

Todwick Primary School

Handwriting Policy



Sept 2024

Updated 2025

Review Date: September 2027

Member of staff responsible: Emma Perry

Handwriting is a cross-curricular task and will be taken into consideration during all lessons. Formal teaching of handwriting will be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure Key Stage targets are met. Handwriting sessions will last around 15-20 minutes following the sequenced progression 'Achieving excellence in Handwriting'.

Reception	Daily Instruction and LW Phonics
Year 1	Daily Instruction and LW Phonics
Year 2	Daily Instruction
Year 3	Four times weekly instruction
Year 4	Three times weekly Instruction
Year 5 and 6	Twice weekly Instruction

Delivery

Handwriting is modelled in both marking and teaching from Reception and throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. All teachers give specific attention to pencil and pen control, grip and posture in helping pupils to develop a legible joined style. Teachers identify all left-handed pupils in their class. Left-handers should always sit on the left of a right-handed child to avoid collision. Children will start handwriting using a soft pencil. When fine motor skills have been established a handwriting pen can be used. From Year 3, children with confident joined handwriting are provided with a handwriting pen which can be used in all subjects except maths. Additional support during practice time will be given to those needing it.

Teaching is consolidated before moving on in order to avoid children practising and reinforcing incorrect letter formation. Children are taught how the letter sits on the line, practice this and then apply this into a word containing that letter, this could be their spellings.

Before any handwriting teaching starts, pupils should have pencils sharpened, ready on tables; grip-supports and finger markers in place on pencils, if needed; paper in position; and any necessary adjusted equipment in place.

All pupils can be taught to slant their paper: slightly anti-clockwise for right handers and clockwise for left-handers. The slanting particularly helps left-handers to have a good view of what they are writing, since their left hand moves away from what they have written.

Every pupil should have a good view of the adult and what is being modelled, including pencil grip, have space to write and be seated at the right height

Reception

Handwriting is taught alongside our Little Wandle Phonics programme.

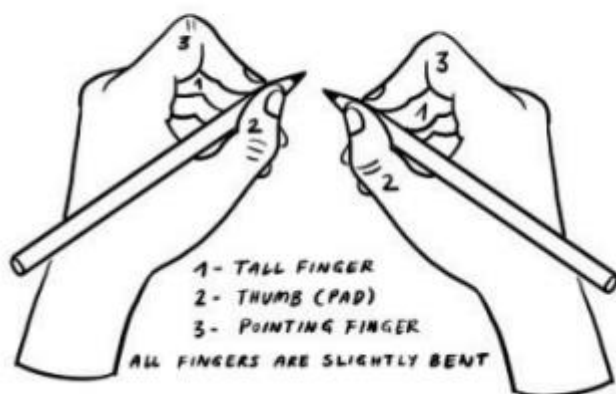
As new graphemes are introduced for reading and writing, they are also used to sequence the order in which they are taught for letter formation. In addition to letter formation being practised during a phonics session, children also take part in discrete handwriting sessions, starting with formation shapes and then following the letter families.

Little Wandle letter formation rhymes are used across Reception and KS1 with children encouraged to use these rhymes in order to support the correct formation.

f

Children are taught how to hold their pencil correctly when starting Reception and this tripod grip is referred to as 'Pinchy Parrot'.

Finger positioning using the tripod grip:



Starting in Reception, children are given daily opportunities to practise letter formation and this is a focus within all adult led writing sessions. From the start of Reception, they have writing books with wide lines in to support the sizing of letters.

Alongside letter formation sessions children in Reception and into Year 1 have additional adult led activities and provision within the classroom, which will include the following:

- enhancing gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern-making and physical activities
- exercises to develop fine motor skills such as mark-making on paper, whiteboards, sensory trays, playdough etc.
- dough disco, squiggle while you wiggle, squiggle me into a writer

By the end of Reception, children should be able to recognise and form all the printed, lowercase letters of the alphabet.

Opportunities for mark making are planned in both the inside and outside environment. Children are offered a range of materials and experiences for mark making developed across all six areas of learning. When teachers are modelling activities, they demonstrate and encourage correct pencil grip.

Year 1

In Year 1, children are taught how to correctly write capital letters, continued formation practise of lower-case letters using formation rhymes, numbers, punctuation, maths symbols and other symbols. Children use wide lined paper and are introduced to narrowing

mid lined paper that supports them with correct height of ascenders and descenders once they can write legibly and easily on the wide-lined paper.

When leaving Year 1, children should be confident in writing all the capital and printed letters, numbers and symbols and start to become familiar correct heights for ascender and descenders.

Year 2

In Year 2, children are introduced to joining letters but only when they are confident with correct letter formation. They will have regular, discrete, practice in letter formation and joining their handwriting in order to build automaticity.

Later in the year children may be introduced to line guides which are used within their writing books or for final presentation pieces of writing.

With regular handwriting practice throughout Year 2, children develop the fluency and speed of their letter formation and orientation and will have had plenty of opportunities to practise neat handwriting.

Pupils are 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
- *write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- *use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Children revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They are taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Lower Key Stage 2 - Years 3 and 4

Handwriting lessons will continue three to four times a week in Lower Key Stage 2. In Lower Key Stage 2 children use the cursive script, building on the foundations from the Early Years and Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Children should be joining letters throughout their independent writing in all subjects, helping to refine their handwriting in line with the requirements of each lesson.

Pupils are 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, *e.g. 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.*

Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

Year 5

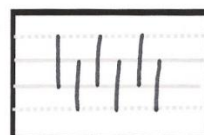
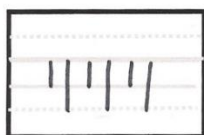
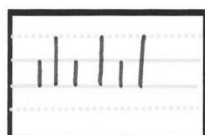
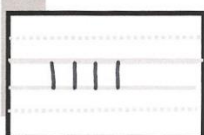
In Year 5, children combine fluent handwriting with other subjects across the curriculum. By the end of the year group, children should produce joined handwriting automatically enabling them to focus on content rather than the process of writing.

Year 6

In Year 6, handwriting practise focuses on ensuring writing is neatly presented and clear in preparation for Key Stage 2 SATS and the expected standard for Year 6. By the end of the year group, children should have achieved stamina and the skills required to write at length and develop a more personal handwriting style as they write with automaticity.

Finger and Hand exercises for warm ups before handwriting sessions.

Action	Description
Finger Stretches	Put the tips of your fingers together and straighten your fingers by pushing your fingertips against each other. Repeat 5 times.
Play the Piano	Touch the table with one finger at a time from each hand like you are playing the piano. Start slowly and get faster.
Fishing Hooks	Put your elbows on the table, keep your hands apart, squeeze your fingers together and point them to the sky. Keep your knuckles straight and make a hook with your fingers. Hold, then straighten five times.
Fireworks	Make a fist with both hands and hold them tight. Then let your fingers go like exploding fireworks! Repeat five times.
Take a Bow	Put your elbows on the table, keep your hands apart, squeeze your fingers together and point them to the sky. Bend your knuckles but keep your fingers straight so your fingers bow to each other. Repeat 5 times.



Warm Up

The above are line guide exercises to ensure children fully understand the correct size of small letters, tall letters and tail letters. They are exercises that can be used regularly as a warm up to a handwriting lesson. The three straight lines are referred to as short, tall and tail lines.

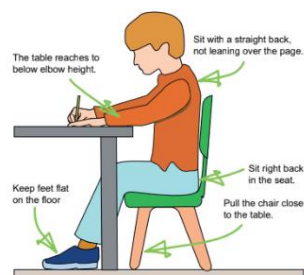
Language and expectations:

There is consistency in the use of language we use across school to ensure that children are 'ready to write':

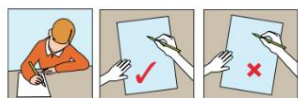
- TNT- Tummy near table.
- BBC- Bottom, back, chair
- 6 points- 6 feet on the floor meaning the four chair legs and the two legs of the children.
- Two hands to write
- Children should be taught how to hold their pencil correctly using three points.
- Praise for quality work and concentration should be within every lesson.
- Children should be encouraged to reflect and improve their work within each writing session.

Right handed children

How to sit correctly to be comfortable for handwriting.

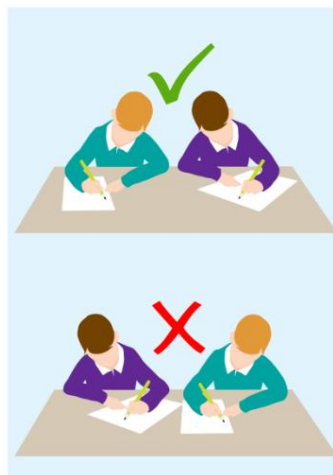


How to hold and position the paper.



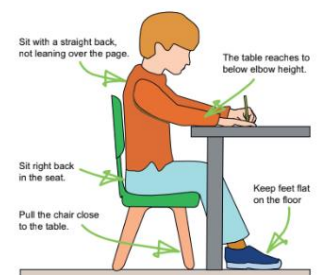
Sitting position

Sit left-handed children to the left of their partner so they have plenty of room to write.



Left handed children

How to sit correctly to be comfortable for handwriting.



How to hold and position the paper.



Teaching Techniques

Teacher Modelling

Teacher demonstration using line guides on a flip chart or whiteboard (large and small sizes as needed)

Teacher and children practise with fingers in the air and/or on tables

Model letters in groups of 3

Emphasise: starting point ('top down' or '1 o'clock', exception- e)
direction (down or anti-clockwise),
height of ascender and length of descender on line guide
type of join (flick or bar), or no join
spacing between letters and words
f has a straight body
size of dot on i

Teacher Intervention

Circulate to model, give feedback and mark work whilst children are practising.
When circulating, model and correct in books, point out good efforts, identify your favourite, encourage self-review, tick their best letter, etc.

Language: joins - (flicks, bar joins, no joins), letter sizes (tall, middle-sized, small), egg-shape letters, ascender, descender

Families

Family 1. The Straight Line Family

i l t j letters based on a single vertical line

i l t j

i l t j

Family 2. The Coathanger Family

c o a d g q e letters based on a c shape

c o a d g q e

c o a d g q

Family 3. The Bridge Family

m n r h b k p letters that have a vertical down stroke followed by a diagonal movement to the right.

n m r

n m r

Family 4. The Zig Zag Family

v w are placed together as a pair.

v w

v w

Family 5. The Smile Family

u y are placed together as a pair.

u y

u y

Family 6. The Misfits!

s f x z letters that are unique and individual and do not fit with any other letter groups.

s f x z

s f x z

Joining from letters

Flick joins - a c d e h i k l m n q t u x z

Bar joins - o f r v w

No joins - b g j p s y