STANLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

HANDWRITING POLICY

Approved by:	**Headteacher**	**Date: February 2026**
Last reviewed on:	**February 2026**	
Next review due by:	**February 2029**	

Whole School Handwriting and Presentation Policy

Vision & Purpose

At Stanley Primary School, we believe that fluent, legible handwriting is a vital tool for effective communication. The aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils develop confident, accurate and fluent handwriting through a consistent whole-school approach based on the *Read Write Inc. Handwriting* programme.

We recognise that:

- Secure handwriting supports confidence and motivation in writing.
- Fluent handwriting frees cognitive load, enabling children to focus on composition, spelling and vocabulary.
- Clear expectations and consistent teaching from EYFS to KS2 ensure equity for all learners.

This policy applies to all teaching staff, support staff, and learners across the school.

Pedagogical Principles

The RWI handwriting approach is rooted in the following key principles:

- **Visualise to Memorise -** Children learn letter formation through *picture hooks*, mnemonics and consistent routines. Copying letterforms is *never* used — children visualise first, then write.
- **Daily Practice -** Handwriting is taught every day:
    - In Reception, letter formation is taught within RWI phonics and daily short sessions.
    - From Years 1-4, handwriting is taught in dedicated daily 10–15 minute lessons.
    - In Years 5-6, handwriting in consolidated ensuring handwriting is applied across all subjects. Daily targeted intervention is provided for those needing further support.
- **Consistency**

  All staff model:
    - The same posture expectations (two feet on the floor, back to the back of the chair, chair tucked in)
    - The same pencil grip guidance
    - The same letter formations
    - The same terminology (e.g., “ready writing position”)

- **High Standards for All**

  All children are supported to achieve fluent, legible writing. Staff ensure scaffolds and adaptations so every learner can succeed, including left-handed pupils and those with fine-motor needs.

Teaching Progression & Expectations

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – Stage 1 - Begins alongside teaching of Set 1 sounds.

Children are taught:

- Correct formation of all letters using RWI handwriting phrases.
- Letters grouped into formation families (e.g., a d g o c q; h n m r, etc.).
- To sit in the "ready writing position":
    - Two feet on the floor
    - Back to the back of the chair
    - Chair tucked in
    - Tripod pencil grip
    - Spare hand steadying paper
- To write on *unlined* paper to focus solely on formation.
- To visualise letters before writing — **never** copy from the board.

Year 1 & Early Year 2 – Stage 2 - Begins when children can securely form all letters correctly.

Children learn:

- A mature style of writing that will flow easily into joined writing.
- To use line awareness through the "sponge cake" model (top sponge, jam, bottom sponge).
- New Stage 2 picture hooks supporting letter formation groups.
- To self-assess and partner-assess letters ("two best bits, one to fix").
- To begin writing small words using taught letter groups.

Children only begin using their new handwriting style in other subjects **after they have been taught all letters** and can apply them confidently.

Year 2–Year 3 – Stage 3

Introduction to joined handwriting.

Children learn:

- Two basic joins: the bridge join and the hill join, including variations.
- To maintain consistent letter height, spacing, and ascender/descender control.
- To use joins when writing words and sentences.
- To develop fluency while maintaining clarity.

Practice remains daily and consistent, following RWI join teaching routines.-teaching routines.

Year 3–Year 4 – Stage 4

Children develop:

- A mature, fluent, speedy handwriting style.
- Clear personal handwriting that maintains all expectations for legibility.
- Consistent sizing, spacing, and alignment.
- Efficient joins and reduced writing fatigue.

By the end of Year 4, pupils should meet national expectations for fluency, legibility, and sustained writing.

Key Stage 2 (Years 5–6)

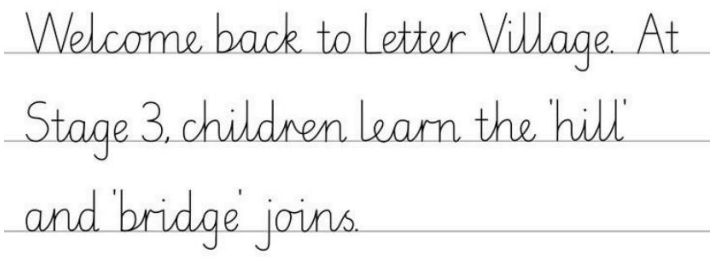
Although all formal handwriting teaching concludes by Year 4, teachers continue to:

- Reinforce the school's handwriting expectations.
- Provide targeted intervention for those needing further support.
- Ensure handwriting is applied across all subjects.

Expectations for Presentation

Across the school:

- Books are kept neat, without doodles or graffiti.
- Errors are crossed out with a single straight line.
- Writing is completed in pencil until pupils earn pen licenses (**stage 3** when children write with consistent sizing – including capital letters, spacing and alignment, clear ascenders and descenders, correct letter formation, correct bridge and hill joins, writing neatly sitting on the line)
  Example:



Inclusion & Support

Left-Handed Pupils

Teachers ensure:

- Left-handed children sit on the left side of right-handed partners.
- Paper is slanted appropriately.
- Pencil is held slightly higher for improved visibility.
- Extra modelling is provided as needed.

SEND & Motor-Skill Support

Adaptations may include:

- Pencil grips
- Sensory writing
- Larger lined books
- Fine-motor interventions (e.g., finger gym, pegs to paper, write from the start booklets)
- Additional small-group handwriting practice
- Slower pacing through letter groups

All adaptations maintain the RWI formation principles.

Assessment & Monitoring

Assessment

Ongoing through:

- Daily partner checks
- Teacher observation
- " Two best bits and one to fix" discussions
- Handwriting in independent writing across the curriculum

Whole-School Monitoring

Senior leaders and subject leads will:

- Conduct book looks
- Drop into handwriting lessons
- Provide coaching to staff

Environment & Resources

Teachers ensure:

- Children can see the board clearly.
- Pencils are sharpened before handwriting lessons.
- Suitable handwriting books are used:
    - Stage 1: plain paper
    - Stage 2: wide lines
    - Stage 3–4: 15mm→8mm lines

Handwriting must **never** be taught on whiteboards (due to pencil grip, poor friction and reduced muscle memory).

Roles & Responsibilities

Teachers

- Deliver daily handwriting lessons.
- Model correct formation consistently.
- Monitor progress and provide intervention.
- Maintain high expectations for presentation in **all** subjects.

Support Staff

- Reinforce correct letter formation during interventions and class work.
- Support identified pupils with targeted motor-skill practice.