



Handwriting Policy

BEDWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Bedwell Crescent,
Stevenage, Herts, SG1 1NJ**

Revised January 2026

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1. INTENT: OUR AIMS AND EXPECTATIONS

Presentation is of paramount importance in our school, and we encourage our pupils to take pride in their work. Handwriting is a fundamental life skill, and we are focused on ensuring that our pupils meet and exceed the age-related milestones as laid out by the National Curriculum. Handwriting with fluidity, speed, accuracy and stamina requires a complex range of whole body and hand strengths and skills. We are committed to supporting our children to develop these competences in a range of ways throughout their schooling. Our policy adopts a continuous cursive script that has a flick leading in and leading out of each letter.

2. IMPLEMENTATION: THE TEACHING OF HANDWRITING

Handwriting is a cross-curriculum task and is taken into consideration during all lessons. Formal teaching of handwriting is carried out regularly and systematically to ensure Key Stage targets are met. We follow a Three Stage philosophy and use the Read Write Inc. progression tool that can be found along with guidance for parents at

[Handwriting - Oxford Owl for Home](#)

STAGE 1 - PRE-HANDWRITING PATTERNS

Pre-handwriting patterns help a child to learn the shapes and directional pushes and pulls of the writing tools required to form letters. All letters are a combination of these shapes and lines.

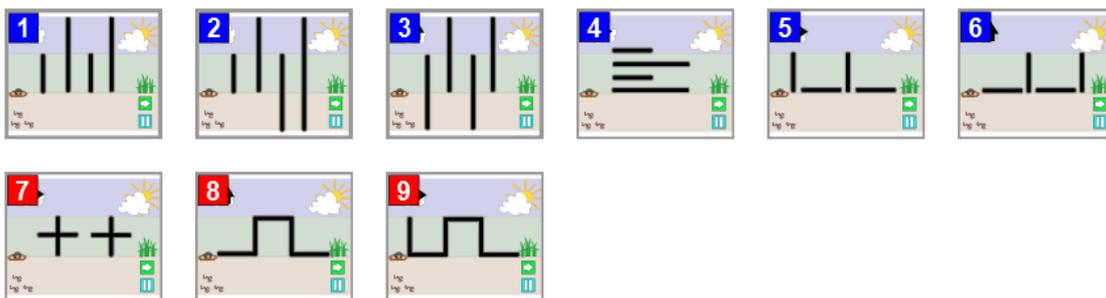
Our youngest pupils' first experiences on the handwriting route involves mark making and simple drawings, whether it is with finger paints, writing in sand or with pencils and crayons. We provide a range of opportunities in the Early Years Foundation Stage to support this in both indoor and outdoor experiences.

Finger Strong and PE lessons help to develop the strength needed to hold and use writing implements effectively. As our pupils' gross and fine motor skills develop, so does their pencil grip and ability to draw and write at a small scale, moving more from the elbow and wrist.

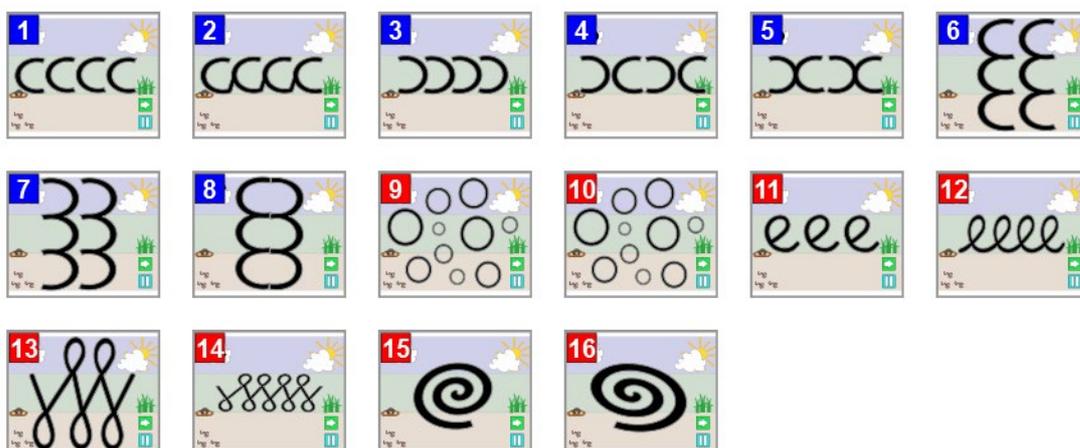
Our children learn many of these directional pushes, pulls and changes in direction on a much larger scale, long before they pick up a pencil, through playing with cars or pretending to cook. These movements become the drawings/scribbles which young children form once they start mark-making, initially as big uncontrolled movements then becoming more controlled and smaller as their gross and fine motor skills develop.



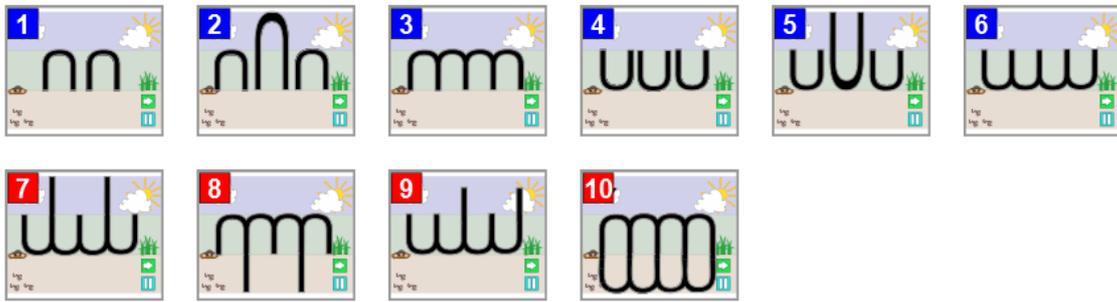
Straight pre-handwriting patterns



Curve pre-handwriting patterns



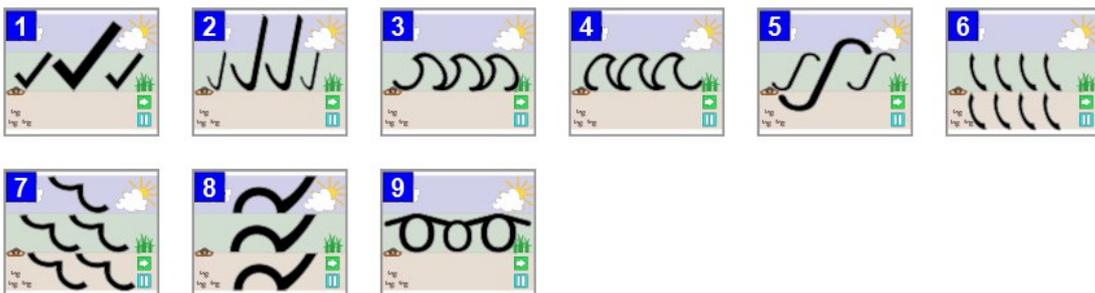
Tunnel pre-handwriting patterns



Diagonal pre-handwriting patterns



Join pre-handwriting patterns



Once the pre-handwriting patterns have been mastered a child will have the skill base necessary, and be more confident, to form letters, numbers, symbols and later the join strokes required for a joined fluid and speedy handwriting style. Our younger pupils have access to many different mark making implements in Nursery and Reception, however they have access to special triangular pencils with finger grip support during more formal handwriting sessions.

STAGE 2 - SINGLE LETTER AND NUMBER FORMATION

Whilst in Reception and KS1, the children work towards meeting the end of Year 2 National Expectations. This means making sure that all letters are formed correctly, with appropriate word spacing and with letters being relative in size between capital and lower cases. Daily practice is undertaken and rewarded by the most improved hand-writer receiving our weekly Handwriting Hero trophy.

Explicit teacher modelling and high expectations are essential, so that the children can see exactly what each letter looks like. All adult writing in books and on displays follow the school handwriting policy. The children focus on making sure they are forming their letters with the correct start and end points. With this in mind, we teach letter formation in groups/families rather than in alphabetical order. Certain groups use the same, or similar, shape and directional pushes and pulls of the pencil to form the letter, for instance the letter c has the same start point and anti-clockwise directional movement shape that is needed to create the letters a, d, g, o and, though a little more complicated, the letters s and e. Teaching letters in groups and families can also help to limit letter reversals such as b and d.

'Around' Letters

Caterpillar

Curl around the caterpillar

- start at the caterpillar's head
- curl around the body



Apple

Round the apple, down the leaf

- start at the stalk
- draw a nice round apple
- go back up to the stalk and then down
- curl the leaf at the bottom



Orange

All around the orange

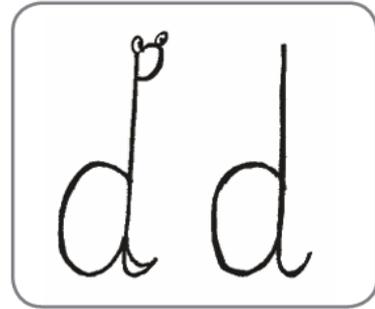
- start at the stalk
- draw a nice round orange



Dinosaur

round his bottom, up his tall neck and down to his feet

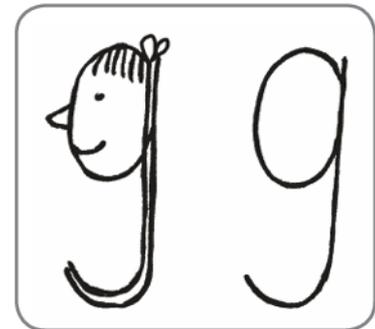
- draw a big round bottom
- up the tall neck
- down the straight line to the feet
- draw a curl for the feet



Girl

round her face, down her hair and give her a curl

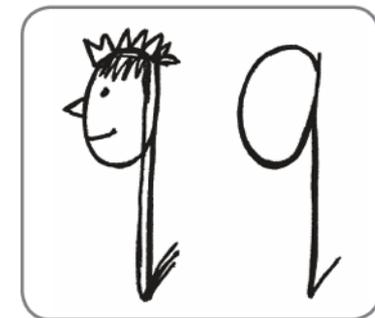
- start at her hair bobble at the top of her head
- draw a nice round face
- go back up to her bobble
- down her very straight hair
- draw a round curl to finish



Queen

round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair

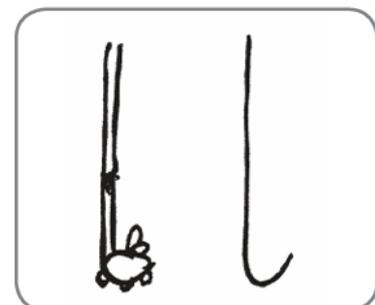
- start at her hair bobble at the top of her head
- draw a nice round face
- go back up to her bobble
- down her very straight hair
- add a sharp flick to finish



'Down' Letters

Liam's leg - down the long leg

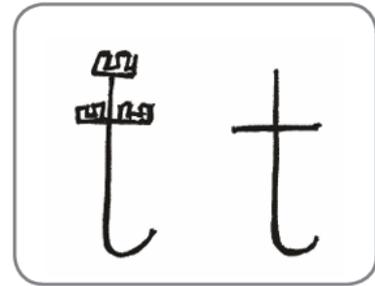
- start at the top of his leg
- go down his long leg
- add a curl for the shoe to kick the ball



Tower

down the tower

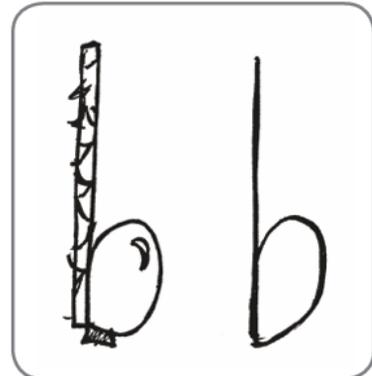
- start at the top of his leg
- go down his long leg
- add a curl for the shoe to kick the ball



Boot

down the laces to the heel and round the toe

- start at the top of the boot
- draw a straight line down the boot
- go round over the toe
- go back to the heel



Polly Pirate

down the plait and over the pirate's face

- start at the top of her plait
- draw down her long straight plait
- go round over her face
- finish under her chin



Kangaroo

down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg

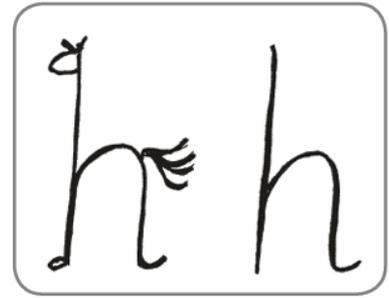
- start at the kangaroo's head
- draw down the long, straight body - then lift the pencil off the page
- draw a straight tail to the body - two thirds of the way down
- draw a straight back leg from the body



Horse

down the head to the hooves and over its back

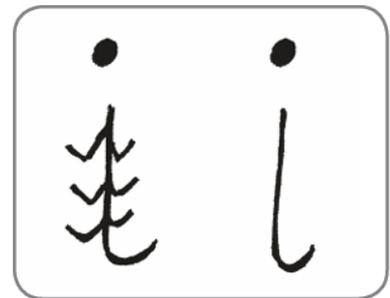
- start at the horse's head
- draw down her long, straight neck
- continue down to her feet
- go round her back
- draw a straight back leg
- add a little curl of dust as the horse runs away



Insect

down the body, dot for the head

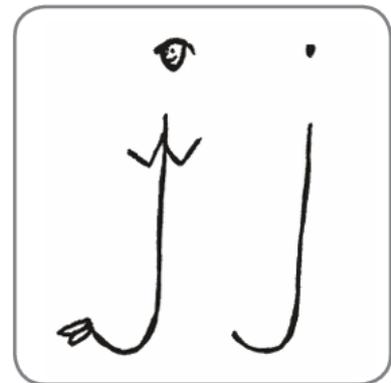
- start at the top of the insect's neck
- draw down the short, straight body
- draw a curl for a small, round tail
- add a little dot for the head



Jack-in-a-box

down its body, curl and dot

- start at the top of the Jack-in-a-box's neck
- draw down the long, straight body
- draw a smooth curl for the legs
- add a dot for the head



Maisie and the Mountains

Maisie, mountain, mountain

- start at Maisie's head
- draw a straight body for Maisie
- go over the mountains from Maisie's waist
- check the mountains are the same height as Maisie
- add a small curl for the grass



Nobby and his net

down Nobby, over his net

- start at Nobby's head
- go straight down Nobby's body
- go over the net from Nobby's waist
- check the net is the same height as Nobby
- add a small curl for the grass



Robot

down its back and then curl over its arm

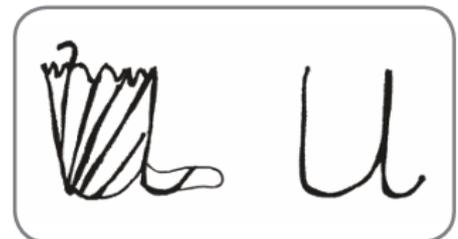
- start at the robot's head
- go straight down his body
- go over the robot's arm from its waist



Umbrella

down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle

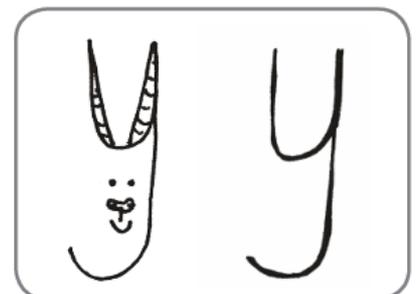
- start at the top of the handle
- draw down the straight line for the handle
- go round underneath the umbrella back up the other side
- go down the umbrella
- add a little curl for the puddle



Yak

down a horn, up a horn and under its head

- start at the top of the first horn
- draw down the straight line for the first horn
- go round underneath the horns
- draw a straight line up for the second horn
- go down and curl under his head



'Curly' Letters

Egg

lift off the top and scoop out the egg

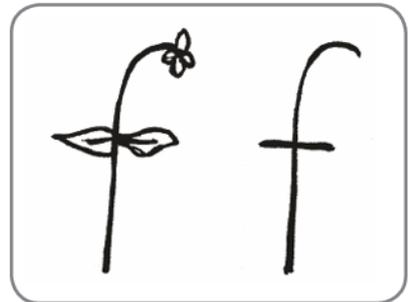
- draw up around the shell that needs to be cut off like a boiled egg
- go round underneath the egg



Flower

down the stem and draw the leaves

- start at the top of the flower
- draw around and down the flower stem - then lift the pencil off the page
- draw a straight line across the leaves



Snake

slither down the snake

- start at the snake's head
- curl one way
- curl the other way



'Zigzag' letters

Vulture

down a wing, up a wing

- draw two straight lines for the wings - down, up



Worm

down, up, down, up

- draw four straight lines
- down, up, down, up



Zigzag

zig, zag, zig

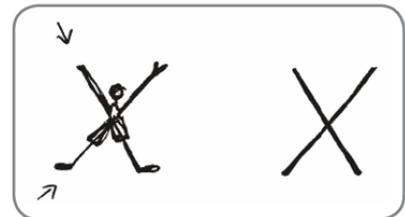
- draw three straight lines
- across, diagonally back, across



Exercise

down the arm and leg and repeat the other side

- start at the top left
- draw one straight line diagonally down
- lift the pencil off the page
- start at the bottom left
- go diagonally up

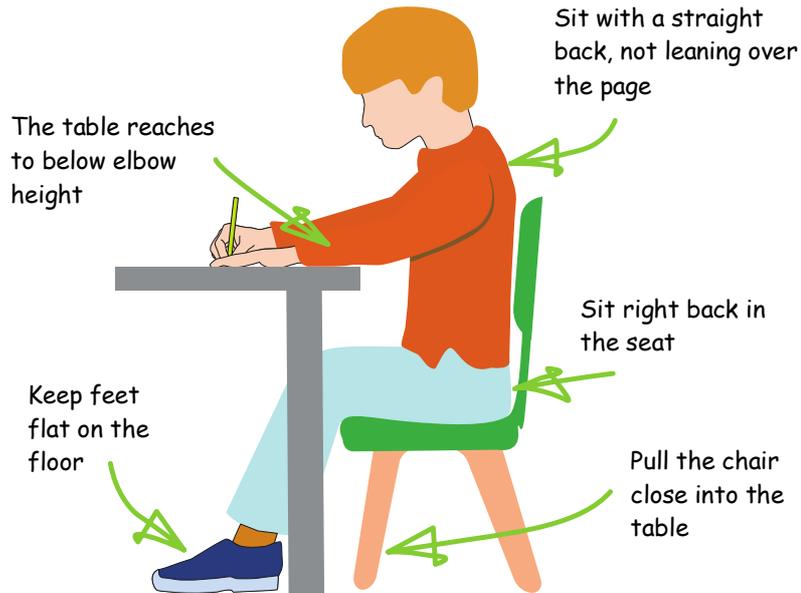


The writing implements available to the children are reviewed as the pupils' control over their letters improves. This progression moves from slightly larger triangular pencils with finger grip support, through to more slender pencils and eventually to using a pen (in key stage 2). Rubbers are available to use, yet we also encourage editing by neatly crossing out with a ruler. Teachers are experienced in adapting practice to match the needs of individual cohorts and pupils.

When a child is ready to start a more focused formal approach to learning how to form single letters or numbers, this is a good time to introduce the other key ability skills required for handwriting:

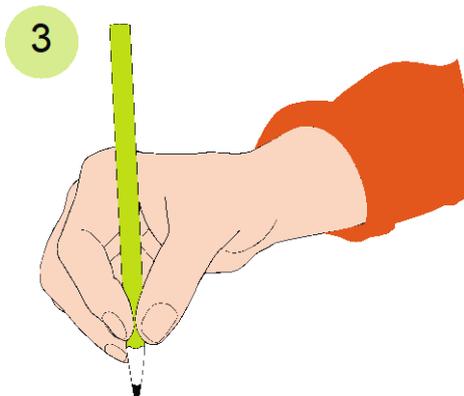
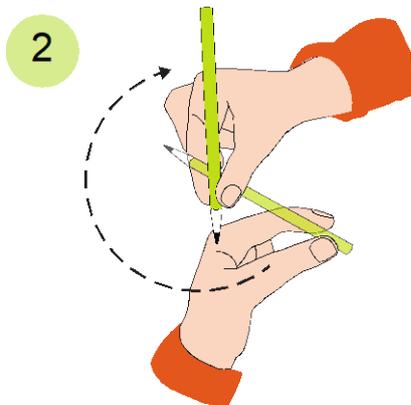
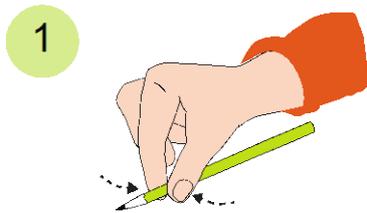
- sitting correctly at a desk - it is important to ensure that their sitting position and table height are correct for them.
- pencil grip - that it is appropriate for the child's developmental stage and age.
- paper position - for younger children this may still be on a vertical surface allowing them to make big movements in-line with their pencil grip stage.

SITTING POSITION



THE TRIPOD PENCIL GRIP

Both right- and left-handed children are encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib.



- 1) Grip the pencil with your index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.
- 2) With your free hand, spin the pencil from underneath.
- 3) Use your middle finger to support the underside of the pencil.

Children tend to develop hand dominance between the ages of 3-5 years old, for some it may be slightly later and for a few it does not become a subconscious decision until they are 8 or 9 years old. Many children will naturally develop a clear right- or left-hand dominance which is greatly influenced by their genetics.

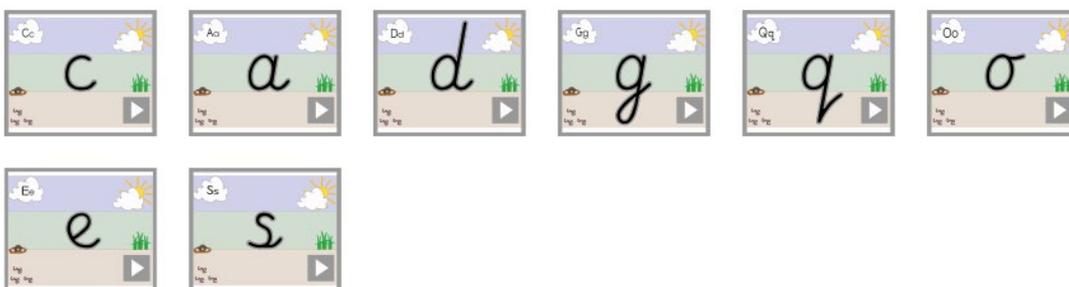
Whether a child is right or left-handed does not affect their academic ability or progress if they have developed and been taught the appropriate key skills. The important thing is not to force particular hand dominance on a child. It will never feel natural for them and the acquisition of gross and fine motor skills will feel awkward and may well appear clumsy, delaying their development, skills ability, confidence and self-esteem. Please see our additional information (Appendix A) if your child is left handed.

It is important to learn how to form letters correctly to begin with, and to start their letters in the correct place, as this makes the transition from single letter formation to joined letter handwriting much easier. Once the letters in their basic form have been mastered, we move to the cursive version in preparation for joining.

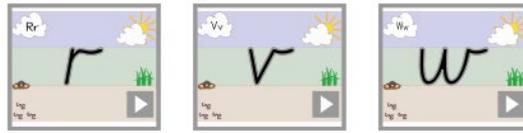
Straight line cursive letters



Curves to start cursive letters



Top exit cursive letters



Tunnel cursive letters



Hooks, loops and lines cursive letters



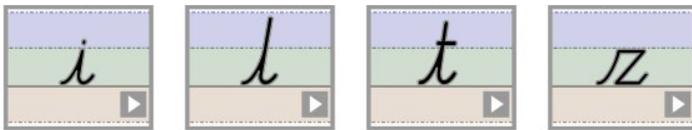
Once a child has mastered and is able to form lower-case letters of a consistent size, and have them correctly positioned in relation to one another, they are ready to learn how to join their writing. We aim for our children to have reached this stage by the end of Key Stage 1.

STAGE 3 - JOINING LETTERS

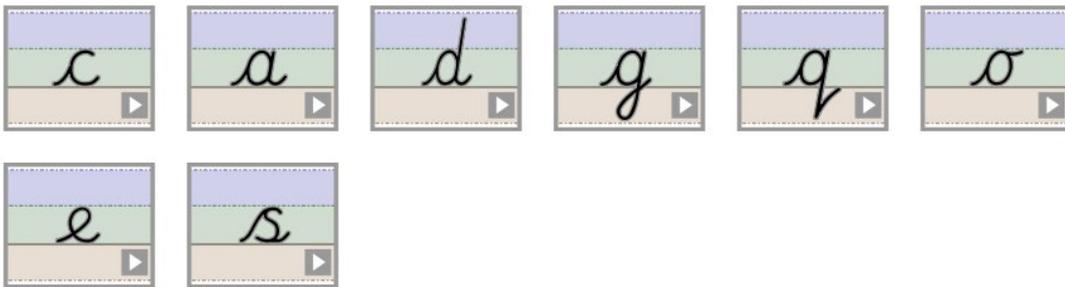
As a child's fine motor skills develop it enables them to form smaller more refined versions of the letters.

At this stage, we encourage the children to use lead in strokes. This is a simple progression from the previous formation, which means that every letter begins on the line. Please note that we do not join capital letters.

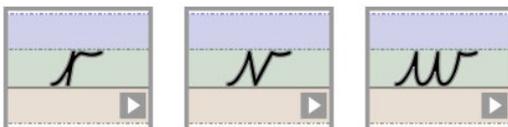
Straight line continuous cursive letters



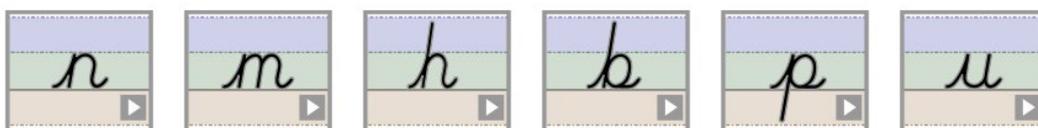
Curves to start continuous cursive letters



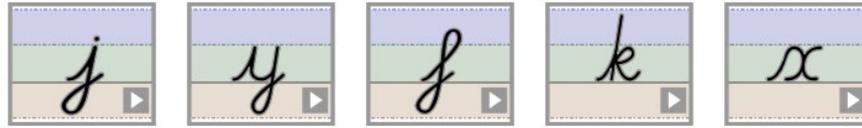
Top exit continuous cursive letters



Tunnel continuous cursive letters



Hooks, loops and lines continuous cursive letters



Moving from Continuous Cursive Single Letters to Joining

There are three join strokes to be taught. The easiest is the bottom exit letters (the majority of the letters), as all a child has to do is write the letters closer together without lifting their pencil off the paper. So teaching this first helps to build a child's confidence in their ability before moving on to more tricky join groups.

Only the top exit letters to the letter "e" and top exit letter joins need to be taught for continuous cursive, as the nature of the font style means that the lead-in and exit strokes needed to join the majority of letter combinations have already been taught.

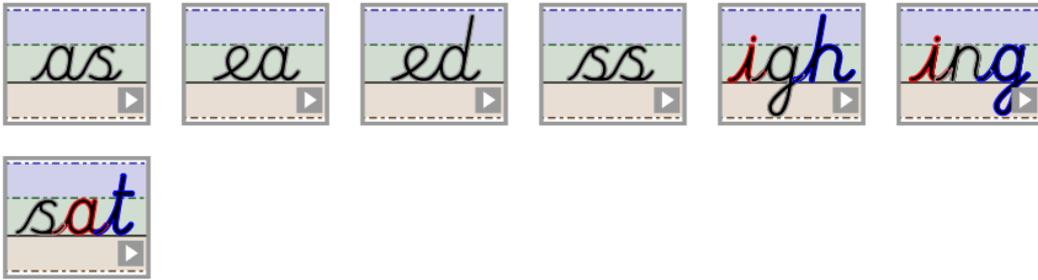
The ultimate aim is for a child to develop a good handwriting style, which means:

- They can produce and maintain a good speed.
- Have a fluid hand movement that is comfortable.
- Letters are of a consistent and appropriate size, positioned correctly.
- Handwriting is legible (so others can read it easily).

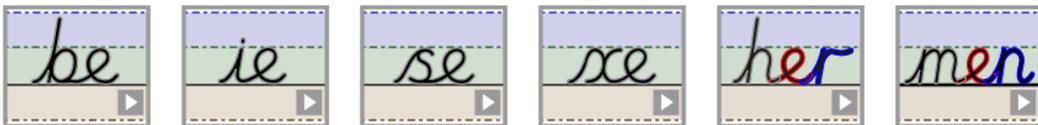
Continuous cursive bottom letter joins



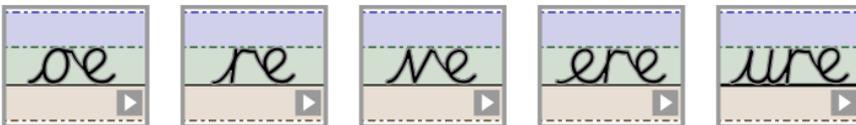
Continuous cursive bottom to c shaped letter joins



Continuous cursive bottom e letter joins



Continuous cursive top e letter joins



Continuous cursive top e letter joins



3. INCENTIVES & SUPPORT

All children are guided and encouraged through praise and incentives such as being the class Handwriting Hero. Our younger children are engaged with finger strong carousels, and whole class activities (for example dough discos) to bring fun to their learning. Each child's pencil grip and letter formation is monitored and small homogeneous groups created to focus on particular letter families.

If pupils are struggling to improve their handwriting, a variety of strategies can be used. Depending on individual difficulties, resources such as pencil grips, sloping writing supports and writing guidelines can prove successful.

For those pupils who have significant identified difficulties, we establish a system of support which may include, scribing, the use of a laptop to type or to use voice typing software.

Once in KS2, if a child can write neatly, legibly, with correct letter formation and in a clear flowing style, they will be rewarded with a pen license - moving away from using a pencil. Everyone in Year 6 is encouraged to write neatly with a pen for all lessons with the exception of maths.

4. ASSESSMENT

Formative assessment

Formative assessment (or Assessment for Learning) takes place throughout every session and is the basis on which teachers tailor learning to the needs of the children they are teaching. Handwriting feedback, both verbal and written is a feature of continuous guidance for all children.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment takes place termly. It is used to:

- identify areas of strength and weakness for classes, groups and individuals
- provide evidence for patterns in progress and attainment (eg. between boys/girls, SEN/non-SEN, different year groups)
- target support to underperforming groups, classes and individuals
- compare attainment with nationally agreed expectations for children of that age

We assess each pupil's handwriting against the Teacher Assessment Framework for their year group. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have their progress assessed using the Early Learning Goals for Literacy and Physical Development.

The image displays six overlapping sheets of the Teacher Assessment Framework (TAF) for handwriting, corresponding to Standards 1 through 6. Each sheet is designed for a specific year group and includes the following components:

- Standard Title:** STANDARD 1: END OF YEAR 1 ASSESSMENT through STANDARD 6: END OF YEAR 6 ASSESSMENT.
- Name:** A line for the pupil's name.
- The pupil can...:** A list of specific skills and expectations for that year group, such as "Write a range of letters, words and simple sentences" for Standard 1.
- Attainment Table:** A table with columns for "Emergent Year", "Secure Year", and "Advanced Year", with corresponding age ranges (e.g., 4;0-10 for Emergent Year 1).
- Date, Assembly, Level:** A section for recording the date of assessment, the assembly used, and the final attainment level.

Early Learning Goals – statutory (Effective September 2021)	Progression in handwriting – statutory National Curriculum, 2014)			
EYFS	Y1	Y2	Y3 & Y4	Y5 & Y6
<p>Pupils at the expected level of development will:</p> <p>Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed • Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters • Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others. <p>Fine motor skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing - using the tripod grip in almost all cases • Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery • Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing. 	<p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly • begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place • make distinctions between ascenders and descenders • form capital letters • form digits 0-9 • use word spaces 	<p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 & relationship to one another and to lower case letters • use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters. 	<p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters • increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch. 	<p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: • choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters • choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

APPENDIX A: LEFT-HANDED WRITERS

Left-handed writers should have the same high expectations as right handed writers. Teachers make sure that left-handed children sit with their writing hand away from a right-handed pupil, as shown in the diagram below. The children are taught to angle their paper to a greater degree and to use the tripod grip (see photograph and link below).

[Teaching the tripod pencil grip \(teachhandwriting.co.uk\)](http://teachhandwriting.co.uk)

It is often frustrating for left-handed writers to use a whiteboard, as their arm may rub out what they have just written. Therefore, alternative methods of recording such as paper and pencil will be offered. In addition, we hold a full range of different pencil grips to explore, should your child be experiencing difficulties.

For more support and guidance for left-handed writers, please explore these links:

[Left-handed writers \(teachhandwriting.co.uk\)](http://teachhandwriting.co.uk)

[Ideas and Tips to Help Your Left-Handed Child \(twinkl.co.uk\)](http://twinkl.co.uk)

[How to support left-handed pupils' handwriting - Bing video](#)

