

Policy/Procedure/Guideline

Policy/Procedure/Guideline:	Handwriting
Date of adoption / Local Governing Committee approval:	July 26
Lead staff member:	Raz Taj
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Summary of values

Every child has the right to access a world-class education. We exist to empower, enable and inspire children to achieve their every potential through exceptional teaching, innovative approaches to learning, and a community-oriented approach to meeting learners' needs

The aim is to enable each child to develop a clear, comfortable and legible style of joined-up writing.

The Early Stage

At the early stages of handwriting development, children participate in Squiggle Whilst You Wiggle, a programme that develops the shoulder, arm and core strength needed for effective writing through large-scale, physical movements. These activities help children build the gross motor skills, coordination and control that form the foundation of successful handwriting.

Mark making and speech provide children with powerful tools for thinking, reasoning and problem solving. Time, space and attention is given to children's mark making, mathematical graphics, drawing and writing experiences. Throughout each day, children have opportunities for spontaneous mark making, drawing and writing in both the indoor and outdoor environment. Resources are carefully chosen, well organised and attractively presented, so that the children can decide independently how they want to represent their ideas and which medium would best suit their purpose. High value is placed upon imagination, ideas and self-expression demonstrated by the children, these are reflected by the adults and used as starting points for planning.

Handwriting development in our EYFS includes a wide variety of activities planned to develop the fine motor skills required for the correct pencil grip. Activities may include threading, using tweezers, dough gym, spiders in jelly, cardboard weaving. The list is endless!

Teaching in Early Years

As children progress to forming letters, they continue to use Squiggle Whilst You Wiggle to further refine their physical control while beginning to learn correct letter formation. At this stage, the school adopts the Little Wandle letter formation rhymes, which provide consistent verbal prompts to support the accurate formation of letters. For example, children learn to form the letter a using the rhyme, "around the astronaut's helmet and then down into space." This multi-sensory approach helps children develop confidence, accuracy and fluency in their handwriting from the earliest stages of learning.



little-wandle-letter-formation-pattern.pdf



Writing Tools

When children are ready to begin letter formation practice they use plain paper. They progress to 15mm lines by Year 1. By Year 2 the children use 8mm lines.

Children are encouraged to use a variety of writing tools from the foundation stage onwards. Chubby infant pencils are more commonly used in the Reception Year and Year 1. Year 2 and Year 3 use the school HB pencil for most writing. From Year 3 onwards, children are taught to use pen when their handwriting is considered to be neatly presented and correctly formed.

Handwriting Sessions

The most effective letter formation practice takes place in short sessions that are modelled for the children. These can be during register time (approx 10 minutes), regularly. It may be necessary to have longer sessions (approx 20 minutes) when the children are first learning letter joins.

Children practice the letter joins taught in previous sessions.

Copying LARGE chunks of text/ whole poems is not an effective way to practice handwriting. The expectation is for handwriting to also be taught as part of their normal writing.

Teaching in Year 1

Children continue to build on from Reception using the Little Wandle letter patter (see below). Teach the direction of letter formation, shape and relative size with small group and individual monitoring. Blends should be taught as a single joined grapheme. Ensure children can form all letters in correct orientation with flicks by end of year.

In Year 1, children are expected to produce legible upper and lower case letters used in the appropriate place i.e., not mixed within words. Attention is given to the production of clear ascenders and descenders and correct orientation of letters.

Children are taught the correct direction to form each letter. The teacher observes the child in order to ensure that the correct direction is used from the outset as it is hard to unlearn bad habits. The letters are introduced in the order they appear in Little Wandle phonics guidance. However practice should be done using the following groupings:

- Letters with curved action as in 'c' : *c a d g o q*
 - *u v y w*
 - *l i t f j*
 - *e s x z*
 - *n r m*
 - *b h k p*
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- Initially, teach the children the lead-in stroke on each letter. Then show them how to join it with one other. Then they learn to join various groups of 2 or
 - 3 letters, finally words.
 - Only group letters that commonly appear together in words (e.g. NOT CC but ca, dad, add,)
 - Use handwriting practice to reinforce spelling patterns.
 - Once the children have learnt all the joins, start to write the date on the board in joined writing.
 - Capitals do not join.

Capital letters are introduced in Year 1. The following order may be used:

- Curves: C O S
- Straight lines: A E F H I K L M N T V W X Z
- Curves and straight lines: B D G J P Q R U Y

Teaching in Year 2

In Year 2 the children learn to join the letters when their letters are correctly constructed and orientated. Teaching is different from practice. The teaching sessions are about movement. The teacher demonstrates the movements and ensures the children are making them correctly.

Use lined paper: the same size as those in their exercise books. Do not use “handwriting ruled paper”. When demonstrating movements, name the movement using the agreed pattern, and encourage the children to do so as they write.

Allow the children to make large and small movements, in the air, on the desk as well as on the page with the pen or pencil. Make a game of it. Use the back of their exercise book. Ensure the children miss a line between each line of writing until at the stage of copying short verses or proverbs.

Start each session with time for the children to respond to your marking or assess movement. Walk round to ensure that correct direction is used. You can’t always tell afterwards. Make it fun. Use colours. Ensure pencils/ coloured pencils are kept sharp.

Initially, teach the children the lead-in stroke on each letter. Some children may progress to join it with one other. Then they learn to join various groups of 2 or 3 letters, finally words.

Only group letters that commonly appear together in words (e.g. NOT CC but ca, dad, add,) Use handwriting practice to reinforce spelling patterns.

Once the children have learnt all the joins, start to write the date on the board in joined writing.

Common difficulties in joining script:

- Capitals do not join.
- An effective way to address these is to be explicit. Show them the common mistakes and how to avoid them.
- Relative size: this needs a lot of emphasis – small letters of equal size, tall letters and descenders equal. Encourage the children to check size by levelling a ruler horizontally across the tops of a line of letters
- How tall? Using medium spaced lines, teach the children to bring tall letters and capitals up nearly to the line above at first.
- How long? Teach the children to drop descenders about half way down to next line
- Loops: children tend to curve these. They must drop in a straight line, bend and go back in a straight line.
- Letter r: children find the shape of the top and the way it joins hard. It needs a bit of practice.
- Letter x: the children will have to be taught how to form the letter in two parts.
- Dotted letters: teach the children to place the dot carefully just above the i or j.

Teaching in Year 3

In Year 3, the letter joins should be taught again, systematically, during the Autumn Term. You should find that you can spend less time on teaching handwriting by the end of the Spring Term but should continue with the practice sessions. All children should be using joined script for everyday work.

Teaching in Years 4-6

Children continue to have short, regular handwriting practice (5-10 minutes) where it is needed. Teach joins or direction if errors seem to be occurring. Do not give children large chunks of text to copy. Children learn to use pen for daily work. Some children may begin to use joined script from the end of Year 2 in daily work. In year 3, this is

explicitly taught. Expect the same standard in all subjects – not just English. Do not allow the children to revert to printing – even the LO in Maths books must be fully joined in Year 4. Children will write using blue ink and respond using green in

Teaching in Year 6

The very best writers may begin to develop their own style, allow them to do this provided it meets criteria for the expected standard. Letters must be correct relative size. Do not allow circles for dots, and insist on school style for loops. If writing slopes, it should be forward, slight and even.

Teachers' Writing

Teachers use the school handwriting script in their writing in children's books and on boards where appropriate. When typing on the interactive board, teachers to use the *CCW Cursive Writing 5* font in KS1 and the *XCCW Joined 5a* writing font in KS2.

Children Experiencing Difficulties

You might normally expect some children in Year 2 and 3 to be still struggling with fine motor control and spatial awareness. They are often, but not always, children with other Special Needs. Provide alternative support for these children. They can make good progress with additional adult time and practice to help them embed the directional element. It is much better to slow the pace of development for these children than to push them to keep up because they then develop bad habits, which are difficult to undo. Ensure that the next class teacher knows exactly where they are at so that the relevant support can be continued.

By Year 5, even these children should be joining all letters correctly.

Left-handed Writers

Ensure you know who these are. They should be seated in a position so that their arm is not blocking the light source. Encourage them to tilt the paper so that they are comfortable. Some left handers find it helps to place the paper or book on a closed ring-binder so that it tilts downwards. Acknowledge, encourage and check them as you are teaching direction.

Position

Encourage children to sit reasonably straight, near the desk but not leaning too far in.
Make sure that the paper is at a very slight tilt away from the writer.

Agreed 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

Agreed 'Patter'

Note that all letters start on the line. Dot the 'i's and cross the 't's at the end of the word.

a - up and over, back round, up to join, then down to the line and flick

b - straight up, back down to the line, up and all the way round and flick

c - up and over, back round and flick

d - up and over, back round, straight up, back down to the line and flick

e - make a loop down to the line and flick

f - straight up and over, straight back down under the line and flick

g - up and over, back round, up to join, straight down under the line and flick

h - straight up, back down to the line and flick

i - up, down and flick (dot the *i* at the end of the word)

j - up, straight down under the line and flick (dot the *j* at the end of the word)

k - straight up, back down to the line

l - straight up, down and flick

m - up, down, over and down, over and down and flick

n - up, down, over and down and flick

o - up and over, back to the line, all the way round and across

p - up and straight down under the line, back up and all the way round and flick

q - up and over, back round, up, down under the line and flick

r - up, straight down to the line, back up and divet across

s - up and over, snake back to the line and flick

t - straight up, back down to the line and flick

u - up down, under and up, down and flick

v - up, down, back up and across

w - up, down, back up, down, up and across

x - up and over to the line, then join with a 'c'

y - up, down, under and up, straight down under the line and flick

z - up and across, diagonal down to the line and flick

Agreed Number 'Patter'

0 – Make a big hoop, just like so. That's the way to write zero.

1 – A straight line down and then you're done. That's the way to write a one.

2 – Around and back on the railway track makes two, two, two.

3 – Around the tree around the tree, that's the way to write a three.

4 – Down and across and down some more, that's the way to
write a four.

5 – A neck then a tummy, and a hat up high, that's the way to
write a five.

6 – A curvy line and a circle mix, that's the way to write a six.

7 – Across the sky and down from heaven, that's the way to write a seven.

8 – Start with an S and do not wait. Cross and join to write an eight.

9 – A loop and a line makes number nine.

