

## Teaching Handwriting at Hunsley Primary

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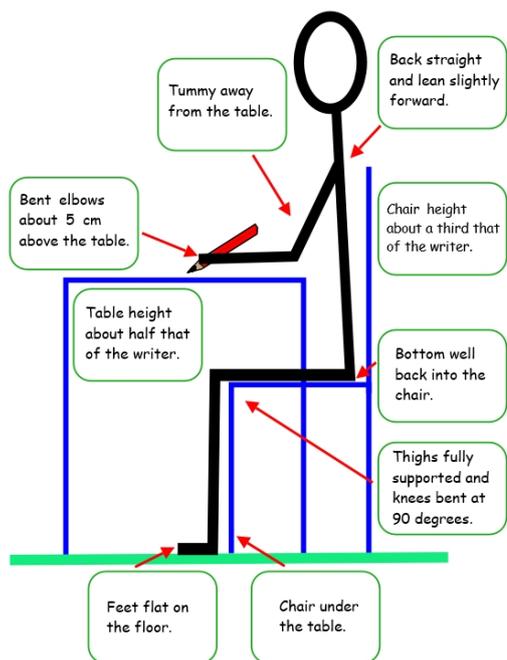
## Principles

When taught effectively, handwriting is where children will see the biggest change and fastest improvement in their work: progress they are able to see, feel and enjoy. Good teaching of handwriting reaps rewards in a very short time span. Good handwriting needs self-discipline, skill and quality teacher input. Good handwriting gives the reader a favourable impression of the work in front of them before they read any of the words. Children must be taught to present their work in as careful and attractive a manner as possible.

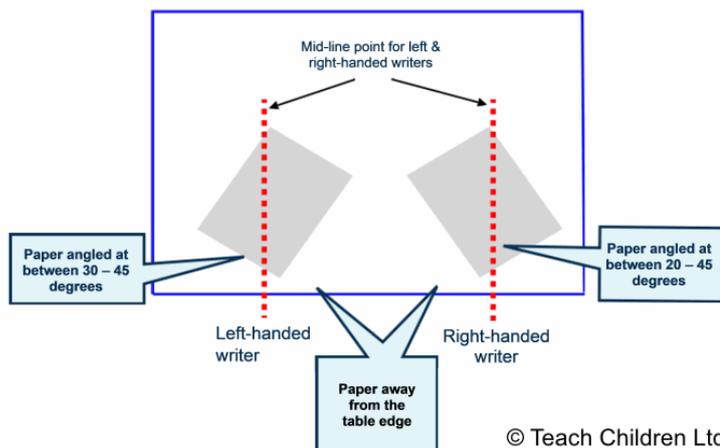
Through this approach, we teach pupils to:

- Write legibly in both printed and joined styles with increasing fluency through teaching: grip, posture, letter shapes and movements; teaching the joining of letters, developing increasing speed and endurance without loss of quality
- Develop the ability to produce letters without thinking in an automatic style response. This releases the brain to concentrate on other ideas i.e. spelling, syntax, grammar, style and content
- Foster a comfortable and legible handwriting style
- Develop a sense of pride in their work, enabling them to present work neatly for an audience.

## Posture



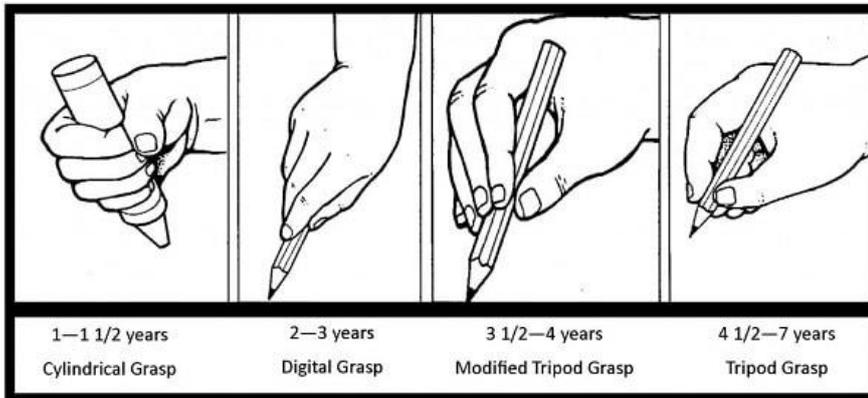
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## Pencil Grip

When completing any writing task, including handwriting practise, children need hold their pencil with the correct tripod pencil grip.



## Ready to write routine

They need to sit up in their chairs with the page slightly sloping. Their non-writing hand will be used to keep the page flat and support the writing. Across the school we will use the following abbreviations and ready to write routine:

- 6 feet - chair legs flat on the floor and children's feet flat on the floor
- BBC - Back, Bottom, Chair
- TNT- Tummy Near Table
- 2 hands - non-writing hand holding the paper/page flat and writing hand ready to pick up their pencil.

When supporting the children to hold their pencil correctly, we will use the following reminders:

- Pick up your pencil with your 'Pinchy Parrot' (thumb, index and middle fingers).
- Find your 'pillow for your pencil' (the soft crease between the thumb and index finger).
- Put your pencil 'to bed' (place the pencil down to rest on the soft crease).

## Language

The same language will be used by all staff teaching the formation of the letters and this is as follows:

- Top solid line
- Middle broken line
- Bottom solid line
- Bottom broken line (R/Y1 only)

When teaching the letters, we will refer to them as follows:

- Tall letters - b, d, h, k, l,
- Short letters - a, c, e, i, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x, z
- Tail letters - g, j, p, q, y
- Teenager t - t
- Greedy f - f

When modelling the correct formation, we will use the following language:

- Careful driving - when re-tracing lines
- Bump the line - when a letter touches a line

- Joining stroke

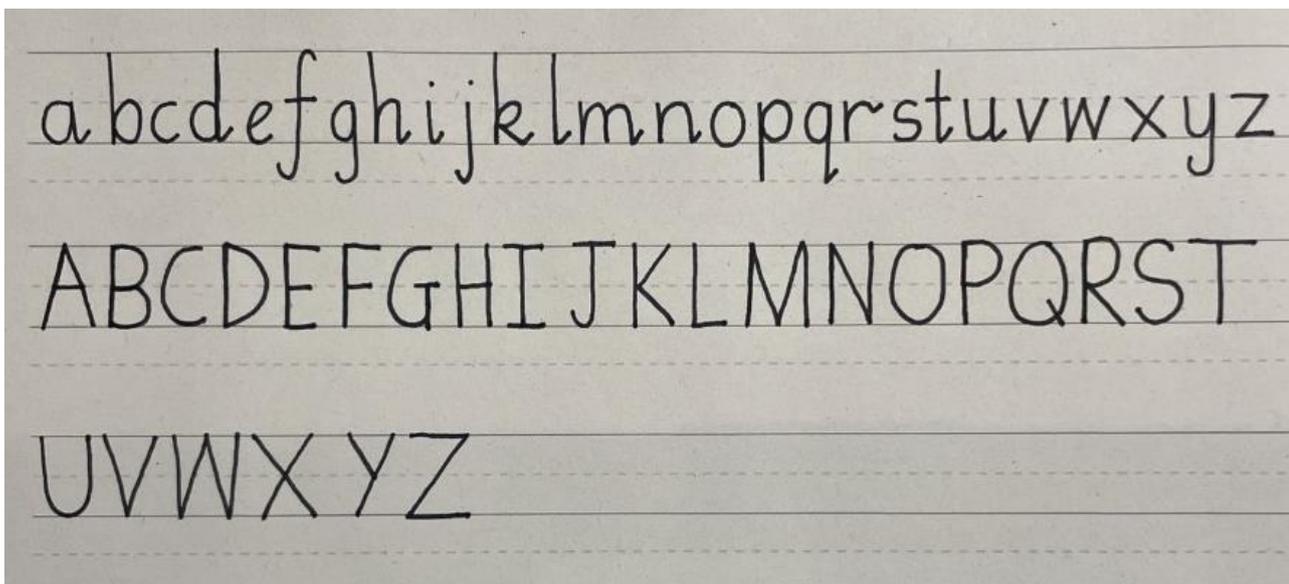
Letter families:

1. The straight-line family- i, l, t, j
2. The coat hanger family- c o a d g q e
3. The bridge family- n, m, r, h, b, k, p
4. The zig zag family- v, w
5. The smile family- u, y
6. The misfits- s f x z

### **The Link to Little Wandle Phonics**

In Reception and KS1, teachers will use the formation phrases from Little Wandle to support children with the formation of lowercase letters. This will be used alongside key vocabulary and the ready to write routine detailed above.

**Formation**The following shows the formation of lower-case and upper-case letters and numbers at Hunsley

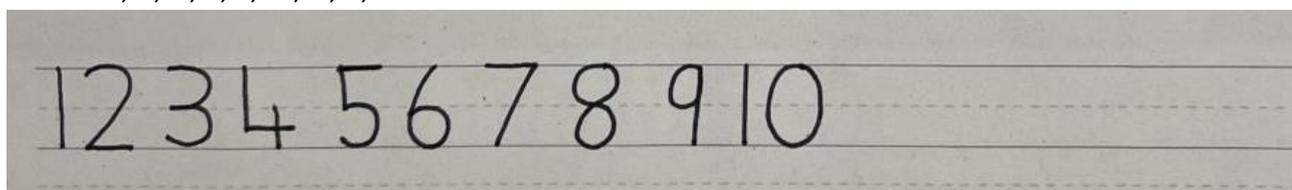


Primary.

Note:

- 'x' is formed down from the top left diagonally, then down from the top right diagonally
- All capital letters start on the top solid line. The following letters are formed with strokes moving down and back up:

A, B, D, E, F, M, N, P, R



- 'k' is formed without a loop in Reception and Year 1 in line with Little Wandle phonics and children will transition to the loop in Year 2 when they begin joining letters

## Handwriting in Reception

Children will begin with daily handwriting sessions in Reception separate from their phonics lessons. At the start of the year, they will have teaching and practice in using and manoeuvring their thumb, wrist and shoulder muscles through a variety of activities such as 'dough disco'. Initial handwriting lessons will also include learning and practising the movements needed to form letters and how to hold and control a pencil. They will also be introduced to key directional vocabulary such as up, down, round and back.

In line with the phonics teaching, children will then be exposed to and practise forming the letters during daily phonics lessons in different ways, such as in the air and on whiteboards. Running alongside this, they will have daily handwriting sessions teaching letter formation in letter families and focusing on the **shape** of the letters writing in books on our Reception handwriting lines. This will focus on lower-case letters to start, using printed sheets to support this. Once children have learnt the formation of lower-case letters, they will be introduced to capital letters and the final stage will include digraphs, trigraphs and words.

Lessons will follow the following structure:

<u>Warm Up</u>	<u>Revisit and review</u>	<u>Teach and Practise</u>	<u>Practise and Apply</u>
Hand warm up exercises. Check posture.	Review previous letter formation.	Use grapheme card and formation phrase to introduce letter. Write in the air and write on palms. Model on board.	Re-enforce ready to write routine and children complete formation on worksheet or in books.

## Unit structure

<b>Unit 1 – Preparation for writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach writing routines, including posture, pencil grip and key writing vocabulary.</li> <li>Motor Development Activities</li> <li>Practising patterns: Set 1 - horizontal lines, vertical lines, wavy lines, circle. Set 2 - up curves, down curves, mixed-height curves, letter C. Set 3 - spirals, crosses, turrets, diagonals. Set 4 - zig-zags, sideways V, letter X, triangles.</li> </ul> <p>(approximately 5 weeks)</p>
<b>Assessment and consolidation</b>	
<b>Unit 2 – Straight Line Family</b>	i, l, t, j  (approximately 1 week)
<b>Unit 3 - Coat hanger Family</b>	c, o, a, d, g, q, e  (approximately 2 weeks)
<b>Unit 4 – The Bridge Family</b>	n, m, r, h, b, k, p  (approximately 2 weeks)
<b>Assessment and consolidation</b>	
<b>Unit 5 – The Zig-Zag Family The Smile Family</b>	v, w u, y

	(approximately 1 week)
<b>Unit 6 – The Misfits Family</b>	s, f, x, z  (approximately 1 week)
<b>Unit 7 – Capital letters 1</b>	Pp, Bb, Rr, Dd, Uu  (approximately 2 weeks)
<b>Unit 8 – Capital letters 2</b>	Ll, Ee, Ff, Mm, Aa  (approximately 2 weeks)
<b>Assessment and consolidation</b>	
<b>Unit 9 – Capital letters 3</b>	Th, li, Jj, Hh, Kk, Nn  (approximately 2 weeks)
<b>Unit 10 – Capital letters 4</b>	Cc, Gg, Oo, Qq, Ss  (approximately 2 weeks)
<b>Unit 11 – Capital letters 5</b>	Xx, Vv, Ww, Yy, Zz  (approximately 2 weeks)
<b>Assessment and consolidation</b>	
<b>Unit 12 – Digraphs, trigraphs, words and consolidation</b>	

Reception handwriting Lines:

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## Handwriting in Year 1

Children will begin with daily handwriting sessions in Year 1 separate from their phonics lessons. The children will revisit forming the lower-case and upper-case letters correctly, but on slightly smaller lines, as shown below. They will focus on the correct pencil grip and letter **sizing**, ensuring accurate placement of letters **sitting on the line** and **spacing** of words.

Year 1 handwriting lines:



In Year 1, the letters will be practised in the order of letter families:

1. The straight-line family- i, l, t, j
2. The coat hanger family- c o a d g q e
3. The bridge family- n, m, r, h, b, k, p
4. The zig zag family- v, w
5. The smile family- u, y
6. The misfits- s f x z

After completing each letter family, the letters will be consolidated, assessed re-visited before moving on to the next letter family.

Children will then re-visit the capital letters in the following order:

PBRDU

LEFMA

TIJHKN

CGOQS

XVWYZ

They will also learn how to form digits 0-9 on handwriting lines.

After each section the letters will be consolidated, assessed re-visited before moving on to the next letter family.

As the children will be writing sentences, they will be using finger spaces between words and as the year progresses these will become more proportionate to the size of the letters and words being written.

Lessons will follow the same structure as Reception.

<u>Warm Up</u>	<u>Revisit and review</u>	<u>Teach and Practise</u>	<u>Practise and Apply</u>
Hand warm up exercises. Check posture.	Review previous letter formation.	Use grapheme card and formation phrase to introduce letter. Write in the air and write on palms. Model on board.	Re-enforce ready to write routine and children complete formation in books.

## Handwriting in Year 2

The children will continue to practise the letters taught in Reception and Year 1 on slightly smaller lines, as shown below. The bottom dotted line is now removed and the gap between the solid lines matches the books used for writing from Y2-6.

Year 2 handwriting lines:



The children will revisit the letter families and capital letters ensuring correct pencil grip and letter sizing, ensuring accurate placement and spacing of words.

Once they are secure in their letter formation, placement, sizing and spacing, the children will then be taught each of the handwriting joins given below:

Join 1 – Up, over, stop reverse

e.g. ac, ad, af, ag, ao, aq, as, ca, cc, cq, co, cs, da, dc, dd, dg, do, ds, ea, ec, ed, ef, eg, eq, eo, es, fa, ff, fo, fs, ha, ho, hs, ia, ic, id, if, ig, iq, io, is, ka, ko, ks, la, lc, ld, lf, lg, lo, ls, ma, mo, ms, na, nc, nd, nf, ng, nq, no, ns, oa, oc, od, of, og, oo, os, ra, rc, rd, rf, rg, rq, ro, rs, ta, tc, tf, tg, to, ts, ua, uc, ud, uf, ug, uq, uo, us, va, vo, wa, wo, ws, xa, za, zo

Join 2 – Join across the top

e.g. fe, fi, fr, oe, oi, om, on, op, ox, oy, or, ou, ov, ow, oz, rp, ry, re, ri, rm, rn, rw, rv, ru, vy, ve, vi, vu, wp, ws, wy, we, wi, wu, wn, wr

Join 3 – join with a diagonal stroke straight up to the top solid line

e.g. ab, ah, ak, al, at, ch, ck, cl, ct, dl, dt, eh, ek, el, et, fl, ft, hl, ht, il, it, kl, kt, ll, lt, lk, lh, ml, mt, nb, nk, nl, nt, ob, oh, ok, ol, ot, rk, rl, rt, th, tl, tt, ub, uk, ul, ut, wl, wt, xl, zl

Join 4 – join with a diagonal stroke up to the middle broken line

e.g. ai, ae, am, an, ap, ar, au, av, aw, ax, ay, az, ce, ci, cn, cr, cu, cy, de, di, dr, du, dy, ee, ei, ej, em, en, ep, er, eu, ev, ew, ex, ey, ez, he, hi, hu, hy, ie, im, in, ip, ir, iv, ix, iz, ke, ki, kn, kr, ku, ky, le, li, lm, ln, lp, lr, lu, lv, lw, ly, me, mi, mm, mn, mp, mr, mu, my, ne, ni, nm, nn, np, nr, nu, nw, ny, te, ti, tm, tn, tp, tr, tu, tw, ty, ue, ui, um, un, up, ur, ux, xe, xy, ze, zi, zu, zy

Children will be taught the break letters: b p g j y q s. These letters do not join to other letters.

Children will be taught to use spaces between words which are appropriate for the sizes of the letters/words they are writing.

After each section the letters will be consolidated, assessed and re-visited before moving on to the next section.

When the children have been taught the above joins individually in two-letter clusters, they will begin to learn three-letter clusters and mixes of joins, building up to short words and eventually sentences. Consolidation, assessment and revisiting will take place at each stage.

Children will not be expected to join letters within all of their writing at this stage. Teachers may set them small challenges throughout the day, such as joining the date or title or single words and sentences. Their focus should be on correct formation in all writing, rather than joining.

## Handwriting in Year 3

Children will continue writing on the lines introduced in Year 2 within each subject book.

Handwriting will continue daily to support children to apply their knowledge of letter formation and joined handwriting to write legibly and fluently with increasing speed in all their writing.

At the beginning of Year 3, the children revisit the letter families, capital letters (in the order shown above) and digits 0-9 to ensure they are forming letters correctly and with correct sizing. After each section the letters will be consolidated, assessed and re-visited before moving on to the next section.

Children will then revisit the four joins with a view to this become more automatic for the children and will build on their joined handwriting skills by focusing on clarity, consistency and quality through confident use of joining strokes.

When the children have recapped the four joins individually in two-letter clusters, they will focus on three-letter clusters and mixes of join, short words and then sentences. Consolidation, assessment and revisiting will take place at each stage

Children will not be expected to join letters within all of their writing at the start of Year 3. Teachers will build this throughout Year 3 with the expectation that children are joining more automatically and consistently throughout the year and continuing into Year 4.

## Handwriting in Year 4, 5 and 6

At the beginning of the year, the children will revisit the letter families, capital letters (in the order shown above), digits 0-9 and the four joins (they will not revisit every pair of letters for each join but just a selection) to assess their progress. This assessment will then form their planned handwriting lessons, revisiting the letters, numbers or joins that need to be revisited.

They work on building **stamina**, **speed** and fluency through activities such as practising longer passages and publishing their final drafts.

They will use what they have learnt to develop their own comfortable handwriting **style** in preparation for the move to Year 7.

## Supporting Handwriting for Inclusion at Hunsley Primary

Although we aspire for all children to be fluent and confident writers, with neat presentation, we also acknowledge that for some individuals, this is a challenging outcome. There are many reasons why this might be the case:

- Fine-motor development delays
- Concentration and attention difficulties (ADHD, for example)
- Gross-motor or balance-related development delays (sensory processing difficulties)
- Visual impairment
- Dyslexia
- Other additional needs which impact on children's learning, especially their learning of writing.

Teachers will monitor pupils' progress in handwriting and take action to support those who are not progressing in line with their peers. Pupils who struggle with handwriting and/or are at risk of falling behind are identified early on and are taught and practise the knowledge they are missing and/or provided with the resources that they need to succeed. Teachers will focus on these pupils during the handwriting lessons and provide individual support. They will observe them as they write and provide feedback and support, preventing them from practising letter formation incorrectly. Joined handwriting is not taught to pupils until they have mastered print handwriting, and each stage will be consolidated, assessed and revisited before teachers move on to the next stage.

For many children with additional needs, writing is one of the most physically challenging aspects of school. To support all children in writing, Hunsley Primary staff engage in training provided by the Sensory and Physical Teaching Service (SAPTS). The training helps us create Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) which reduce the challenge of writing by using resources such as:

- Theraputty
- Fine motor exercises and warm-ups
- Resistance bands
- Pencil grips
- Ergonomically shaped pencils
- Support programmes such as 'Write from the Start'
- Writing slopes

The aim is to ensure that children with motor or sensory challenges are able to capture their ideas in writing, which is clear, functional and purposeful.

Where writing needs to be reduced to support a child or where functional handwriting is the aim, we also use the following:

- Scribes
- Transcribers
- Voice recording apps
- Voice recording whiteboards
- Laptops and Chromebooks
- Touch typing programmes such as BBC dancemat

## **Left-handed Writers at Hunsley Primary**

Once children have settled on their dominant hand, those children who are left handed will be supported to sit their paper slightly to the left of centre, and rotate it roughly 45 degrees clockwise (moving the top right corner down slightly). They will use their right hand to secure the paper and prevent it from moving when writing.

Left-handed children will be encouraged to hold their pencil 2-3 centimetres from the point of the pencil. They are also offered pencils and pens with a built-in grip zone if needed to support pressure and slipping when writing. Children will be encouraged to keep their wrist below the line they are writing on to ensure that they develop a comfortable position and avoid curling their wrist to see what they are writing.

## **Pencils and Pens at Hunsley Primary**

In Reception, children begin mark making using a variety of media, such as paint, giant chinks, pastels, pencil and crayons.

When practising letter formation, children will use a pencil, starting with a jumbo tripod grip pencil to support the correct pencil grip. When the children are ready and their fine motor skills have developed, they then move onto high quality slim pencils. Additional resources to support pencil grip are also provided to children if needed, for example pencil grips and 'twist 'n' write' pencils, and these are dependent on individual needs.

We begin the transition from pencil to pen in lower Key Stage 2 by providing children opportunities to experiment with different types of pens and find a utensil which is comfortable enough for them to produce fluent handwriting. There is no set year group where children are required to begin to use a pen, this is based on when the children and teachers feel that they are ready to do so, however our aim is to support all children to be able to use a pen comfortably by the end of Year 6.