



## **HANDWRITING POLICY**

March 2024

This policy sets out the agreed expectations for handwriting and how handwriting will be taught.

### **WHY**

Handwriting is an important part of writing. A fluent, joined script reduces cognitive load and enables pupils to: focus on new learning, write in all subjects at a greater speed (which is particularly important as they transition to secondary school), learn spellings (muscle memory). prevent wrist ache/repetitive strain problems.

### **WHEN**

Handwriting is taught for a short daily time in Rec – Y3. In Y4- Y6 handwriting is taught daily-near daily in response to the needs of pupils/class. The vocabulary of tall/short letters, ascenders/descenders, upper case/ lower case and capital letter is used in teaching.

### **HOW**

-A variety of activities are used to teach handwriting in the earliest stages: sand writing, paint writing, magic pencil in the air writing etc. In addition, other tasks will be given to help develop fine motor control: threading beads, colouring, sewing, using tweezers to pick up sequins, playdough strengthening activities etc..

-A strong focus on teaching correct pencil grip will begin when pupils start school. A tri-grip is used. Triangle shaped pencils for writing and drawing are used in early years which support this. Some pupils may need to use triangular pencils to support the development this for longer. Correct grip can help with fluency needed when joining and prevents wrist pain and problems.

-Printing formation of lower case letters are taught in '**letter families**' with a 'chant' to support children. When modelling, the teacher and children say the chant to support the child knowing the correct formation when writing independently. The aim is to secure the understanding of the common features of letter formation as soon as possible (such as the letter families below and all letters start at the short line/tall line except e and f etc)

Curly caterpillar letters: c, a, o, d, g, q, s  
One armed robot letters: r, n, m, p, h, k, b  
Long leg letters: l, t, u, i, j, y  
Zig-zag letters: v, w, z, x  
Odd bods: f, e

-During handwriting lessons pupils will be encouraged to assess their own work in simple ways: circling their best 'g'/horizontal join/word after completing a line of handwriting, using a ruler to identify inconsistent letter size across the line etc.. This encourages pupils to take ownership of their learning and undertake further practise in their 'problem areas'.

-Correct formation can be reinforced by apps such as 'Hairy Letters'.

-Teachers/TAs model printed/joined handwriting, in line with this policy, when writing on the board/creating displays etc..

-Pupils will be expected to use what they have been taught in handwriting lessons in their independent work/other subjects – independent use is the aim and key to success.

-Rubbers will not be used in handwriting lessons. Mistakes are important to learn from and inform the teacher of problem letters/joins which need further work. In addition, over use of rubbers reduces the time a child is practising handwriting.

-Pupils need to learn to orientate letters in relation to the line. They also need to learn to 'visualise' the tall/short letter horizontal lines to enable them to write with consistency. We use lined paper from early years onwards to support this.

-Pen licences will be awarded to children in KS2 when they consistently show clearly formed/joined handwriting when writing in many contexts. All pupils in Y6 write in pen in Term 5/6 in preparation for secondary school.

## **INCLUSION**

-Handwriting skills are progressive. Although there are expectations for year groups, work for pupils will be adapted so they reflect the next steps of learning in the handwriting progression no matter the age of pupil.

-Some pupils will be offered different materials to support handwriting such as triangle pencils/grips/sloped boards.

-Some pupils will receive focused intervention work to support handwriting.

-Left handed pupils (approximately 10% of the population) are supported by being encouraged to:

- Turn their paper to the right rather than the left
- Sit on the left hand side of a right handed child so they have enough space
- Keep the wrist straight and their hand below the writing line

### **EXPECTATIONS:**

By the end of Rec: (printed script)

- Pupils have correct pencil grip.
- Pupils use correct letter formation for the 26 lower case letters.

By the end of Y1: (printed script)

- Pupils sit correctly at a table with correct pencil grip.
- Pupils understand which letters belong to which family and practise these (letters that are formed in similar ways).
- Pupils use correct letter formation for the 26 lower case letters.
- Pupils use correct letter formation for the 26 upper case letters.
- Pupils leave word spaces.
- Pupils use correct formation for numbers 0-9.

By the end of Y2: (printed/joined script)

- Pupils orientate letters correctly in relation to the line (eg: p not P)
- Pupils show consistency in size in lower case letters in relation to each other (tall and short letters, length of descenders etc.).
- Pupils use horizontal and diagonal joins correctly after teaching/in independent work.
- Pupils join/not join letters (in line with this policy) after teaching/in independent work.
- Pupils use consistent word spaces.
- Pupils show consistency in size in writing capital letters.
- Pupils show consistency in size in writing numbers.

By the end of Y3: (joined script)

- Pupils use a legible, joined script in independent work.
- Pupils join/not join letters, in line with this policy, in independent work.

By the end of Y4: (joined script)

- Pupils write in a legible and consistent style, with increase speed and style.
- Pupils write letters with parallel down strokes.
- Pupils write with appropriate letter/word spacing over lines/paragraphs.

By the end of Y5: (joined script)

- Pupils write fluently and legibly with speed and a personal style.

## **PRINTING SCRIPT: LETTER FORMATION 'CHANT'**

<b>Letter</b>	<b>Chant</b>
<b>Curly caterpillar letters</b>	
c	Around like a c.
o	Around like a c, keep on going
a	Around like a c, up and down
q	Around like a c, up and down, with a kick
g	Around like a c, up and down, down, tail
d	Around like a c, up, up and down
s	Around like a c floating
<b>One armed robot letters</b>	
r	Down, up and around
n	Down, up and around
m	Down, up and around and around
p	Down, up and around (tummy on the line)
h	(start tall) Down, up and around
b	(start tall) Down up and around (The top of the bubble should be level with the short letter line.)
k	(start tall) Down, up and around (The top of the bubble on the k should be level with the short letter line.)
<b>Ladder letters</b>	
l	(start tall) Down
t *	(start tall) Down
j	Down, with a tail
i	Down
u	Down and around
y	Down and around, with a tail
<b>Zig-Zag monster letters</b>	
v	Zig-zag
w	Zig-zag, zig-zag
x	Slash, slash
z	Across, slash, across
<b>These do not follow one of the letter patterns</b>	
e	Straight across, round like a c
f *	Curl, down down, with a tail

\* All crosses should be the same height as the short letter line.

### **JOINING SCRIPT: BREAK LETTERS**

Assume all letters are joined into and out of – exceptions are on the table below:

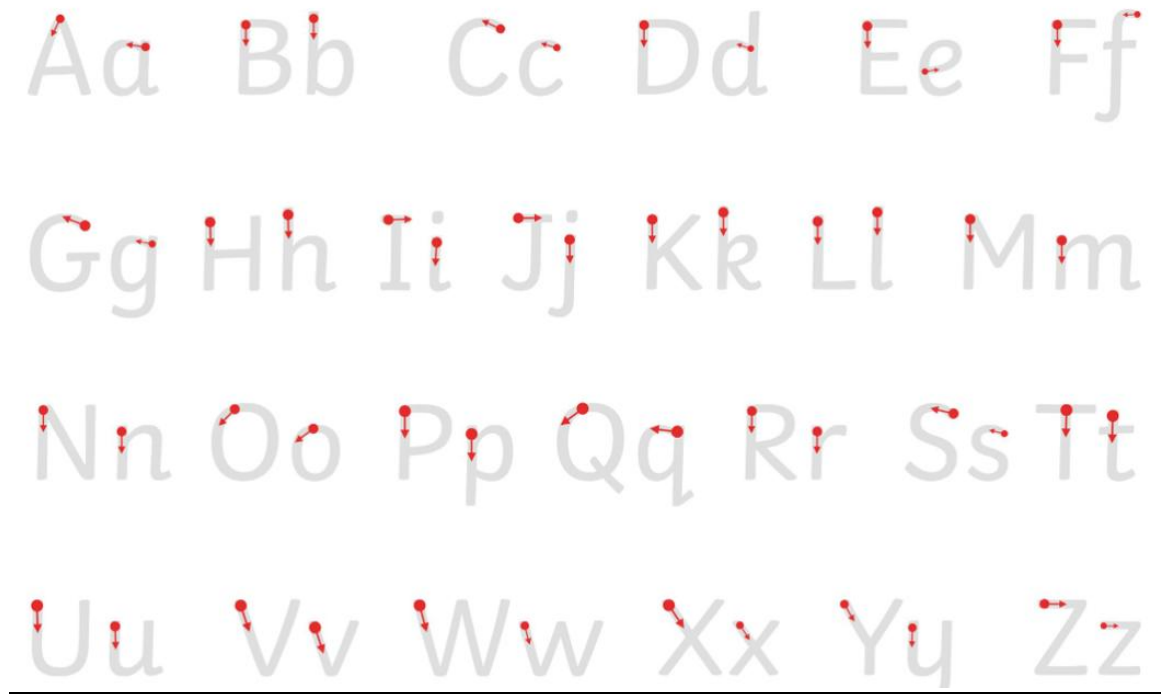
<b>Letter</b>	<b>No join in/ No join out/ No join in or out</b>
f	Join in. Join out using cross
x	No join in or out
z	No join in or out

### **APPENDIX 1: LETTER AND NUMBER FORMATION**

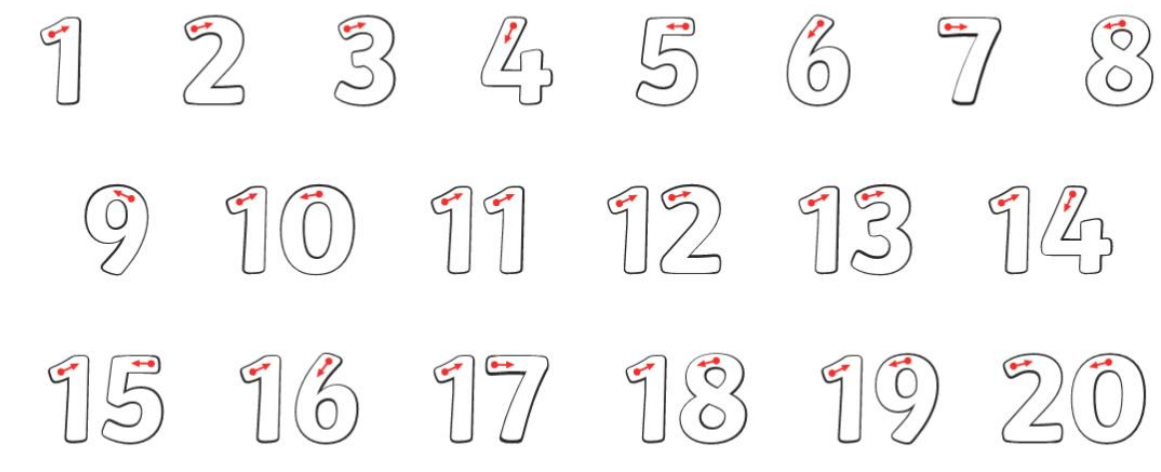
**Lower case formation:**

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

**Lower and upper case formation:**



**Number formation:**



## APPENDIX 2: JOINING LETTER FORMATION

### THE TWO MAIN JOINS

**Horizontal joins** to short letters: EG. ou, oo, ow, wi, wa, vi, vu.

ou oo ow wi wa vi vu

**Horizontal joins** to tall letters: EG. ol, ot, ob, oh, ok, wh.

ol ot ob oh ok wh

**Diagonal joins** to short letters: EG. ai, ar, un, ur, ir, li.

ai ar un ur ir li

**Diagonal joins** to tall letters: EG. ab, al, ul, ut, ib, it, ll, lt, etc.

ab al ul it ib it ll lt

### PROBLEM JOINS:

s as ask bass

f from for of off offer

g/i/y/q g go ping j jaw ajax y yell day q quiet

k k kick back

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**Diagonal joins** to short letters: EG. ai, ar, un, ur, ir, li.

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**Diagonal joins** to tall letters: EG. ab, al, ul, ut, ib, it, ll, lt, etc.

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### **PROBLEM JOINS:**

s -----

f -----

g/j/y/ q -----

k -----



### **APPENDIX 3: USEFUL TYPE FONTS**

For when preparing handwriting worksheets/flashcards/display etc.

'Twinkle' will produce the alphabet as below:

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  
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  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

'Comic Sans MS' will produce the alphabet as below:

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  
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  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

(f q t y are incorrect in lower case. G Y is incorrect in upper case.)

'Bradley Hand' will produce the alphabet as below:

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  
(f is incorrect)