



Handwriting and Presentation Policy

Policy approved and adopted: September 2018

Review date: September 2021

Aims

- To encourage children's sense of pride in their recording and so form a positive attitude towards all their work through promoting excellent presentation.
- To promote consistency of handwriting and presentation across the school and in all areas of the curriculum.
- To teach children the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate their meaning effectively
- To ensure that children acquire a clear, fluent, joined, legible and individual style.

Handwriting

This scheme is built upon careful progression leading to the development of an individual style. The structured programme includes letter formation, basic joins, printing, penmanship, speed writing and sloping. Children will be taught to write letters with exit strokes (lead outs) in preparation for joining letters (cursive writing) when ready. Some letters with descenders (f, g, j and y) will be taught with a continuous, joined descender to encourage flow.

Children will be taught:

- How to hold a pencil/pen/writing implement correctly using the correct grip and body position
- To write from left to right and top to bottom of a page
- To start and finish letters correctly
- That all the letters of the alphabet start at the top, except d and e
- To finish letters with exit strokes (lead outs)
- To form letters of the correct size and orientation
- To put regular spaces between letters and words
- How to form lower and upper case letters and numbers
- To use diagonal and horizontal joins
- That all lower case letters can be joined, before and after, except q and x which have no joins after them and z which is not joined at all.
- That upper case (capital) letters are never joined.
- To write legibly in both joined and printed styles, with increasing fluency and speed
- To use different forms of handwriting for different purposes e.g. print for labelling maps and diagrams, a clear, neat hand for finished work, a faster script for notes

Getting ready to write

Seating and posture

- Chair and table should be at a comfortable height
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Encourage children to sit up straight and not slouch
- The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor
- Tables should be free of clutter
- Rooms should be well lit
- Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners

Pencil grip

- Children should write with a pencil (or pen when introduced at the appropriate time) with a rounded nib. Pencils should be reasonably sharp.
- A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil

For right handers

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point
- The paper should be placed to the right tilted slightly to the left
- Use the left hand to steady the paper

For left handers

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger
- Hold about 3cm from the tip
- The hand should be kept below the writing line
- The paper should be tilted slightly to the right at about 20 - 30°
- Use the right hand to steady the paper

NB It is very important that a right handed child is NOT seated on the left hand side of a left handed child as their elbows will collide!

Teacher Modelling

- Teachers need to model all elements of the handwriting policy regularly.
- Pupils should see the teacher demonstrating correct joins
- Handwriting sheets for pupils to copy as practise should be handwritten by the teacher, clearly showing the correct joins and not be a typed passage.
- Displays and working walls should contain examples of teacher modelled handwriting where possible and appropriate.

Handwriting assessment (Target Tracker statements)

Year Two (for information)

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 unjoined

Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to each other and to lower case letters.

Use spacing between words that reflect the size of the letters.

Year Three and Year Four

Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.

Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of his/her handwriting e.g. by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

Year Five and Year Six

Write increasingly legibly, fluently and with increasing speed, through improving choices of which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters.

Write increasingly legibly, fluently and with increasing speed, by choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

Teachers will also assess handwriting against criteria which may include the following:-

- Is the writing legible and generally presentable?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins correctly made?
- Are the spaces between letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?

Decisions about awarding pen licences will be based upon these.

Presentation

Teachers will act as a role model for handwriting and presentation in marking and writing during teaching activities, and will ensure:

- That children are encouraged to take a pride in the presentation of their work
- That children have the appropriate materials to achieve their best presentation, and that the lighting is effective
- That children adopt the correct posture for writing as outlined above
- That they provide a variety of opportunities for children to share their work with different audiences
- That children look after their work, label all their books neatly and keep them all clean and tidy

Agreed guidelines for Handwriting and Presentation

- A margin will be ruled on the left of the page in pencil with a ruler
- In Learning Journals, the date will be written for the first piece of work of the day only and underlined using a ruler
- In Maths books, the short date will be written in the margin and then underlined using a ruler
- The WALT/Title will be written in the middle of the page and underlined using a ruler
- Pieces of work should continue underneath each other and be clearly demarcated
- All children to use handwriting pens when ready, and pen licences will be awarded to Year 3/4 children when criteria are met
- All Year 5 & 6 children should be using pens for writing
- All children will edit their written work in a different coloured pen

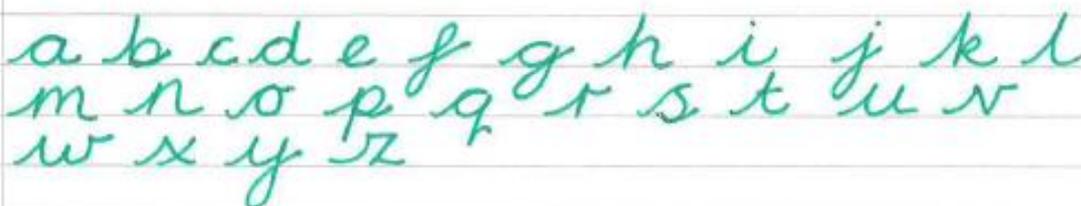
Support for Learning

Children who are experiencing difficulty with their handwriting will be brought to the attention of the SENCO. These may include children with poor motor skill development, visual impairment, dyslexia, special educational learning needs, slower writers and left-handed children (see below). A programme will be agreed to support the progress of children who are experiencing difficulty with their handwriting.

Additional Guidance and related documents:

Letter formation guide:

On regular lined paper



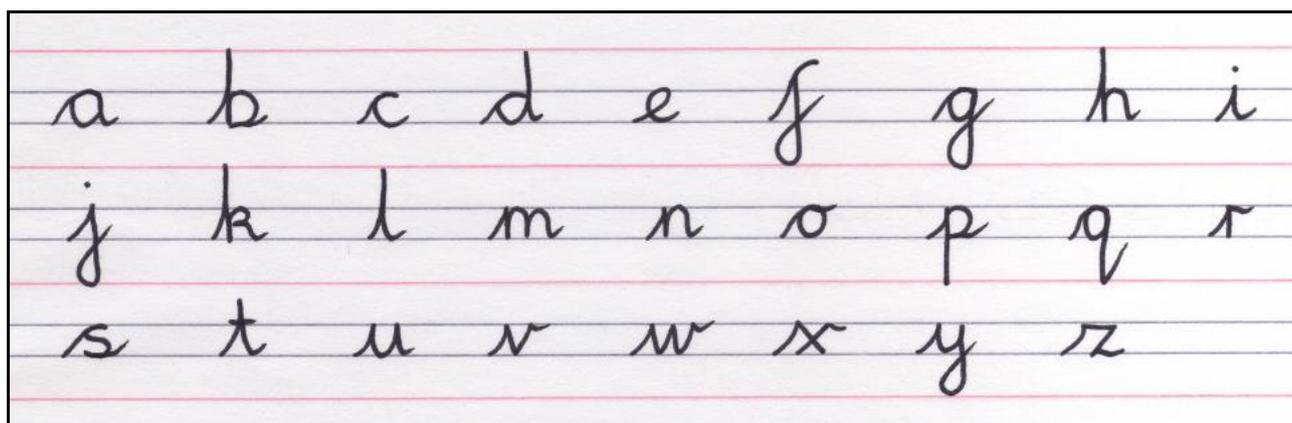
a b c d e f g h i j k l
m n o p q r s t u v
w x y z

Capital letters are never joined.

All letters have a lead-in and an exit stroke with the exception of x, q and z.

Don't forget to warm up and sit correctly for each handwriting lesson.

On handwriting lines



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

The following letter styles have been chosen to meet the preceding list of criteria:

Specific letter style options The reasoning behind each cursive letter style option chosen for use in <i>Spectrum Handwriting</i> was discussed with several Literacy and SpLD (Dyslexic) practitioners who agreed with our choices.	
	Chosen because, looped from the back, it is easiest to link to all other letters, always joining the same way and thus more fluent.
	Chosen because it joins in the same way whether it is at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of a word, thus making it fluent and meaning there is less for children to learn.
	Chosen because it is more legible, most like the printed 'v' and less likely to be confused with the letter 'u'.
	Chosen because it is more legible, most like the printed 'w' and less likely to be confused with the letter 'u'.
	This is the only small letter that requires the pencil/pen to be lifted from the paper. This style was chosen because it will join and because it is most like its precursive counterpart. A curved 'x' can often be confused for the letters 'sc'; this is particularly so for dyslexic and less able readers.
	Chosen because it is more legible, most like the printed 'y' and doesn't involve taking the pencil/pen off the paper.
	Chosen because it will join and because it is most like its precursive counterpart.

Position and warm up activities

APPENDIX

Here's a warm up that's great for posture and a positive attitude. Use it before cursive handwriting lessons and during the refreshing and can be done even in a crowded class. If it's manageable, let your students jump in place first.



Push palms



Pull hands



Hug yourself tightly



Reach high, one hand, then other
Reach - make circles in the air

* BLOCKS



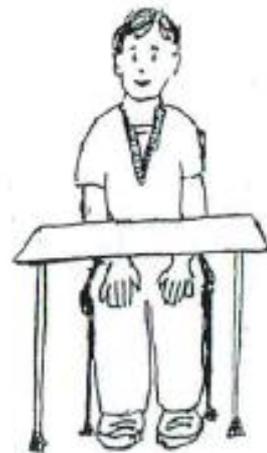
Pull up on chair



* Stack your blocks



Assume an outrageous posture



Stack your blocks again!

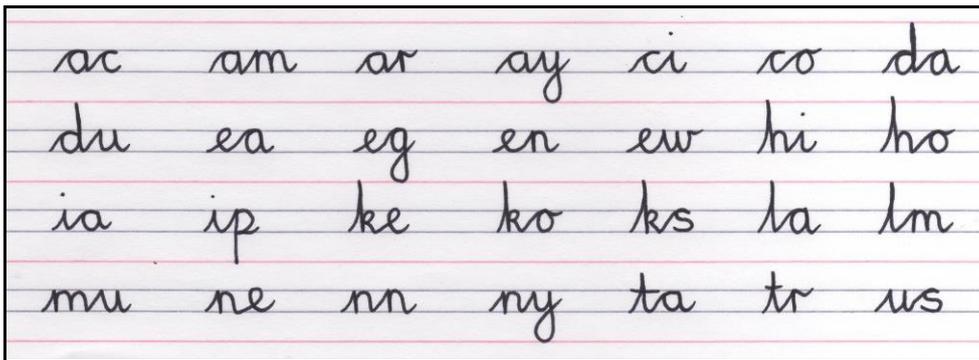
Progression of Skills

1. Children will be taught the movement of each of the four letter families (see cursive writing style for individual letters)

- a. Long Ladders (down and off in another direction) – l, i, j, t, u, y
- b. One armed robots (down and retrace upwards) – b, h, k, m, n, p, r
- c. Curly Caterpillars (anti-clockwise round)– c, a, e, d, g, o, q, f, s
- d. Zig Zag letters – v, w, x, z

2. Baselines joins:

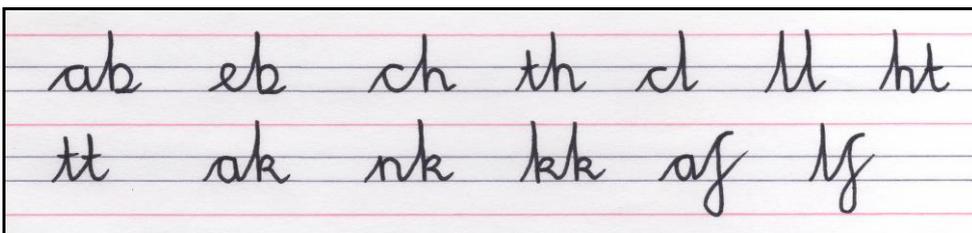
- a. ac, ad, ag, ai, am, an, ap, ar, as, av, aw, ay
- b. ca, ce, ci, co, cu, cy
- c. da, de, di, dr, ds, du, dy
- d. ea, ec, ed, eg, ei, em, en, ep, er, es, ev, ew, ey
- e. ha, hi, ho, hu
- f. ia, ic, id, ie, ig, im, in, ip, ir, is, iv, iw
- g. ka, ke, ki, ko, ku, ks, ky
- h. la, le, li, lm, ln, lo, lp, ls, lu, ly
- i. ma, me, mi, mm, mn, mo, ms, mu
- j. na, ne, ni, nn, no, ns, nu, ny
- k. ta, te, ti, to, tr, ts, tu, tw
- l. ua, un, us



3. Joins to the letters with ascenders

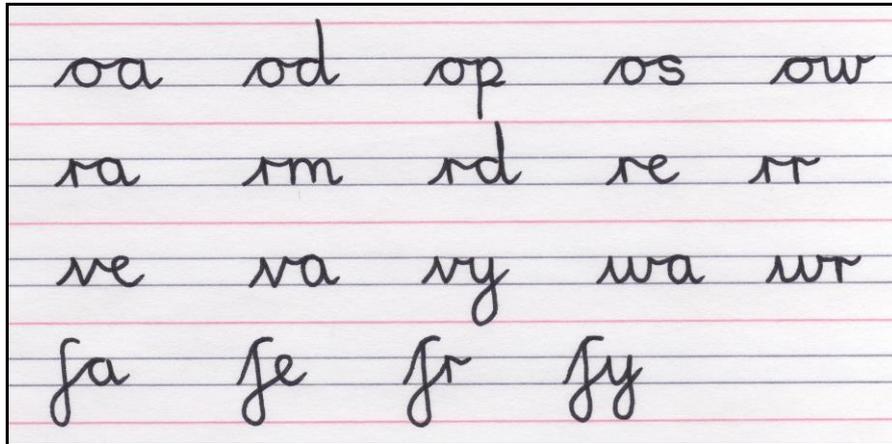
Ensure that children are aware that the joining stroke should not travel to the top of the ascender of the second letter but should meet the second letter at the top blue line

- a. ab, eb, ib, lb, mb, ub
- b. ah, ch, mh, th, uh
- c. al, cl, el, il, ll, nl, tl
- d. at, ct, et, ht, it, nt, tt
- e. ak, ik, kk, lk, nk, uk
- f. af, ef, if, lf, uf



4. Horizontal joins (top joins) to letters without ascenders:

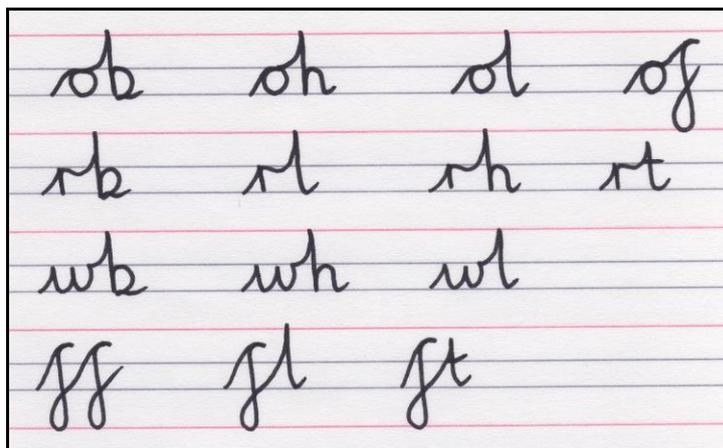
- a. oa, oc, od, oe, og, oi, om, on, oo, op, oq, or, os, ou, ov, ow, oy
- b. ra, rc, rd, re, rg, ri, rm, rn, ro, rp, rr, rs, ru
- c. va, vi, vo, vr, vy
- d. wa, we, wi, wr
- e. fa, fe, fi, fo, fr, fs, fu, fy



5. Horizontal joins (top joins) to letters with ascenders:

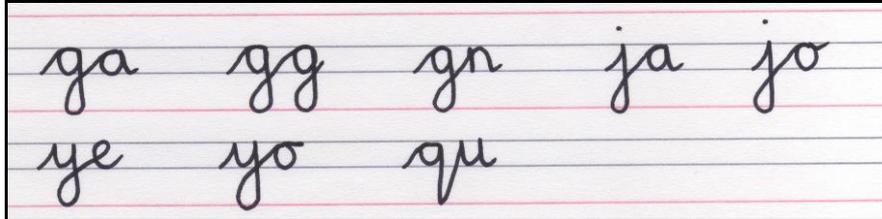
Ensure that children are aware that the joining stroke should travel directly to the top of the second letter

- a. ob, of, oh, ok, ol, ot
- b. rb, rh, rk, rl, rt
- c. wb, wh, wl
- d. ff, fl, ft



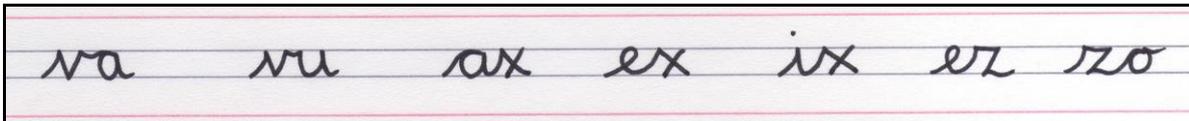
6. Joins from letters with ascenders:

- a. ga, ge, gg, gh, gi, gl, gn, go, gr, gs, gu
- b. ja, je, ji, jj, jo, ju
- c. ya, ye, yi, yo, yu
- d. qu



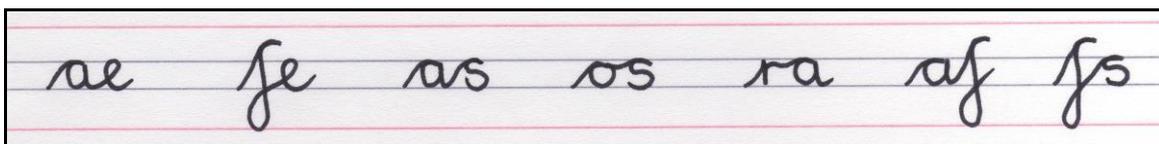
7. Zig-zag letters:

- a. va, ve, vi, vo, vu
- b. ax, ex, ix
- c. ez, iz, zz, zo



8. Tricky joins which may require additional practice:

- a. Joining to e from a baseline join: ae, ce, de, ee, he, ie, ke, le, me, ne, te, ue
- b. Joining to e from a horizontal join: fe, oe, re, we
- c. Joining to s from a baseline join: as, cs, ds, es, is, ks, ls, ms, us
- d. Joining to s from a horizontal join: fs, os
- e. Joining from an r: ra, rb, re, rf, rg, rh, ri, rk, rm, ro, rr, rs, rt
- f. Joining to and from an f: af, ef, if, ff, of, rf, fa, fe, fi, fo, fr, fs, fu, fy, fl, ft



Suggestions for activities to teach handwriting

- Using spellings as a basis for handwriting practise (especially useful for reinforcing specific spelling patterns and knowledge of high frequency words)
- Writing short poems or limericks
- Writing facts linked to topic work
- Best copies of work for class books
- Best copies of work for display