

Handwriting at SMR

Handwriting is an essential skill for life and it is the responsibility of all teachers to facilitate the development of this skill. Accurate letter formation and the ability to write in a fluent cursive style enables people to communicate clearly and quickly in written form. This policy sets the expectations for handwriting for children, teachers and support staff at SMR. Teachers should model using the school's cursive style for all learning and feedback in books.

Intent

- To raise standards in writing across the school.
- To have a consistent approach across the school when teaching handwriting and presentation of work throughout the school.
- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.

For pupils to:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters with correct orientation in cursive handwriting.
- Develop flow and speed, so that eventually they are able to produce the letters automatically and in their independent writing.

Implementation

Handwriting is taught regularly through sessions and may be linked with spelling, grammar or phonics objectives. Teaching occurs outside English lessons. Importantly, shared and guided writing and teachers' written comments in books also provide additional opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting. In addition individual teaching and practise time is provided for children who are experiencing difficulties.

The role of the staff

- To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting.
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling.
- To provide resources and an environment which promotes good handwriting.
- To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development.
- To organise additional support for children who are below age related expectations
- LSAs trained by OT in fine motor skill development

Posture

- For good posture the large muscle groups that support the pelvis, trunk, shoulders and arms need to work in a coordinated way (gross motor skills). Strong gross motor skills gives the body a stable base (core strength) required for balance and stability, supporting coordination skills and helping the child's fine motor skills.

- Chairs and desks within classrooms are matched to children's age and height.
- Children's backs should be straight and feet resting on the floor. A right-handed child should have their book slanted to the left. For a left-handed child the book should be slanted to the right.
- For writing at a table, posture should be upright without being rigid and uncomfortable
- The hand which is not holding the pencil or pen (the supporting hand) should be used to stabilise the paper.

Pencil grip and Pressure

- An effective grip is necessary in order to produce legible, fluent handwriting
- Once children are developmentally ready (usually around age 4 but can be later for some), they should be taught how to hold a pencil correctly and develop a functional grip
- For most children a tripod grip is the most effective grip as it allows for control of the pencil and for precise movements for letter formation
- Early teaching of grip is needed as writing habits can be hard to change once formed
- For most children who are taught good posture and pencil grip, they will be able to apply the right amount of pressure to write fluently

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and a specific individual or group programme is drawn up in consultation with the SEND co-ordinator. Thicker triangular pencils, pencil grips and wider lines may be used by children experiencing problems writing, alongside other activities to develop their fine motor skills.

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- paper should be positioned to the left for right handed pupils and to the right for left handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case;
- pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision;
- pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child, so that they are not competing for space;
- extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically
- left-handed pupils can find it harder to write on small whiteboards as their hand can smudge or rub out words while they write

Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when they are modelled by a right-handed teacher.

Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

Expectations

- During handwriting sessions, children will apply taught formations of letters, or parts of text relevant to their current learning. For example, they may practise the letters from their current phonics focus, the letter strings used in their weekly spellings, key words, key vocabulary related to core texts /topics or use parts of text from guided reading or English texts.
- Pupils complete handwriting in their writing books. This enables children to both practise and refer back to handwriting alongside all other writing to ensure accuracy and consistency.
- Children use a standard HB pencil, well sharpened.
- When a child demonstrates that they are writing in a consistently joined and legible style they will be given a pen licence.

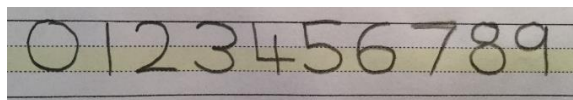
Support for children with gross/fine motor skill difficulties:

Teachers and LSA's will identify children who need support with gross and fine motor skills. Teacher will speak to SENDCo regarding concerns to put support and strategies in place that meet their developmental stage. These could include:

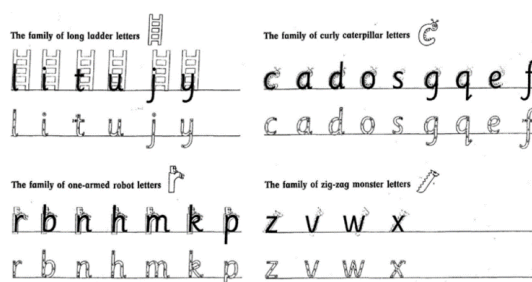
- Use of additional assessments (such as WriteWell Stages 1-4)
- Pencil grips
- Writing slopes
- Wobble cushions
- Hand eye coordination
- Exercises
- Intervention groups
- Occupational therapy or physio input/exercises

Training for staff will be available from the SENDCo and occupational therapist

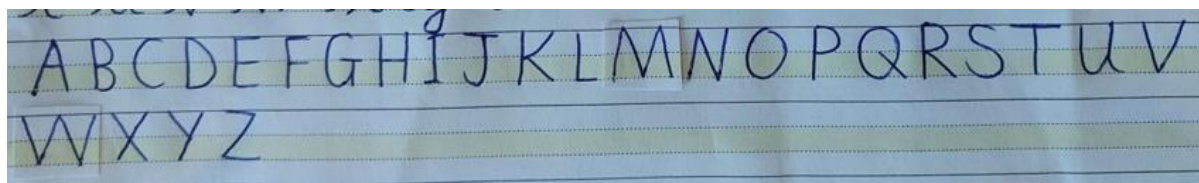
Number formation



Letter formation

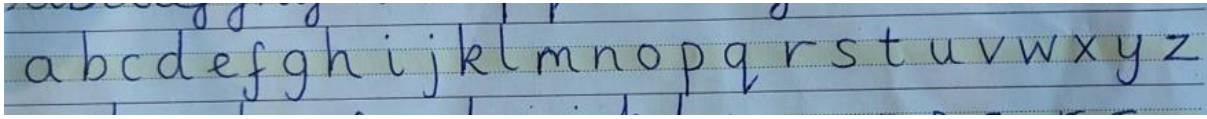


Capitals

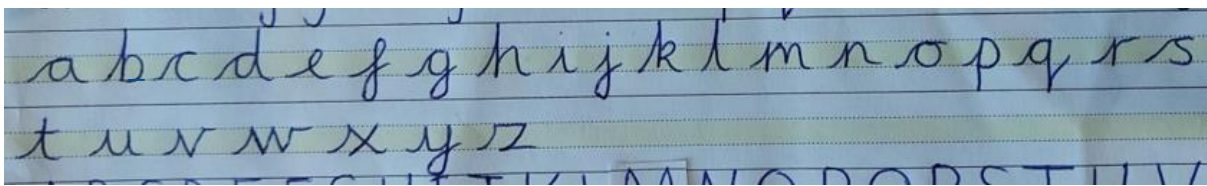
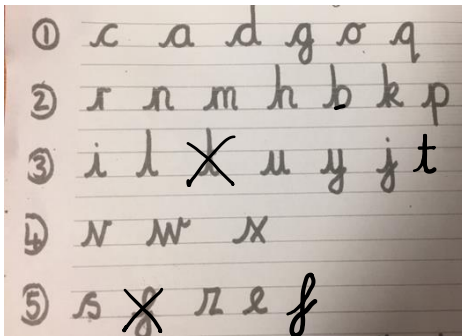


Lower case

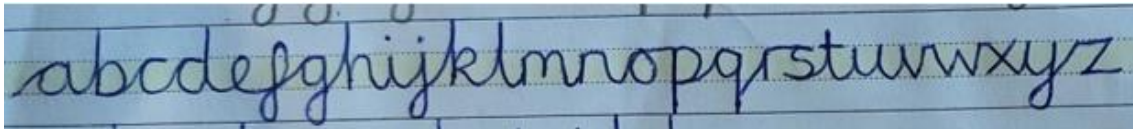
Firstly, individual letters are taught without entry strokes. They can be separated into the four groups above (long ladder letters, curly caterpillar letters, one-armed robot letters and zig-zag monster letters).



Once these formations are secure, individual letters are taught with entry strokes, in order from the sequence below. These entry strokes can be highlighted by using a different colour pen.



Once these formations are secure, all letters, except capital letters are joined.



There are four different joins taught:

1. Diagonal join to letters without ascenders e.g. ai ar un in am ear aw ir hu ti ki du up ag
2. Horizontal join to letters without ascenders e.g. ou vi wi op ow ov ri ru ve we re fe fu ob ol
3. Diagonal join to letters with ascenders e.g. ab ul it ib if ub th ck ch it
4. Horizontal join to letters with ascenders e.g. ol wh ot ft fl of rt rk wh ol ob

Nursery and Reception

Fine and gross motor skills are developed in EYFS through indoor and outdoor enhancements and intervention where needed (funky fingers, Dough Disco). Children will use chunky triangular pencils, large chalks, chunky pens and paint brushes to develop their motor skills.

When teaching letter formation, teachers understand the need to use multi-sensory approaches and for children to use materials which provide sensory feedback; children can 'feel' the shape of the letter if writing with crayon or chalk more so than if using a whiteboard pen on a smooth whiteboard. Pupils will also use sensory trays with flour, foam, sand etc to rehearse correct letter formation.

A non-cursive letter formation is taught in Reception, so they are ready for pre-cursive in year 1. Children will use a range of strategies including tracing, following patterns and going over and under teacher's writing.



Year 1

Throughout Year 1, pre-cursive script will be taught and when children are ready, they will move to cursive script. By the end of Year 1, all children should know how to form and demonstrate accurate joins and letter formation. Ascending and descending letters should be clear and correct in proportion. Handwriting lessons will be taught 4 x week and handwriting will be practised daily. Children will use a range of strategies including tracing, following patterns and going over and under teacher's writing. They will use a handwriting book for handwriting lessons and will have 21mm handwriting lines in their English book.

sun beamed out and Lila
saw the beautiful sky and
it was blue. so Lila ran back
home and she ~~saw~~ her village
was celebrating with music
and it was called hey Jude.
and they played parades
parades and musical statues
and they had some cake.
and they had loads of
food because beza had
the food was dying.

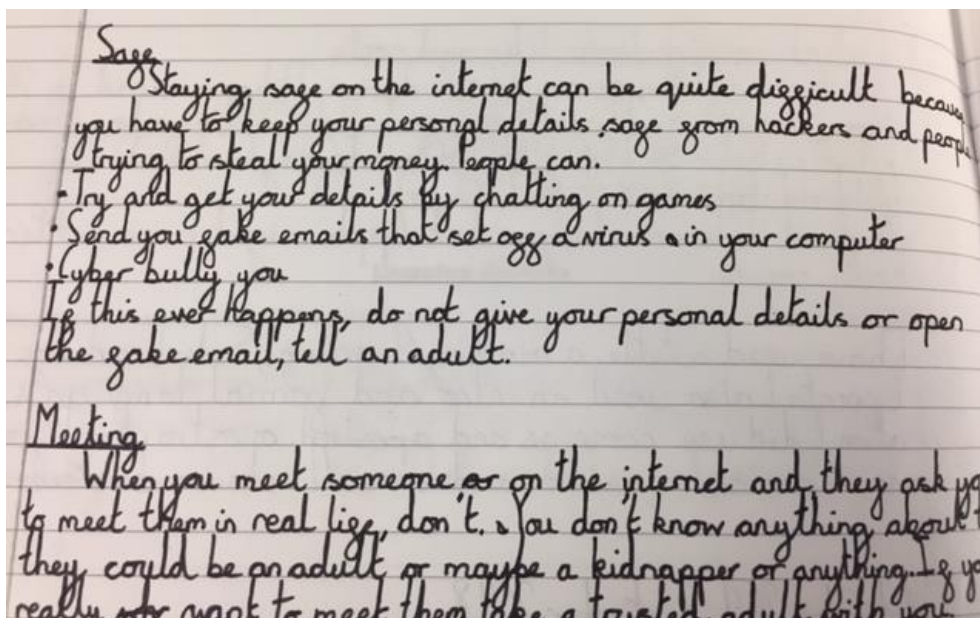
Year 2

In Year 2, children are expected to join their handwriting in accurate cursive script. Letter formation should be consistent, with accurate ascending letters and descending letters, which are in proportion to the rest of the script. Handwriting lessons will be taught 4x week and handwriting will be practised daily. Teachers will decide when children are ready to move away from the 21mm handwriting lines in their English book and move to plain lines.

Dear Sue
My name is Amel and we are learning
about the homeless people. Can you come
in ^{our} school to tell us more about the
homeless people? How many homeless
people come to get more food? Is it
just you who works there? Would you
like us to donate some food? Why
did you want to work in the food bank?
We are looking forward to meeting you.
From Harel class.

Year 3 and 4

Children's writing should become consistent in height and proportion. Writing should increase in fluency and speed. Handwriting is taught 4 x week until the end of term 2, then 3 x week with daily practise. In Y4, handwriting will be taught 3 x week with daily practise. In year 3, children will use 12mm handwriting lines in their English books and will move to plain lined books in Y4 if they are ready. When teacher identifies that a child is using consistent, cursive handwriting which is the correct height and proportion across the curriculum, the child will be given a 'pen licence'.



Year 5 and 6

Children in year 5 and 6 should write with a consistent and fluent, cursive style. Letters should be consistent and in proportion, with appropriate letter sizing. Year 5 and 6 will start the year with 3x week sessions until the teacher is confident. Handwriting will be practised daily throughout the curriculum. Where children are identified as needing additional support with their handwriting, targeted feedback and support will be put in place.

my eyes my trembling and exhausted body started to calm down and without realising it, I began to drift off into a dreamless and long sleep. When I awoke, I knew something was not right. Suddenly,...

Suddenly, a light turned on above me. Slowly, a handsome man walked into the bright room. He was wearing a red and gold embroidered waistcoat and black trousers. But the funny thing about him was he was smiling at me. What I was at the stupid, old smelly orphanage, people never had a big beam on their faces. (I don't think you were allowed to be honest) The man came in and sat next to me on the bed. It felt like he was going to read me a story. When I was a baby, I remember that my parents used to read me stories, but I'm 17 now I shouldn't be treated like that. He didn't read a story. He said to me, "Hello, I am the prince. But don't start bowing at my feet, I hate it when people do that. Now, I am to take care of you. My wife and me found you snoring away in our garden. Oh, and by the way, you'll meet her in a sec, come on." So both of us walked down a

Monitoring and Evaluation

- This will be undertaken by the class teacher and will also be assessed as part of English writing assessments.
- When undertaking scrutiny subject leaders will monitor all subjects for neat presentation and the use of cursive writing.