

AREA OF LEARNING: English

Handwriting Curriculum Map

Aim

It is our aim to encourage the progression and development of each child's handwriting throughout the schools into a fluent, legible and individual style that can be adapted for a range of purposes and will support their spelling and composition.

Method

All children write in pencil; they may use pens only when 'publishing' independent writing. Handwriting is taught in discrete sessions focussing on letter formation, consistent size and shape of letters, as well as accurate joining. Letters, letter joins, words and sentences are always explicitly modelled. Teachers give specific advice for pencil control, grip and posture.

How to hold a pencil

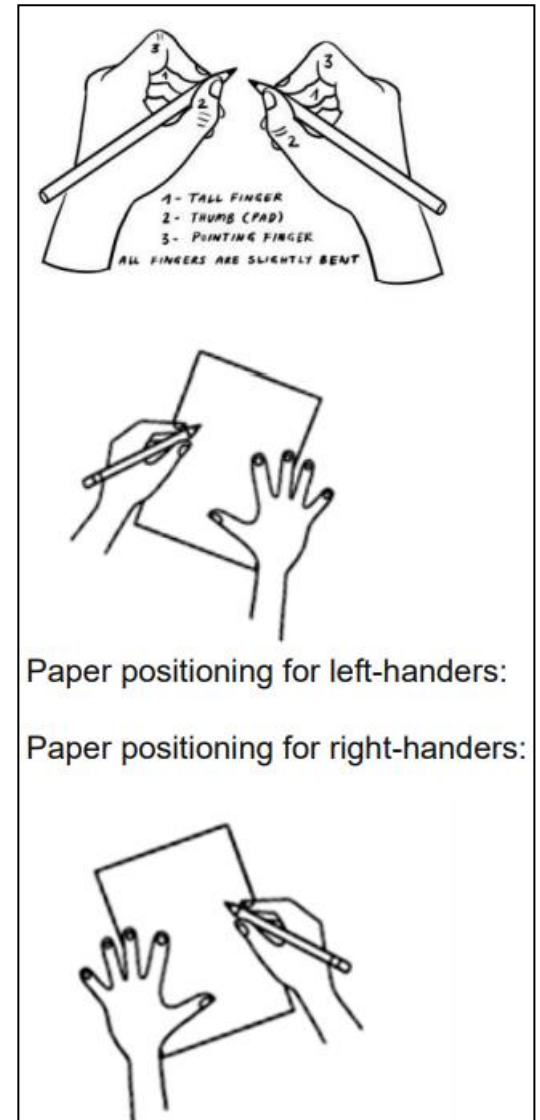
Teachers encourage children to maintain correct finger positioning. Children should pinch the pencil with the index ('pointing') finger and the thumb, about a finger space from the end (on the coloured part just above the sharpened point); and rest the middle finger underneath the pencil to support it. The way a child grips the pencil will affect the quality, speed and flow of the handwriting. The grip should be relaxed, not pressing too hard on the pencil or the paper.

Finger positioning using the tripod grip can be seen in the diagram.

How to sit

Teachers encourage children to sit comfortably by:

- explaining why sitting comfortably helps them to write easily
- reminding children with pupil-friendly prompts: feet on the floor; bottom to the back of the chair; pencil in one hand and the other hand on the paper
- showing children what 'poor' sitting looks like: leaning forward, close to the paper; resting their head in their hand or on the table; dangling their non-writing arm or hand instead of using it to steady the paper
- checking whether a pupil might have a condition that might mediate against their sitting comfortably, for example, if poor eyesight is causing them to peer closely at their writing



Paper positioning for left-handers:

Paper positioning for right-handers:

Teachers write in the handwriting that is expected from their children and this is applied in all writing and modelling.

Left-handed pupils and adaptations

Teachers identify all left-handed children in their class. Left-handed pupils need specific demonstration and adjustments, including by making sure they:

- have space to write
- sit to the left of any right-handed pupil to prevent their arms colliding
- slant their paper to the right
- use softer pencils that require less pressure
- grip the pencil at a slightly higher point so they can see around their fingers
- do not hold the pencil too tightly or press down too hard

Interventions and Additional Support

When required, children may receive additional interventions to ensure that they write in a legible style. Here, handwriting should be explicitly modelled in front of the child for them to practise the join. **Joined handwriting should only be taught when children are forming letters consistently and correctly.**

In EYFS and for children who require further support to develop their fine motor skills, the 'Pegs to Paper' scheme is used.

Teachers may give children triangular-grip pencils for support in their handwriting; these are to be used throughout all of the children's writing.

Assessment

Verbal feedback or written comments are used to help to improve children's handwriting throughout the day, with specific references as to what can be improved. Handwriting books can be used in lessons to establish that the same standard is expected in all of their books.

Further information can be found in the following documents:

RWI Capital Letters Guidance

RWI Digits Guidance

RWI Stage 3 Handwriting Guidance

Letter Guidance

Teachers are expected to use the following as an example of how to write each letter.

Welcome back to Letter Village. At
Stage 3, children learn the 'hill'
and 'bridge' joins.

Terminology

Capital and lowercase	Capital letters are used for proper nouns and I. Lowercase letters are used for all other letters.
Ascenders	Letters that go above the usual letter line
Descenders	Letters that go below the usual letter line
Letter bodies	The main body of letters, which are neither ascenders or descenders (e.g. the rounded parts of 'b', 'd' and 'a' and the arches of 'm' and 'n')

EYFS

Using the ReadWriteInc scheme, letter formation is taught five times a week, using phrases to help with the formation of each letter. Previously taught letter are practised at this time as well, and homework is given for the children to continue to practise this at home.

In addition to this, handwriting and fine-motor skills are a weekly focus, where small groups of children are given specific practise for handwriting.

Activities that focus on developing children's fine motor skills can be found throughout the continuous provision. Thicker pencils with grips specifically for right or left-handed children are used.

ELG: Fine Motor Skills	<p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing, using the tripod grip in almost all cases; • Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery; • Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.
ELG: Writing	<p>Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed; • Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters; • Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

KS1

In Year 1, teaching focuses on letter formation and size. In Year 2, when the children are ready, teaching focuses on joining letters, explicitly referring to the horizontal join (the 'bridge' join) and the diagonal join (the 'hill join').

Fully joined handwriting encourages:

- Correct letter formation
- Clear spacing
- Increased speed
- The development of a personal style.

Year 1

Children are taught using the Read Write Inc. handwriting scheme, focusing on letter formation. They 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.

The gross and fine motor skill/handwriting intervention Otto may be used.

Notes and guidance

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Children 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 children should receive specific teaching to meet their needs. **Narrower lines should only be introduced when children can write legibly and easily on wide-lined paper.**

Year 2

Children are taught using the Read Write Inc. handwriting scheme, focusing on Stage 2 (letter formation) and then Stage 3 when the majority of children are ready to join. Children 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 un-joined e.g. x
- write capital letters of the correct size and orientation in relationship to one another, and to lower case letters
- Write digits of the correct size and orientation in relationship to one another
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Stage 3 Letter Joins

Hill to jam letter

Hill to top sponge letter

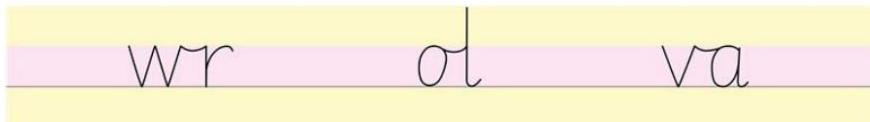
Hill to 'sister' letter



Bridge to jam letter

Bridge to top sponge letter

Bridge to 'sister' letter



Notes and guidance

Children 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. **Joined handwriting should not be taught until children can form unjoined letters correctly and consistently.**

KS2

Key Stage 2

In KS2, handwriting is expected to be joined at a quicker pace. Discrete handwriting sessions are supported through activities linked to spelling (Dictation). Sessions can recap letter joins between two letters, in a word or in a sentence.

Year 3 / 4

Children are taught using the Read Write Inc. handwriting scheme, focusing on Stage 3 and 4. Additional practice focusing on letter formation may also be required. Children 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 un-joined
- 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 the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch).

Notes and guidance

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

Year 4 /5

Children 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 Children 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 un-joined 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.