

Sherwood Primary School

Policy for Handwriting



March 2025

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Mission Statement

We are Sherwood. Each of us unique. As one family, we all thrive and excel together.

Sherwood Curriculum Rationale

We aim to provide a creative and challenging curriculum that inspires our children and prepares them for life in a culturally diverse and ever-changing world. High expectations, inclusive approaches and excellent teaching will form the basis of all our work. Our pupils will have the opportunity to explore, ask questions, discover and become resilient, independent learners. Our Curriculum will prepare our children for life-long learning.

Inspire • Explore • Achieve

Sherwood Values

Teaching and Learning at Sherwood Primary School is underpinned by six core values.

The 6 Sherwood Core-Values are:

- Honesty
- Perseverance
- Respect
- Adventurous
- Aspiration
- Independence

Alongside our core values, we also promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs across the curriculum.

Equality

At Sherwood, we believe that equality should permeate every aspect of School life and is the responsibility of every member of our School Community.

Every member of our School Community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. We are committed to ensuring equality of education and

opportunity for all pupils; irrespective of race, gender, gender variance, disability, belief, religion socio-economic background or sexual orientation.

It is our aim to understand and tackle the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in School. The Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It is our aim to celebrate and value the equal opportunity achievements and strengths of all members of our School Community.

Rationale

The ability to write fluently and legibly gives children a means to communicate their thoughts and ideas efficiently. Cursive handwriting helps children to learn and remember spelling patterns. Handwriting skills should be taught regularly and systematically.

Aims

As a school, our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will:

- Understand the importance of clear presentation in order to communicate meaning.
- Take pride in the presentation of work, developing handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting.
- Be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- Develop a fluent, comfortable, legible, joined handwriting style.
- Know when a joined or printed style is most appropriate.

Teaching and Learning

Children at Sherwood progress through five Learning and Progression Steps for handwriting (see Appendix 1). These Phases begin when the children are taught to first form letters during the Foundation Stage, using a pre-cursive style of handwriting following the school's handwriting script and using the *Red Rose Phonics Programme's Patter*, and to form numbers using *Numberblocks Number Formation Patter* (see Appendices 2, 3 and 4). When children can form letters consistently, they are then taught in a cursive style with ascenders and descenders. As they progress, they are taught how to join letters, which is practised and refined in Lower Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6, children should be able to maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed.

When writing, children are taught to sit comfortably at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly. They are taught to form lower case letters, capital letters

and numbers, of the correct size relative to one another. They are taught to use spacing between words that reflect the size of the letters. They learn to use diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. They learn to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed.

Writing displayed throughout the school includes pre-cursive letters, cursive writing and computer-generated writing. When marking or writing comments, members of staff use cursive handwriting as appropriate and model our School Handwriting Script (Appendix 2). Children are given experience of a variety of writing tools. Handwriting pens are used when the children are ready, from Year 4.

Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1

Learning begins in EYFS when the children are taught to form letters in the pre-cursive style and number formation. When they are developmentally ready in Key Stage 1, children are taught a cursive style and how to begin joining their letters. Handwriting is taught as a discrete subject weekly, practised within continuous provision and applied in phonics sessions. The rhymes to support letter formation (the 'patter') are taken from the *Red Rose Phonics Programme* (see Appendix 3) and to form number formation from *Numberblocks* (see Appendix 4).

The children are taught to:

- Develop their fine and gross motor skills with a range of multi-sensory activities
- Practise patterns and free flowing hand motions
- Write both lower case and upper-case letters
- Write from left to right and from top to bottom
- Start and finish letters correctly
- Be consistent with the size and shape of letters and the spacing of letters and words
- Sit letters on the line, and ensure that ascenders reach the appropriate height, and that descenders sit below the line
- Have the correct pencil grip
- Find a convenient position for their page
- Have the correct posture and position

BY THE END OF KEY STAGE ONE expectations are that children:

- Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another in most of their writing.
- Consistently form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- Use diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in their writing.
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters
- Use capital letters appropriately
- Consistently use spaces between words

Key Stage 2

During Key Stage 2, handwriting is practised and applied in independent writing and in spelling sessions. It is taught discretely as appropriate, with interventions used to support individual children. The children are taught to write with increasing legibility, consistency in size and proportion of letters, and to fluently use the correct handwriting joins. Children are encouraged to use a fluent and consistent joined style throughout their independent writing.

We aim for children to develop a clear and fluent style by the end of Key Stage 2 and that they are able to adapt their handwriting for the following different purposes:

- a neat, legible hand for finished, presented work.
- a faster script for notes.
- print for labelling maps or diagrams

BY THE END OF KEY STAGE TWO expectations are that children:

- Produce legible joined handwriting
- Maintain legibility, fluency and speed in handwriting.
- Choose appropriate standard of handwriting as appropriate to the task.
- Select appropriate writing instruments for either a given task or an independent one. e.g. colour-coded pens for a key.

Progression in Letter Formation

The letters of the alphabet are sorted into four main movement groups.

The four groups are:

Long ladder letters – i, j, l, t, u (v, w with rounded bases). Down and off in another direction, exemplified by the letter l.

One-armed robot letters – b, h, k, m, n, p, r. Down and retrace upwards, exemplified by the letter r. Numbers 2, 3, 5.

Curly caterpillar letters – c, a, d, e, g, o, q, f, s. Numbers 0, 6, 8, 9. Anti-clockwise round, exemplified by the letter c.

Zig-zag letters – v, w, x, z. Numbers 1, 4, 7.

Progression in Joining Letters

There are two basic joins. The diagonal join, eg. when joining 'at' and the horizontal join, eg. when joining 'op.'

Letters that come before a diagonal join are: a, b, c, d, e, h, i, k, l, m, n, p, s, t, u.

Letters that come before a horizontal join are: f, o, r, v, w

The two basic joins are taught whilst considering the letter they are joining to:

1. Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders. Eg. ai, ar, un
2. Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders. Eg. ou, vi, wi.
3. Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders. Eg. ab, ul, it.
4. Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders. Eg. ol, wh, ot.

These joins are all taught by the end of Year 1. From Year 2 onwards, it is expected that children should be applying these joins in their handwriting.

Handwriting across the Curriculum

It is important to ensure that appropriate attention to handwriting and presentation takes place in other areas of the Curriculum; other subjects can be used outside the explicit teaching of handwriting to give opportunities for reinforcing key knowledge, skills and understanding with regard to handwriting and presentation.

Equal Opportunities

All teaching and non-teaching staff at Sherwood Primary School are responsible for ensuring that all pupils, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnic origin and social circumstances have access to the whole curriculum and the opportunity to make the greatest progress possible in all areas of the curriculum while in our school. Attainment and achievement of all children will be regularly assessed, analysed and acted upon.

Left-handed pupils

Teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- o paper should be positioned to the left for right-handed pupils and to the right for left-handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case
- o pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision
- o pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side
- o left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space – avoiding elbows knocking
- o left-handed pupils should be encouraged to bring their hands down and round
- o extra practise with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically

Assessment

Assessment of Handwriting is carried out as part of the overall assessment of Writing, with all written work providing an opportunity for assessment. Teachers assess children's handwriting progression during lessons as they write, as well as once they have completed their writing. Criteria for assessment includes:

- Does the child adapt the correct posture?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movements when forming/joining?
- Does the child write fluently?
- Is the writing legible?
- Is the child's handwriting developing in-line with Key Stage expectations?

The assessment of children's handwriting ensures that progress is being made.

Special Educational Needs

Some pupils with Special Educational Needs and disabilities may need extra support, and alternative strategies for handwriting. This support will be assessed on an individual basis in order to help the child in the best way. Teachers liaise with the SENDCo to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Such support might include the use of: pencil and pen grips, writing slopes, specialist pencils and pens; specialist papers, the use of whiteboards and pens.

Other areas considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc. Outside agencies are utilised where appropriate. We believe it is important to prepare all children for adult life and that being able to write in a clear legible way is part of this, however, children may also need the use of technological devices for longer pieces of writing.

Roles and Priorities

The role of the Subject Leader for English is to coordinate the teaching of handwriting across all phases of the school. This is in order to secure a consistent approach across the school and to ensure progression in handwriting is outstanding.

Some key duties include:

- Monitoring of handwriting, and the application of handwriting, across the whole curriculum
- Helping identify and facilitate the professional development needs of staff
- Liaising with the school SENDCo to best support children with handwriting difficulties
- Organising, maintaining and cataloguing handwriting resources

- Keeping abreast of new initiatives in the teaching of handwriting

The Link English Governor will:

- Meet regularly with the English Lead to understand the strengths and areas for development, asking relevant questions and holding the school to account.
- Have a clear picture of how English, including handwriting, is delivered at Sherwood School and monitor how effective this system is.
- Ensure that CPD and resources are provided to staff for teaching Handwriting

Links with other Policies

These may be read in conjunction with this policy for further information.


- Curriculum Policies
- SEND
- Feedback and Marking
- Equal Opportunities

Approval

Approval date: March 2025

Review date: March 2028

Signed (Headteacher):



Signed (On behalf of the Governing Body):



Appendix 1

Sherwood Primary School Learning and Progression Steps in Handwriting



	LAP 1	LAP 2	LAP 3
Step 1 EYFS On Track	<p>Through Continuous Provision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop holding a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – use the tripod grip. Develop pressure skills. Begin to learn the Red Rose Patter encountered through Phonics sessions. 	<p>Through discreet handwriting teaching of Sherwood's pre-cursive script:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form lower case letters correctly – starting and finishing in the right place, going the right way round, correctly orientated. <p>Learn to form letters in handwriting families using the Red Rose Patter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Long ladders' Down and off in another direction – i, j, l, u. 'One-armed robots' Down and retrace upwards – b, h, k, m, n, p, r (numbers 2, 3, 5 follow a clockwise direction). 'Curly caterpillars' Anti-clockwise round – c, a, d, e, g, o, q, f, s (numbers 0, 6, 8, 9). 'Twisting letters' – v, w, x, y, z. 	<p>Through discreet handwriting teaching of Sherwood's pre-cursive script:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form letters with clear ascenders ('tall letters') and descenders ('tails'). Refine handwriting so that letters sit correctly on the line and 'tails' below the line. Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write capital letters and numbers of the correct size relative to one another and to lower case letters. Use spacing between words which reflects the size of the letters. Develop the use of 'lead ins' using the Red Rose Patter. 		
Phase 3 Year 2 On Track	<p>Through discreet handwriting teaching of Sherwood's cursive script: Refine the use of diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters without ascenders: e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ai, ar, un ou, vi, wi <p>Develop the use of diagonal joins to letters with ascenders: e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ab, ul, it <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use capital letters appropriately e.g. <i>not always writing A as a capital, not using capitals within words.</i> Orientate capital letters correctly. Use Handwriting books with red and blue guidelines. 	<p>Through discreet handwriting teaching of Sherwood's cursive script: Develop the use of horizontal joins to letters with ascenders: e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ol, wh, ot 	<p>Through discreet handwriting teaching of Sherwood's cursive script: Refine the use of diagonal and horizontal joins with and without ascenders.</p>
Phase 4	<p>Children will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write legibly. Form and use the correct handwriting joins with consistency and increasing fluency. Write with consistency in size and proportion of letters e.g. <i>by ensuring downward strokes are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.</i> Use a joined style throughout their independent writing. 		
Phase 5	<p>Children will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn to choose when it is appropriate to print (lower case and upper case) rather than to join writing e.g. <i>printing to label a scientific diagram; upper case for headings; printing to write an email address.</i> Write fluently with increasing speed, using a joined style as appropriate in their independent writing. Learn to choose the writing implement best suited for a task e.g. <i>pencil for quick notes, handwriting pen for letters, marker pens for posters.</i> 		



Cursive 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

Letter Pattern Groups

Long Ladder Letters - i j l t u y

















Curly Caterpillar Letters - a c d e f g o q s


One Arm Robot Letters - b h k m n p r

Monster Zig Zag Letters - v w x z


Appendix 3

Red Rose Letters & Sounds Patter


 <p>Lead in, round the anchor, down the rope and flick.</p>	 <p>Lead in, up the bat, down the bat, round the ball and flick.</p>	 <p>Lead in, curl round the cat.</p>	 <p>Lead in, back round the dog's body, up to his ears, down to his tail and flick.</p>
 <p>Lead in, across the shelf and over the elf.</p>	 <p>Lead in, round the flamingo, follow down the flamingo, loop and fly.</p>	 <p>Lead in, go round the gorilla, swing from the vine and loop.</p>	 <p>Lead in, up the hill, down the hill, over the hedge and flick.</p>
 <p>Lead in, up the insect, down the insect and flick. Don't forget his cap!</p>	 <p>Lead in, up the jetty, jump off the jetty and loop. Don't forget your cap!</p>	 <p>Lead in, up the koala, down the koala, round the arm, down the leg and flick.</p>	 <p>Lead in, up the long ladder, down the long ladder and flick.</p>
 <p>Lead in, up the mound, down the mound, over the moles and flick.</p>	 <p>Lead in, up the nose, down the nose, over the nostril and flick.</p>	 <p>Lead in, back around the octopus and flick.</p>	 <p>Lead in, up the path, down the path, up the path, round the pond.</p>




Lead in, quick! Back round the pond, down and splash.




Lead in, up to the cloud, rain down to the ground and over the rainbow.




Lead in, slip down the slide and flick.




Lead in, up the tree, down the tree and across the branch.




Lead in, up for breath, down under the sea, up for breath, down again and flick.




Lead in, down the vase, up the vase and flick.



Lead in, down the wave and up the wave. Down the wave, up the wave and flick.



Lead in, cross the box, cross the box and flick.



Lead in, up the yo-yo, down the yo-yo, up the yo-yo, swing and loop.




Lead in, zip, zap, zoom!

Appendix 3

Numberblocks Number Formation Pattern

1




One straight line from top to bottom

2




Round and down then across the base

3




Go around in a curve then around again

4



Draw down and across then cut the line

5



Draw down and around then across the top

6



Start with a curve then go around in a loop

7




One flat line and one line down

8




Start with an s then loop back around

9



Start with a loop then a line straight down

0



Round in a loop like an empty hoop