

HANDWRITING POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2024 - 2025

CAPTAIN WEBB PRIMARY SCHOOL

Intent

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns. The development of this fluid style when mastered allows children to apply their energy into the content of their writing as opposed to the formation of the letters themselves. Handwriting skills are taught regularly and systematically throughout the school.

At Captain Webb Primary School our aims in teaching handwriting are:

- To enable children to write in a consistent, well presented and legible format.
- To have a consistent approach across Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and 2 when teaching handwriting.
- To ensure that from Year 2 to the end of Year 6 children are using a cursive writing style.
- To make sure all children know the difference between lower and upper case letters.
- To ensure the skills taught at Key Stage 1 continue to develop throughout Key Stage 2.
- To adopt a consistent approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.

Implementation

Children will be taught to:

- hold a pencil correctly

Children should be encouraged to use a tripod pencil grip, where the pencil is gripped between the index finger and the thumb. The middle finger is then used to support the underside of the pencil as shown below.

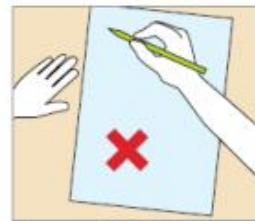
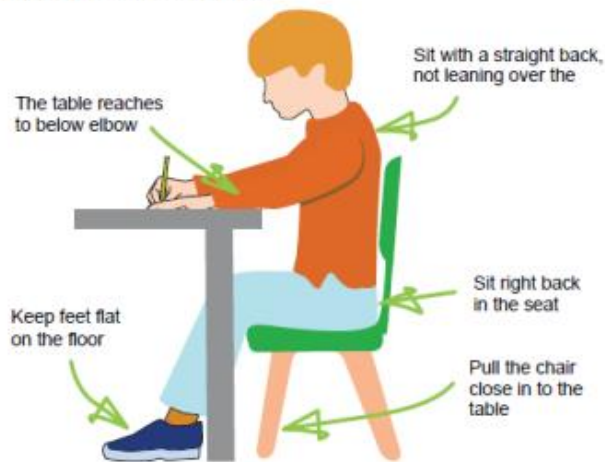


- 1) Grip the pencil with your index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.
- 2) With your free hand, spin the pencil from underneath.
- 3) Use your middle finger to support the underside of the pencil.

- and adopt the correct posture when writing

Children should be encouraged to adopt the correct writing position as shown below.

SITTING POSITION



Paper position for right-handed children

(children who are left handed should reposition the paper the other way and sit to the left hand side if seated next to a right handed child)

- write from left to right and from top to bottom of the page
- start and finish letters correctly
- form regularly sized and shaped letters
- use regular spacing between letters and words
- take a pride in their written work and the overall presentation






In **Nursery** children will be encouraged to develop gross motor control through the use of large equipment for mark making such as big chalks, paint brushes, finger paints, shaving foam etc. They will develop their fine motor skills and use a range of mark making tools such as pencils, pens and crayons. They will be encouraged to talk about shapes and movement. As the children progress they will be taught to form letters correctly starting using Read Write Inc's guidance on letter formation using the RWI mnemonics to aid the correct letter formation.

In **Reception** children will be taught to form letters correctly starting using Read Write Inc's guidance on letter formation using the RWI mnemonics to aid the correct letter formation. Letter formation is taught alongside phonic development. Our aim is that by the end of the EYFS all children hold a pencil correctly and form all letters and numbers correctly. Errors in pencil grip and letter formation will be immediately addressed, modelled and corrected.

In Reception and Year 1 all children should receive a daily handwriting session for 10 mins as part of their RWI Phonics session.

RWI Mnemonics

My Sound Mat

								
Maisey mountain mountain	Around the apple, down the leaf	Slither down the snake	Round his bottom, up his tall neck and down to his feet	Down the tower, across the tower	Down the body, dot for the head	Down Nobby and over his net	Down the plait and over the pirate's face	Round her face, down her hair and give her a curl
								
All around the orange	Curl around the caterpillar	Down the kangaroos body, tail and leg	Down and under, up to the top and draw a puddle	Down the laces, to heel, round the toe	Down the stem and draw the leaves	Lift off the top and scoop out the egg	Down the long leg	Down the head, to the hooves and over his back
								
Down his back, then curl over his arm	Down the body, curl and dot	Down a wing, up a wing	Down a horn, up a horn and under his head	Down up, down up	Zig-zag-zig	Round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair	Down the arm and leg, repeat the other side	

Handwriting and Spelling

Across the school, handwriting is carefully modelled by the teacher and outcomes are recorded by the children in their literacy books. The use of patterns to support letter formation and appropriate letter-joins is also embedded enabling children to also further develop their fine motor skills. From Year 1, teachers use the RWI spelling lists and draw attention to spelling patterns as they demonstrate writing the word in handwriting practise at the start of English lessons.

Year 1

Statutory Requirements

- 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
- Form capital letters
- Form digits 0-9
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

In **Year 1** children should now have mastered how to hold their pencil correctly using the tripod grip and begin to write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.

They will continue to use the RWI Mnemonics to learn how to form all their letters and transition to Nelson Handwriting to understand which letters belong to which handwriting family.

Nelson Handwriting provides a clearly structured programme with full coverage of the technical aspects of writing (including letter formation, basic joins, printing, speed writing and slant.) This edition brings greater alignment between the teaching of phonics and the teaching of handwriting.

Letter families

Set 1: c o a d g f s q e

Set 2: i l t j u y

Set 3: b h k m n p r

Set 4: v w x z

Year 2

Statutory requirements:

Pupils should be 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 not joined
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and with the correct relationship to one another and to lower-case letters
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

In **Year 2** children should now have mastered the correct formation of the shapes of individual letters, know the letter families and can now be introduced to joined handwriting.

Joined handwriting is taught by joining vowel consonant digraphs – this also helps with the recall of spelling patterns. From Year 2 onwards, all pupils receive a daily handwriting session for 10 mins.

- Pre cursive script



(Note the letters which do not yet join to another letter known as the **break letters**: b, g, j, p, q, s, x, y and z. Note the letters which do not join from another letter: c, h, q, r, t, y and z) At this stage, the pupils are taught to form the k with a loop to support the fluidity of joined letters.

Joining Groups

The joining groups divide the letters according to how they will join to the other letters.

Group 1

a c d e h l k l m n t u

Thirteen letters with exit flicks

Group 2

a c d e g i j m n o p g r s u v w x y

Nineteen letters which start at the top of the x height

Group 3

b f k l t

Six letters which start at the ascender

Group 4

f o r v w

five letters which start at the x height.

Inclusion (EYFS to Year 2)

Children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills and children with special educational needs, will be given daily tuition to help achieve their optimum handwriting level. These interventions will be delivered using the Jimbo Fun programme produced by the National Handwriting association. <https://www.jimbofun.co.uk/> (See Nelson Handwriting Book 1 p20 for a comprehensive list of specific handwriting difficulties)

Years 3 and 4

Statutory requirements:

Pupils should be 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 not joined
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, for example by ensuring that the down strokes of the letters are parallel and equidistant; that the lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch

In **Year 3** children should have now mastered the correct formation of the diagonal and horizontal joins and focus on learning the first, second and third joins. In **Year 4** the children will revise all taught joins and be introduced to the fourth join.

The Joins

	Group	→	Group	
The first join	1	→	2	<i>in am</i>
The second join	1	→	3	<i>ab ch</i>
The third join	4	→	2	<i>oa wo</i>
The fourth join	4	→	3	<i>wh ob</i>
The break letters				<i>bigger</i>

The Joined Style

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Years 5 and 6

Statutory requirements:

Pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed and personal style
- Choose which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding, as part of their personal style, whether or not to join specific letters
- Choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters)

In Year 5 and Year 6, teachers model handwriting. Targeted groups of learners who are experiencing difficulty in fluency and formation of letters will receive additional intervention sessions. The majority of pupils will be encouraged to develop their own style.

Implementation

Whole class and group teaching

In the early stages, pupils will receive handwriting lessons in small groups of children. Later on, as children come to understand the concept of written language and show evidence of developing control, you may work with large groups and whole classes.

Handwriting is taught alongside the teaching of Phonics. However, teaching the mechanics of handwriting, ensuring correct letter formation and pencil hold including additional practice should be planned into the weekly timetable outside the Phonics lesson.

It is suggested that 10 minutes at the beginning of your English lesson is timetabled for Handwriting.

Resources

Sharpened HB pencil

Lined paper

Reception pupils will begin their writing journey with a chunkier pencil to support them with the tripod grip. They will also transition between larger lines to 15mm lined paper.

Practice

1. Practice the basic letter formation / join
2. Practice letter formation / joins in words.
3. Practice letter formation / joins in a sentence.

Teaching Sequence for Handwriting

All staff will follow the 'teaching sequence for handwriting' document that outlines the weekly focus. e.g. Year 2 Spring 2 Week 1: wk 1 join to and from w using the third join and fourth join owf owb own owd p77

The staff will follow the Read Write Inc and Nelson Handwriting handbooks for guidance on how to teach the letter formation and joins correctly. The teaching sequences have been planned to ensure progression and each year group have opportunities for revision to ensure handwriting joins are embedded.

Assessment

Whole school and class assessment

Senior leaders should monitor children's writing and presentation in books regularly (termly). The following should be considered:

- Is the writing generally legible?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with age related expectations?

Individual assessment

Children should be observed as they write during handwriting lessons – the teacher must circulate, monitor and intervene. Teachers also need to monitor and mark whole pieces of writing. The following should be considered:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movement when forming and or joining letters?
- Are any letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
- Is the writing easily legible?
- Is the pupil's handwriting development should be in line with age related expectations?

Inclusion (Year 3 – 6)

Children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills and children with special educational needs, will be given daily tuition to help achieve their optimum handwriting level. These interventions will be delivered using the 'Speed Up!' a kinaesthetic programme to develop fluent handwriting. (See Nelson Handwriting Book 1 p20 for a comprehensive list of specific handwriting difficulties)

Impact

This systematic approach ensures development in the skill of handwriting throughout each year group. Outcomes in children's wider curriculum work, as well as in their literacy books and school displays, evidence the progress that children make in this area, as well as the consistency of the approach across the school.