is important that there is a consistent style of handwriting throughout the school, and that all staff consider themselves to be teachers of handwriting, with a clear understanding of the progression of skills, and of how to remedy errors. It is not sufficient to exhort children to improve their handwriting; the different elements need to be taught and practised. Early intervention is essential at every stage, to prevent the acquisition of bad habits which are difficult to correct.

The school handwriting style is based on "Handwriting for Windows" by Kath Balcombe, which is available for reference in each class base and downloaded onto all school computers. A reference sheet showing an alphabet of capital, lower case and joined letters is included in the Appendix and should be available to children in every classroom, and to parents. Children who join the school with established fluent joined handwriting will be allowed to continue with their current style of handwriting.

The following is a brief outline of our agreed policy:

### **Gross and fine motor skills**

Activities to develop gross and fine motor skills are essential to the development of good handwriting. Pattern sheets are included in the Appendix; many other materials and suggestions for activities are available in school.

### **Posture**

Children should be taught the importance of sitting upright and correctly on their chair, with their feet on the floor.

### **Pencil grip**

Children should use a tripod grip, and be given constant reminders until this is established. Triangular section pencils and shaped pencil holders are available in school for children who find them helpful.

### **Position of paper**

Left handed children should be encouraged to tilt their paper slightly to the right to improve their view of what they are writing, and to reduce smudging later on when they write in ink. Right handed children may find it helpful to tilt paper slightly to the left. Paper should be steadied with the free hand.

## **Paper**

All pupils work in an exercise book with lines at 8mm spacing to encourage the correct size and placing of letters on a line, although some children may have different needs. Where work is redrafted and presented for display, children may use plain paper and guidelines, with the same line spacing. A photocopiable master is included in the Appendix. For the teaching and practice of handwriting, it may sometimes be helpful to use "handwriting paper" to give further support for the relative heights of parts of the letters; photocopiable masters are included in the Appendix.

## **Correct letter formation**

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, and the relative heights of the body of each letter, and any ascender and descender. Teaching will be appropriate to the needs of the child. The "patter" used for developing writers/SEND pupils to accompany correct letter formation is included in the Appendix.

## **Joining letters**

Children should be introduced to joined handwriting as soon as they have mastered the shape of individual letters. They will begin by joining vowel and consonant digraphs, to facilitate the recall of spelling patterns. Later, the four basic handwriting joins will be taught systematically (see the outline in the Appendix) and then practised in regular short handwriting sessions, linked to spelling patterns.

## **Correcting mistakes**

Use of rubbers is to be discouraged except in the case of work in pencil for display. Otherwise, mistakes in pencil or ink should be crossed out using a single horizontal line, and the whole word rewritten.

## **Fonts**

Materials prepared in school for children will use Handwriting for Windows font where appropriate. This font may not be used for mathematical resources in Numeracy, Computing or numeracy-based curriculum work.

## **Writing implements, linked to assessment**

In Year 3 all pupils will write in pencil. In Year 4 when children have achieved legible joined handwriting in pencil, they will progress to a fibre tip "school handwriting pen", which will then be used for all written work in school. Children will use a LKS2 checklist (copy in the appendix) to assess and improve their own work, and achievement of this milestone will be celebrated. Further progress will be assessed using UKS2 criteria (copy in the appendix).

Pens will be provided by the school and children will not be allowed to provide their own writing implements from home unless they are able to make a convincing case of special need; for example parents of some left handed children may prefer to provide a more expensive specialist left handed pen if their child finds that helpful.

### **Assessment of handwriting**

The statutory expectations for pupils at KS2 and entry from KS1 are included in the Appendix.

Any pupil whose work does not evidence one, or more than one, of the statements relating to handwriting can be awarded the 'working towards the expected standard' or 'working at the expected standard', but cannot be awarded 'working at greater depth within the expected standard'.

To be awarded 'working at greater depth within the expected standard' at the end of KS2, pupils must meet all of the statements relating to handwriting in the preceding standards.

Pupils who have a physical disability that prevents them from being able to write as part of day-to-day classroom practice are exempt from having to meet the statements for handwriting for the 'working towards the expected standard', 'working at the expected standard', and 'working at greater depth within the expected standard'.

Copies of KS2 mark schemes for handwriting, and exemplar materials, are included in the Appendix.

### **Ink**

Black ink will be used throughout the school.

Further help and guidance can be sought from the Literacy Coordinator or from the SENDCo.

# Appendix

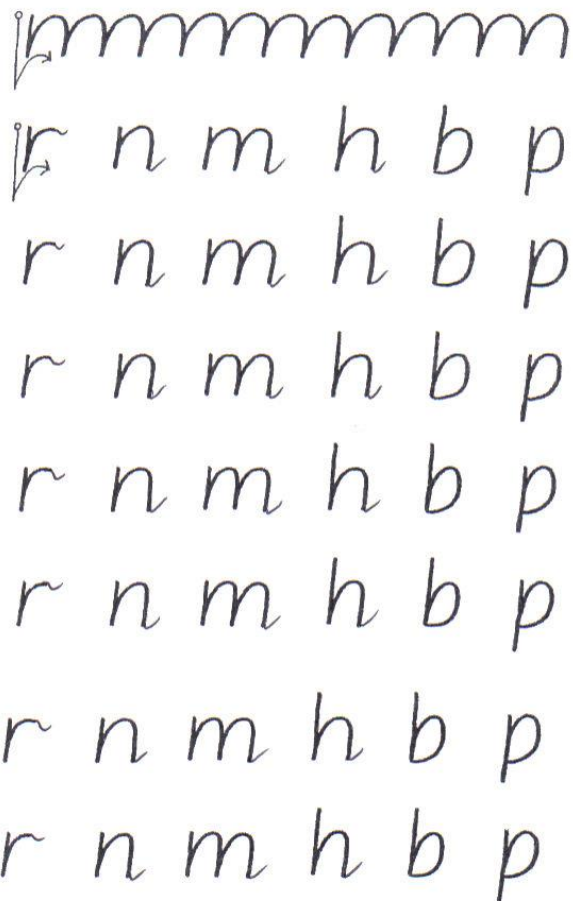
- 1 Alphabet of capital, lower case and joined letters
- 2 Pattern sheets for letter families
- 3 Guidelines 8mm
- 4 Handwriting paper
- 5 SEN "patter" for correct letter formation
- 6 Outline of the four basic joins
- 7 LKS2 checklist: "What makes handwriting good"
- 8 UKS2 progression for handwriting skills
- 9 National Curriculum requirements
- 10 Mark schemes for handwriting and examples from KS2

Handwriting  
Letter formation

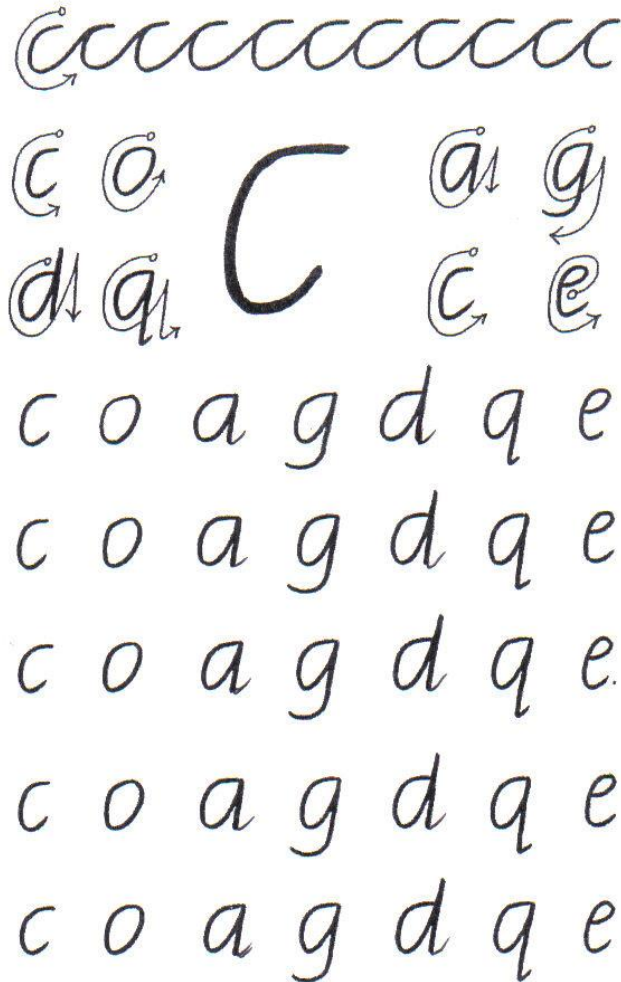
a b c d e f g h i j k  
l m n o p q r s t u  
v w x y z

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

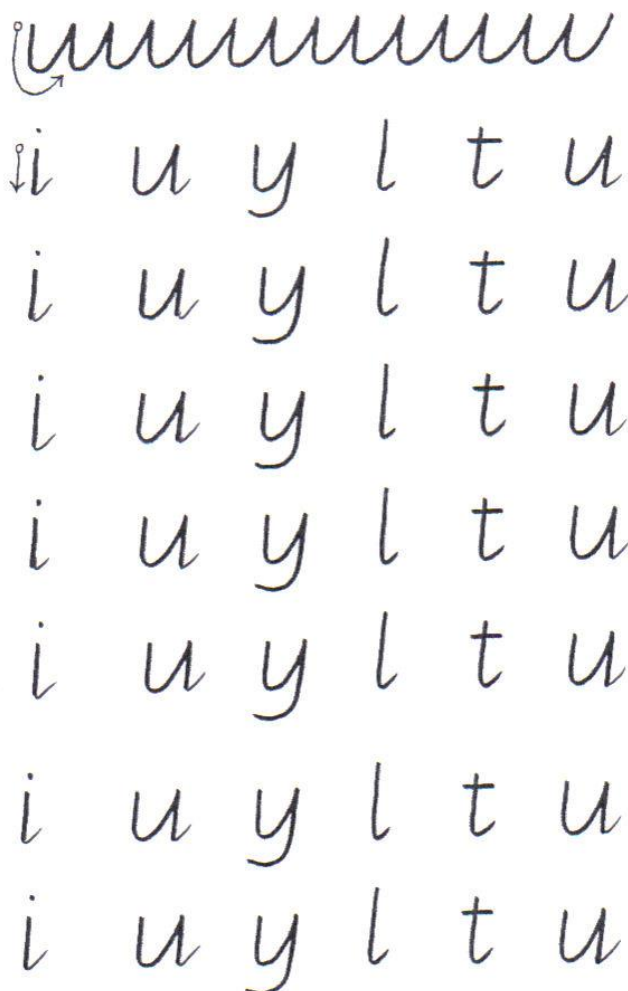
The family of letters which is formed from the first pattern. For the best results practise the letters the same size and shape as the line of pattern.



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.



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.





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.



This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



## Early writers intervention/SEND "patter" to accompany correct letter formation

Curly "c" letters:

c over the top and round  
o curly "c" all the way round  
a curly "c" up, down, flick  
d curly "c" all the way up, down, flick  
g curly "c" up, down, give it a tail  
q curly "c" up, down, kick  
s curly "c" and round the other way

b straight down, up to the middle, round to the bottom  
h straight down, up to the middle, over and flick  
l straight down, flick  
k straight down, up to the middle, loop and a kick  
p straight down, up to the top, round to the middle  
t down and round, take your pencil off, and across

f over the top, straight down, round the other way and across  
j straight down, round, give it a dot  
i short down, round, give it a dot

m down, up, over, up, over and flick  
n down over and flick  
r down, up and over

u down, up, down, flick  
y down, up, down, give it a tail

v down, up  
w down, up, down, up  
x across and across  
z straight, across, straight

## 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)

on on on on on

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

in in in in in

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

it it it it it it

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

ot ot ot ot ot ot

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

og og og og og

ad ad ad ad ad

# Good Handwriting

- is readable!
- has careful, clear letters.
  - sits on the line.
  - starts at the margin.
  - goes to the end of the line.
- has a finger space between each word.
- has the same letters the same height.
- is not too **big**, and not too small.
- is joined up!

\*\*\*

When your handwriting is good in pencil, you will be allowed to use a school handwriting pen.



# Good handwriting

Well done! Your handwriting is already good enough for you to be allowed to use a school handwriting pen.

## Even better handwriting

has all the letters the same regular size

has the ascenders and descenders clearly distinguished

has all the correct joins

is consistent.

\*\*\*

Your reward for this will be a school pen.



## Even better handwriting

Well done! Your handwriting is already good enough for you to be allowed to use a school pen.

## Beautiful handwriting

is fluent

has ascenders and descenders parallel to each other

has a personal style and is stunning to look at

gives displayed work the "wow" factor.

\*\*\*

Your reward for this will be the presentation of a special handwriting award in assembly and your work displayed.





# Handwriting and the National Curriculum

KS1 (entry to school)/Intervention/ SEND

## 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.
- 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)

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

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 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.

**Handwriting**

Make this judgement based on a few lines of writing chosen to represent the child's best performance, looking across both pieces.

- Band F1** ■ Writing is legible, letters are usually correctly formed and orientated. Generally, upper and lower case letters are not mixed within the word.

1 mark

- Band F2** ■ Letters correctly formed and orientated.

- Writing may be a controlled printed style, with letters generally neat and regular in size, ascenders and descenders usually distinguished. Alternatively, there may be evidence of the ability to join letters, although this detracts from the overall regularity of the handwriting.

2 marks

- Band F3** ■ Letters correctly formed and orientated.

- Handwriting is neat and regular in size, with ascenders and descenders usually distinguished.  
■ There is evidence of fluency and the ability to join letters.

3 marks

meeting and they ~~are~~ every Mondays  
assemblies. We have are fruits before  
playtime and some children  
will show you around the  
school so you get to know

2 marks

I hope you are starting to feel welcome in this  
class. There are five tables in this class. There are  
30 children and one teacher. We are going to  
be kind to you, be helpful, we are going to  
make you feel welcome and I will be lovely to

3 marks

I will be your friend. I will help you  
and I will show you where the toilet is.  
We have to be very kind or the other  
children will tell of you. If you <sup>are</sup> on the

3 marks

**SECTION F****HANDWRITING**

All children need to develop a serviceable handwriting style which is legible, clear and encourages the reader to engage with what has been written.

This assessment of handwriting is based on children's ability to write legibly and fluently in a sustained piece of writing.

Judgements will be made on the basis of the legibility and clarity of the handwriting throughout the longer piece, supported by a closer look at the size and position of words and letters.

**Band F1** The handwriting is legible and shows some features of regularity in size and spacing. However, overall the script is disjointed and uneven.

**1 mark**

**Band F2** Overall, the handwriting is regular with some flow and movement. Letters and words are usually appropriate in size and position but there is some variation.

**2 marks**

**Band F3** The handwriting is consistent and fluent with letters and words appropriately placed. The handwriting maintains a personal style to engage the reader.

**3 marks**

## Handwriting examples

### Example awarded 1 mark

The handwriting is legible and shows some features of regularity in size and spacing. However, overall the script is disjointed and uneven.

~~I~~<sup>for</sup> but think you will be waking  
up at a resnable time. Therefor  
having a P.E sechen will make you  
fit befor lesens an breakfast.

~~Then~~  
Then they will not be late  
and have les time to work.

~~Against~~  
~~When~~  
Havin just 6 lesens and Encloding  
breckfast and not seing yodur perants  
untill 1.30pm is aparling.

The perents will miss them having  
said that going to school with  
an empty stumude is not good  
and the perants if thay are  
still asleep will think thay have  
been kid naped by someone.

The children will fall asleep during  
lesans and breckfast.

I think we shod have the  
children's apinyn dont you?



Example awarded 2 marks

Overall, the handwriting is regular with some flow and movement. Letters and words are usually appropriate in size and position but there is some variation.

~~7:00am - To early to get to school even if you  
get to go home early. because you are still tired.~~ } <sup>wrong</sup> x

I am very unhappy because every morning we have to get to school at 7:00am it is way to early. and as for the sports I think that we should have them in the afternoon because if you have the sports in the afternoon because if you are doing all your lessons in the morning then in the afternoon you can go and run wild. At 1pm I think we should have dinner so that we don't starve and Sport or Homework Club you can have it at 2pm and school closes at 1:30pm still but it is like an after school club so you can do it if you want but if you don't want to you can go home. from 12:30pm to 1:00pm we have something called golden time which is where over the weeks if someone has been naughty then they lose a golden warning and then if you miss-behave again you will lose 5mins of your golden time. It keeps going up <sup>in 5 mins</sup> until it is 30 mins and then you get sent to the head teachers office and have to spend half an hour sitting silently and getting told of and

Example awarded 3 marks

The handwriting is consistent and fluent with letters and words appropriately placed.  
The handwriting maintains a personal style to engage the reader.

I believe the new school timetable has some great ideas but there are some worse sides of it that many pupils and teachers may disagree with. I am one of many people who dislike the idea of coming to school at 7:00 am, which would mean getting up very early. On the other hand I think having an exercise session in the morning would be a healthy way to start the day.

Also having breakfast at 8:00 am at school would result in pupils getting to know each other and make friends with one another. I'm not the only one who doesn't agree with having all lessons cramped together in the morning till gone midday, it would cause becoming pupils to become bored and not being able to produce the best of their abilities.

On the contrary it may refresh and relax themselves the children if they have a sport or homework club shortly after their long hard lessons.

But many children may state