



## Handwriting Policy and Guidance

Amendments made since last review

Autumn 2018 – Handwriting moved from English policy to own policy to incorporate the detail of broad guidelines needed to support new handwriting programme in school.

Autumn 2023 – No changes made

Policy agreed / reviewed 28.11.2023

Next review due Autumn 2026

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body

Signed by headteacher

### Rationale

It is paramount that children are rigorously taught correct letter formation from the very beginning of their time in school to develop legible, fluent and efficient handwriting.

In handwriting, as in other skills, children will develop at different rates; for that reason, it is important that there is a consistent style of handwriting throughout the school, and that all staff consider themselves to be teachers of handwriting, with a clear understanding of the progression of skills, and of how to remedy errors. It is not sufficient to exhort children to improve their handwriting; the different elements need to be taught and practised. Early intervention is essential at every stage, to prevent the acquisition of bad habits which are difficult to correct.

### Aims

- To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.
- To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency by -
  - having the correct pencil grip
  - knowing that all letters start from the top, except d and e which start in the middle
  - forming all letters correctly and knowing the size and orientation of letters.

### Broad Guidelines

- **Teaching Time** - There should be daily mark making activities in FS, a daily 15 minute lesson in KS1 and 15 minutes each day in Y3 and 4. Year 5 and 6 pupils will have support as appropriate to individual need.
- **Paper** - As motor skills increase then the size of writing should decrease. Size of books and lines will decrease as children move through school. In Year 2 the majority of children should be ready to start the year on narrow lined books. Some will need to continue on wide lined books until ready. Children should use unlined paper from time to time so that they can practise to apply skills and consider issues of presentation and aesthetics.
- **Seating and posture** -
  - Chair and table to 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 chairs 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 a pen when appropriate) 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 pencil lightly between thumb and forefinger 3 cm away from the point. The paper should be placed to the right slightly tilted to the left. Use the left hand to steady the paper.  
For left handers - Hold the pencil lightly between the thumb and forefinger, resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger; hold about 3 cm 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 degrees. 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.

## Handwriting Guidance

Model to be used at Longton lane Primary School is **Nelson Thornes Handwriting style**. This has been inserted on to the school server so it can be used at all times by all staff. The font shows as NTFP on the school server and moves through from print to joined handwriting.

The only alteration school that school has agreed is that the letter s will only have one formation.

### The four joins

1. to letters without ascenders
2. to letters with ascenders
3. horizontal joins
4. horizontal joins to letters with ascenders.

The **break letters** (letters that aren't joined from) are:

**b g j p q x y z s**

NB Children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units before learning to join.

### Teaching Sequence may include

- Hand and finger strength
- Tracing
- Patterns
- Over teacher's writing (highlighter)
- Under teacher's writing (directly under words – write in large letters, leave large spaces)
- Independence

### Techniques for teaching letter formation

- Model good handwriting at all times
- Demonstrate
- Talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Children form letters in the air
- Finger trace over tactile letters
- Write over highlighter pen
- Write in sand with finger or stick
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the back of the person in front of you.
- And many, many more.....

## Order of Teaching

- c a d g q o e s f (set 1)
- i l t u y j (set 2)
- r n m b p h k (set 3)
- v w x z (set 4)

**Joining Groups** – these divide the letters according to how they will join to other letters.

Group 1 – a c d e h l k l m n s t u (13 letters with exit flick plus s)

Group 2 – a c d e g l j m n o p q r s u v w x y (19 letters which start at the top of the x-height)

Group 3 – b f h k l t (6 letters which start at the top of the ascender)

Group 4 – f o r v w (5 letters which finish at the top of the x-height)

Break letters – b g j p q x y z (8 letters after which no join is made. Joins are not made to or from the letter z)

**Joining** – This is linked to set 1 to 4 as well as letter groups.

The first join – from any member of joining group 1 to any member of joining group 2, the same movement as a diagonal

join from one letter to the start of the next.

1. Diagonal join to set 1 letters first e.g. ed, ac
2. Diagonal join to set 2 letters e.g. iu, ig
3. Diagonal joins to set 3 letters e.g. ar, an
4. Diagonal joins to set 4 letters e.g. aw, ex

The second join – from any member of joining group 1 to any member of joining group 3, same as the first join except that the join meets the ascender halfway up the letter and then continues to the top of the ascender.

1. To set 1 e.g. if, ef
2. To set 2 e.g. il, it
3. To set 3 e.g. ck, ch

The third join – from any member of joining group 4 to any member of joining group 2, it is a horizontal curve because the join is from the x-height of one letter to the x-height of the next.

1. To set 1 e.g. wa, fo
2. To set 3 e.g. on, om
3. To set 4 e.g. ow

The fourth join – from any member of joining group 4 to any member of joining group 3, it is the same as the first join except that it goes from the x-height of one letter to the top of the ascender of the next.

1. To set 1 e.g. of, ff
2. To set 2 e.g. wl, rl
3. To set 3 e.g. ob, ok

Break letters – joins are never made after the letters in this group.

Each year group has a teacher and assessment book and progress can be seen through the scope and sequence pages at the start of each book. For each focus links can be found in the pupil book, extension book and resource book to support teachers when planning appropriate joins.