

Abingdon Primary School



Handwriting Policy

Updated by: Alice Riley

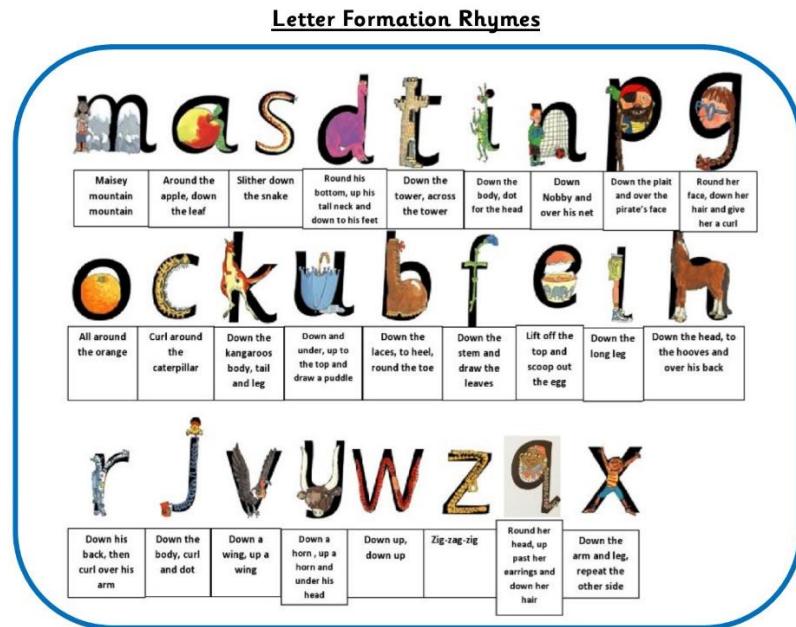
Date: January 2026

Review date: January 2028

Intent

At Abingdon Primary School, we follow the Martin Harvey method for teaching handwriting. We use a *consistent* approach of teaching handwriting throughout the school using Martin Harvey's guidelines and clear terminology.

Children begin their handwriting journey in Reception, where they are taught to form letters correctly through the *Read, Write Inc* scheme. We use specific mnemonics to help children remember the correct formation.

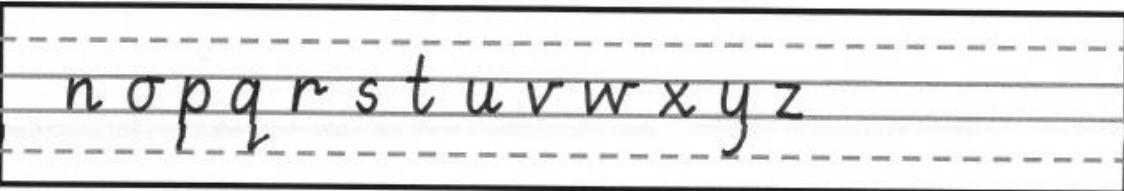
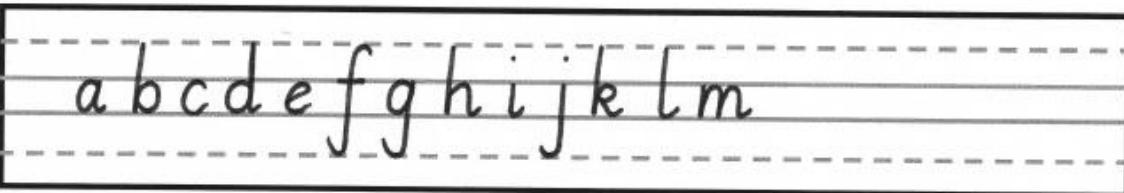


*Please note – When teaching children to form the letter f, we slightly adapt the mnemonic to “*down the stem to the roots and draw the leaves*” to create the letter in the formation of f.

Building fine and gross motor skills

Throughout Reception, children have regular opportunities to develop their fine and gross motor skills through focus activities and through accessing the continuous provision. This includes but is not limited to: playdough, threading, tweezers, using sponges in the outdoor area to name a few. At Abingdon, we recognise the importance that children need to be *physically* ready to begin their writing journey.

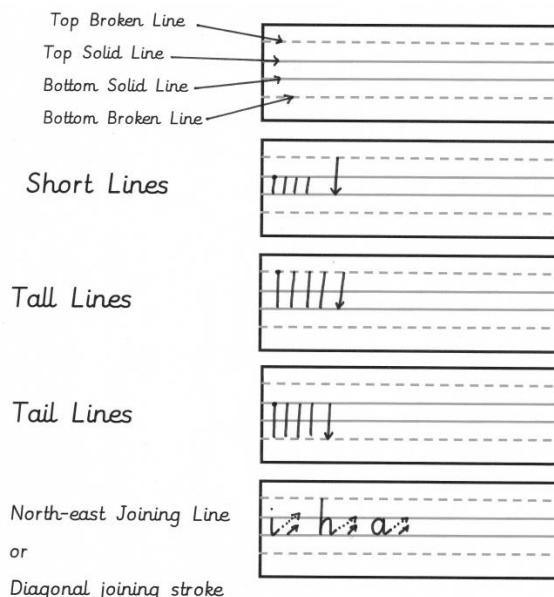
In line with Martin Harvey's [Achieving Excellence in Handwriting Guide \(see appendix 1.1\)](#), all letters should match the agreed formation when being modelled to children.

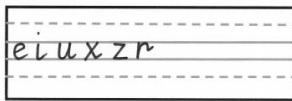
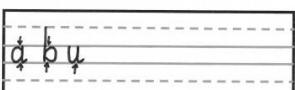
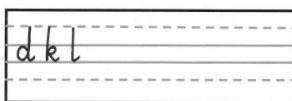
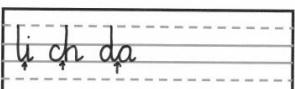
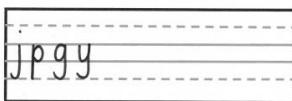
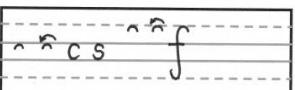
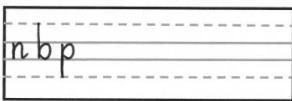
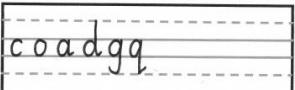
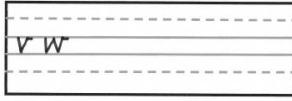
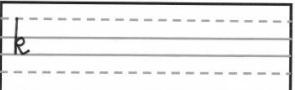
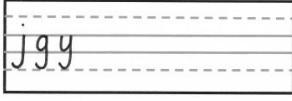


- Capital letter formation and number formation needs to be taught.
- Capital letters need to be tall and are never joined.
- Before any letters are joined, children must be secure in their formation of letters and writing should be legible across several pieces of work.
- Once children are accessing cursive writing, it is important to note that we do not join from z, b, p, s, y, g, j and q but we can join to these letters.
- There is no looping on tail letters.
- If a member of staff is unsure of how to form a letter or join, they should seek advice from the English(writing) Lead (Alice Riley).

Handwriting Displays

The approach progresses through the school with an emphasis being placed on the use of **consistent language**. Specific handwriting displays in each classroom will reflect the consistency of language and approach used throughout school.



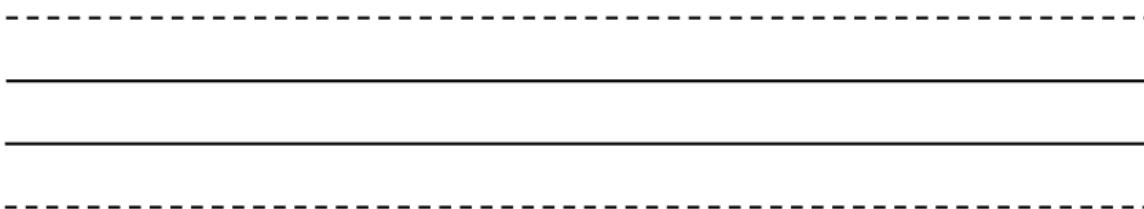
Narrow bridges		Small letters	
Letters with triangles		Tall letters	
Joins with triangles		Tail letters	
Coat hanger hooks		Narrow letters	
Egg shapes in the coat hanger letters		Letters with sharp points	
Shoe lace k		Narrow curved tails	

At Abingdon, we use the **Twinkl** font to model the handwriting style in printed form (EYFS-KS1) and the **Twinkl Cursive Unlooped** font to model the handwriting style in joined form (KS2). This is for creating digital resources only and handwriting should be modelled regularly for children through discrete teaching by each class teacher.

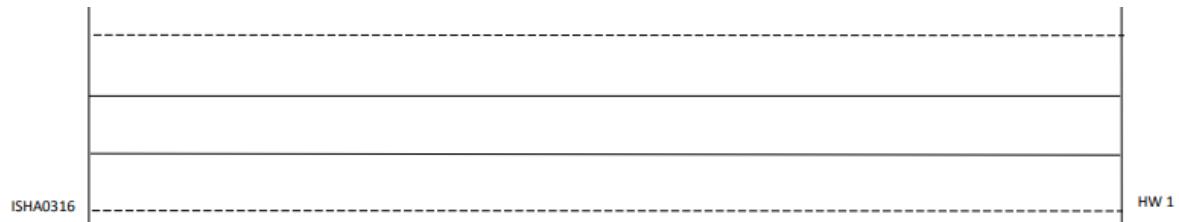
Handwriting lines

There is a clear progression of the handwriting lines that we use at Abingdon.

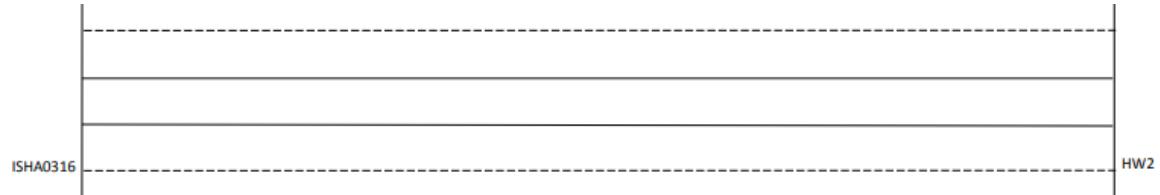
- Reception ([PDF- see appendix 2.1](#))



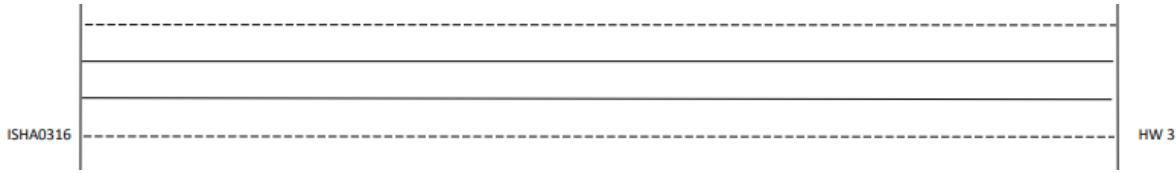
- Year 1 ([PDF- see appendix 2.2](#))



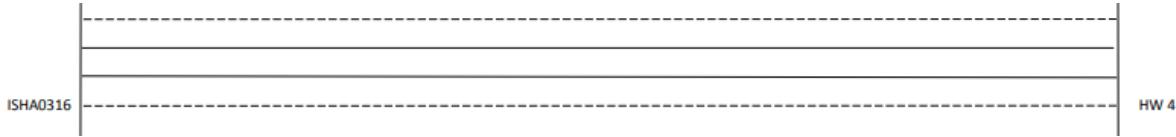
- Year 2 ([PDF- see appendix 2.2](#))



- *Year 3 and 4* ([PDF- see appendix 2.2](#))



- *Year 5 and 6* ([PDF- see appendix 2.2](#))



Implementation

Handwriting is taught daily for a minimum of 10 minutes; however, the practice is applied to all writing across the curriculum.

Modelling

All classes need to have handwriting modelled to them, during the handwriting session and during each lesson as much as possible. Classes now have visualisers. Handwriting sessions should be modelled where possible under the visualiser to give a more accurate model.

Handwriting Tools

In order to produce excellent handwriting, we believe that children must have good quality tools.

Pencils

Children will use HB pencils at Abingdon until they achieve their pen licence. Pencils must be kept regularly sharpened and must be an appropriate size for the child's hand. Children are given responsibility for keeping their pencils sharp, but staff will monitor this.

Pens

Pens should be used for written work from Year 3 onwards at the point where the teacher judges the child's handwriting to be sufficiently neat and fluent. At this point a pen licence will be awarded and the child will be given a pen with their name on.

The children at Abingdon use black ink pens for their writing. (green pen for editing)

Non-negotiables for developing excellent handwriting

At Abingdon, we teach the following habits for developing excellent handwriting:

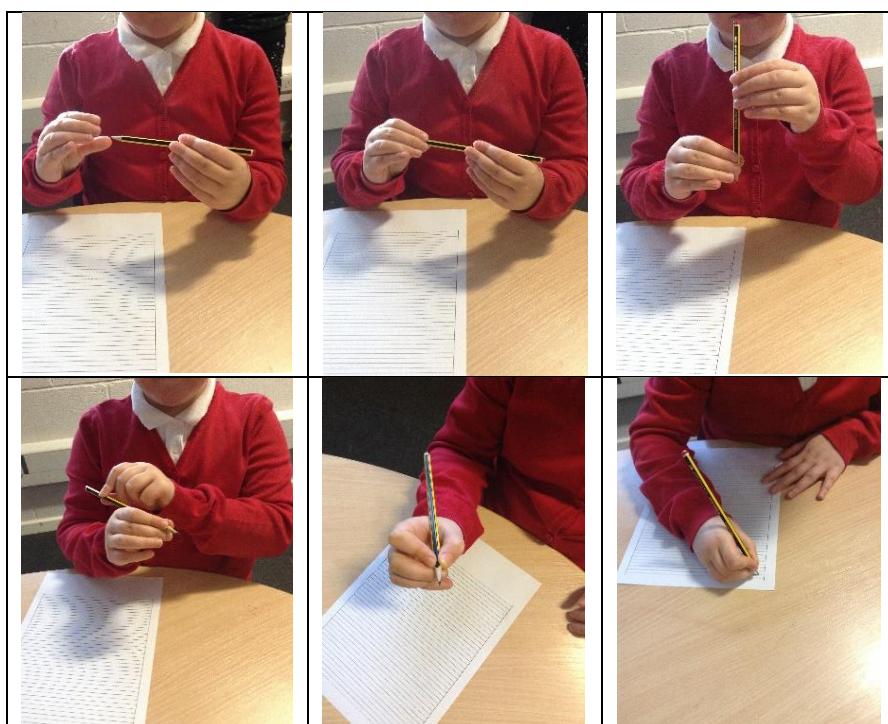
1. **Two hands.** Insist on children always using two hands when writing. *One hand to hold the paper and one hand to write with.*
2. **Six feet.** Children must always keep six feet on the floor. *Their own two feet and the chair's four feet.* This means that the child does not kneel or sit cross legged on the chair. Neither do they rock backwards or

forwards on the chair.

3. **BBC.** Ensure that children always sit in the BBC position – *Bottom Back in Chair*. This means that they never sit with the chair sticking out and their bottom on the front edge of the chair.
4. **TNT.** *Tummy Near Table.* This ensures that the child is sitting with the body close to their work, instead of having to stretch forward to write.
5. **Paper position.** *The paper should be upright when the child is writing or at an angle not greater than 45 degrees.* When children turn their paper to an angle greater than this, it is often because the pencil is being held with the thumb in a position which blocks the child's view of the pencil point.

Pencil hold

At Abingdon, children are explicitly taught how to hold their pencil correctly. We teach children to pick their pencil up with their non-dominant hand. They are then asked to put the pencil into their writing hand and put the pencil “*in its bed*”.



Good posture and correct seating position are vital components of developing good handwriting at Abingdon. The habits above must *not* be seen just as *good habits for handwriting*. They must be insisted upon in all subject areas, throughout the school day, otherwise their impact is reduced. It has to be seen as the correct way, indeed the only way, rather than what is expected merely in handwriting lessons.

Impact

With consistent handwriting across the school, children of all abilities will be able to present their work to the highest possible standard increasing their confidence and self-esteem. There is an importance in the adults being the role models for this and it feeds into our Abingdon Family ethos. The children at Abingdon will have a clear sense of pride about their work, which will encourage them to go further with their learning. This, in turn, has an effect on increased progress and attainment across the school.

Publishing books

From Year 1 up to Year 6, children will use *Publishing books* to display their best/final piece of writing. This is to give children a sense of purpose for their writing and to promote a sense of being a *real author*. Each piece of work will be built on in English lessons for at least 2 weeks. These books will move up with the children to their new class each academic year. Each pupil will produce a *Handwriting sheet* that will be stuck in before their first piece of work for that academic year. This will show clear progression and the standard at which the pupil is capable of at the beginning of a new academic year.

Monitoring of Handwriting Policy

The Senior Leadership Team will monitor children's books regularly to ensure this policy is being implemented consistently. This ensures that the policy leads to good practice in facilitating effective feedback, learning and teaching.

Teachers will moderate handwriting and presentation across their classes regularly in a variety of books during their weekly key stage meetings.

Handwriting and presentation will also be part of subject leader book scrutiny feedback.

Linked policies

Presentation policy

Marking policy

English policy

Behaviour and Conduct Policy

Teaching and Learning Policy

Appendices

[1.1 Achieving Excellence in Handwriting](#)

[2.1 Reception Handwriting lines](#)

[2.2 Year 1-6 Handwriting lines](#)