



Learning Together, Learning for Life

Handwriting Policy

2025 / 2026

Approved by:	FGB	Date:
Headteacher:		Chair of Governors:
Next review due by:	April 2026	



Handwriting Policy

We are very proud of our pupils' handwriting and take particular care with our handwriting style. In line with the Writing Framework 2025, handwriting is taught explicitly and regularly across the school beginning in Early Years, in addition to writing in phonics lessons. We use Letter-join's handwriting scheme in Key Stage One and Two as the basis of our handwriting policy, which enables us to meet National Curriculum requirements through a structured teaching programme. We use the Little Wandle teaching sequence in Early Years to ensure secured foundational letter formation in Early Years, ready for progression to a cursive script in Key Stage One.

Objective

Handwriting is a core skill which influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils should have the ability to produce fluent, legible and speedy joined handwriting, and to understand that different styles of handwriting are used for different purposes. We aim to ensure all of our children are securing this as they transition to Year 5 at their next setting.

Our intention is to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.

Aims

- Develop neat, legible and speedy handwriting where letters and words are automatically produced in independent writing.
- Establish and maintain high expectations for the presentation of written work.
- Understand, by the end of Year 4, the importance of neat presentation and the need for different handwriting styles (joined, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly.

Expectations

All teaching staff are expected to model the style of handwriting chosen for each year group in our school in all their handwriting, whether on whiteboards, displays or in pupils' books.

Consistency throughout the school

Pupils should experience coherence and continuity in the teaching and learning of handwriting across all school years and be encouraged to take pride in their work. We want to help pupils enjoy learning and developing their handwriting, so they feel a sense of achievement and pride.

Every teaching space will have expectations around handwriting displayed and resources to support our aims readily available.

Handwriting frequency

Handwriting is a cross-curricular task and will be taken into consideration during all lessons. Formal teaching of handwriting will be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure key stage targets are met throughout learning, as emphasised in the 2025 Writing Framework.

Writing equipment

Pupils will first learn to write with chunky crayons, chalk or soft pencils while developing a proper grip before exploring with large scale drawing and writing to build fine motor skills, then moving to

smaller, more precise writing tools.

When their fine motor skills are established, pupils may progress to using an HB pencil.

Inclusion

For children who experience handwriting difficulties due to fine motor development, including those who are left-handed and/or with special educational needs, appropriate additional support will be put in place. Letter-join's Lesson Planners include differentiation activities for extra practice and their Handwriting Recovery Programme is available as an intervention for our key stage 2 pupils to give structured support if they find handwriting challenging.

Our phonics programme Little Wandle also support children where foundational letter formation needs support with additional support is needed.

For all pupils, additional resources are available and used to support pencil grip, including pencil huggers, tripod shaped pencils and carefully chosen pens and pencils to suit ages and stages.

We will make use of supportive technologies, such as Clicker and transcription tools to ensure specific issues with fine motor control do not create a barrier to writing.

Key Stage Teaching



Early Years - Foundations of Transcription

We teach short, daily handwriting lessons, which may include:

- warm-up activities to get ready for handwriting
- air writing, pattern making and physical activities to develop gross motor skills
- correct sitting position and pencil grip for writing
- mark making on paper, whiteboards, sensory trays and tablets etc. to develop and refine fine motor skills
- the introduction of letter shapes, their sounds, formation and vocabulary.

On arrival in EYFS, children in Early Years begin the foundations of transcription by:

- Being given daily opportunities to mark make and to give them meaning.
- Making use of fine motor activities as part of continuous provision to strengthen and prepare muscles for writing.
- In Reception, writing their own name (with a laminated name card for support)
- In Reception completing focused letter formation practise at school and home linked to sounds taught in phonics.

We use Little Wandle resources to teach letter formation through the year, with the following outcomes:

- Form the letters from the letter families accurately, with control, forming ascenders and descenders with accuracy.

Curly Letter family:

c, a, d, g, o, q, e, s, f

Long letter family:

l, i, t, j, u, y

Bouncy letter family:

m, n, r, b, p, h

Zigzag letter family:

v, w, x, z, k

By the end of EYFS, all children will also have been taught the correct formation and size of capital letters and digits.

Key assessment criteria EYFS

For every letter, we check that a child:

Follows the four Ps:

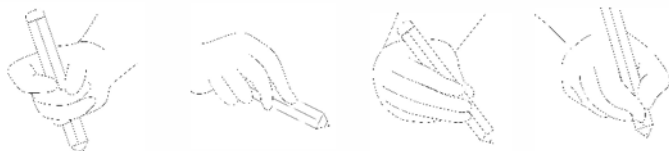
- Sits with the correct **p**osture
- Uses the correct **p**encil grip
- Holds their paper in the correct **p**osition
- Applies appropriate **p**ressure
- Starts and finishes letters in the correct place and follows the correct orientation
- Recites the formation phrase to help them remember the letter formation e.g. *curl around the cat*.

Pencil and pressure checks: Can they hold a pencil or crayon with enough control to make marks without help?


Posture checks: Can they maintain a sitting posture with feet on the floor; bottom to the back of the chair; pencil in one hand and the other hand on the paper?



Pencil grip checks: Can they use a tripod-grip, holding a writing utensil between thumb and forefinger, with the side of middle finger completing the tripod? Monitor type of grip being used throughout year, with expectation that tripod grip (see *image on the right*) is secured by end of Reception.



Key Stage 1: Years 1 and 2

Teaching progresses from five short lessons to longer daily lessons each week. We make use of Letter-join  to:

- continuing with gross and fine motor skills activities
- practise to strengthening handwriting learning
- learning where and when to use capitals and printed letters, reinforced by practice
- practising handwriting with spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Year 1

The children are taught how to write capital letters, printed letters, numbers and symbols, using Letter-join's resources.

The children progress from *printed letters* to a *cursive non-joined script*.

The learning is divided into three sections covering:

- warm-up activities, letter families and capital letters
- the uses of printed letters
- numbers and symbols.

These activities will help children visualise where each part of the letter sits using tools such as large printed templates; laminated mats for finger tracing; outdoor chalk grids, sky writing to trace ascenders / descenders. Sensory materials will be used so children can encode the length and direction of strokes: sand trays (ascenders = long stroke up; descenders = long stroke down); paintbrush and water outside; playdough letter modelling (stretch up / push down); pipe-cleaner or wool letters to feel height/length.

On completion, children should be confident in writing all capital and printed letters, numbers and symbols and start to become familiar with their use.

Children will use lolly sticks and then move to using coffee stirrers (narrower space) to support making spaces - more accurate than fingers and allows free arm to support the paper whilst writing next word.

Year 2

In Year 2, lessons and modelling will ensure focus on:

Shape

Space

Size

Sitting

Stringing (joining)



Joined handwriting will not be taught until pupils can form individual letters correctly and consistently. The children progress from *cursive non-joined script* to a *cursive joined script*. This is linked to the secured knowledge of digraphs and trigraphs. We will ensure children are securely reading each digraph before practising the join.

The children are taught to improve letter formation and orientation through regular practice supporting spelling, punctuation and grammar.

The children will cover:

- letter families
- high frequency words
- joining techniques
- sequencing sentences
- dictation exercises
- spelling, punctuation and grammar practice.

With regular handwriting practice throughout this module, children should now be developing fluency and speed of their writing.

Lower Key Stage 2: Years 3 and 4

Handwriting lessons will continue daily in Lower Key Stage 2.

Pupils are taught to use a joined style throughout their independent writing in all subjects, helping them to refine their handwriting based on the requirements of each lesson.

Through a variety of resources which link handwriting to other areas of the curriculum, legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting should be improving.



The children progress from *cursive non-joined script* to a *cursive joined script*.

Over the week, children will take part in:

- Active motor skills activities
- high frequency word writing
- joining techniques
- sequencing sentences
- dictation exercises
- spelling, punctuation and grammar practice.

Learners will continue to build on producing fluent, consistent and legible handwriting through the regular practice offered lessons.

On concluding lower Key Stage 2, children will have practised applying size-appropriate handwriting to all areas of the curriculum whilst maintaining fluency and legibility.

Handwriting Ready:

All classrooms and learning spaces at Reed First School are handwriting ready. This is achieved through:

- Activities to support fine and gross motor control
- Carefully stored and looked after writing and mark making equipment
- Carefully laid out seating areas
- Displays to support expectations around seating position and pencil grip
- All writing completed by adults on displays, in books or in shared teaching exemplifies our handwriting style

Cursive lowercase letters

a b c d e

f g h i j k

l m n o p

q r s t u

v w x y z

Capital Letters

A B C D E

F G H I J K

L M N O P

Q R S T U

V W X Y Z

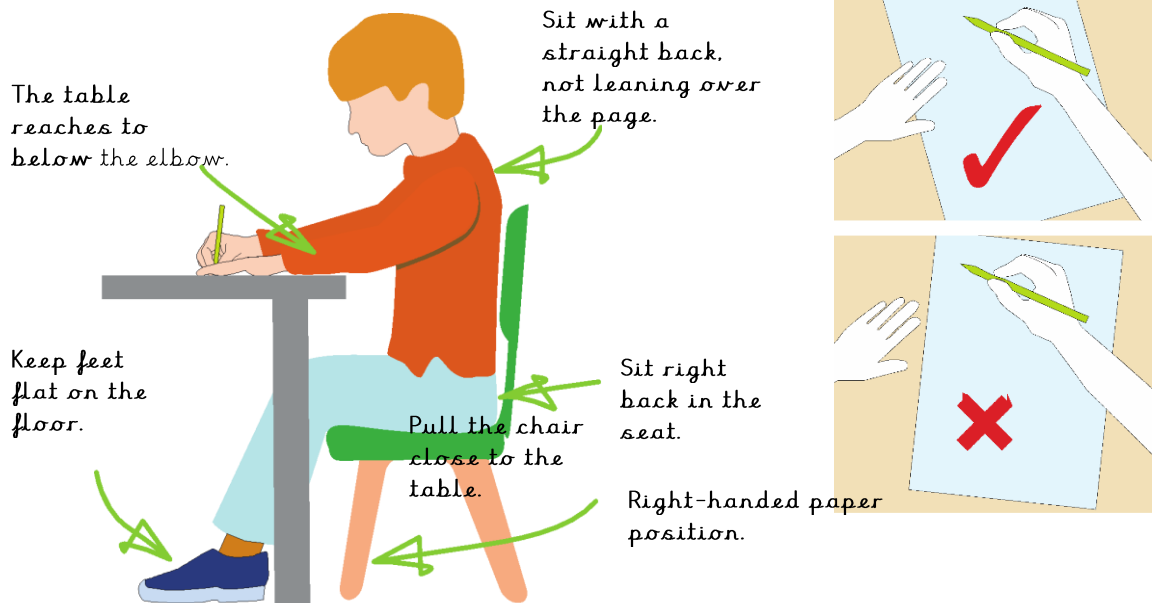
1 2 3 4 5 6

7 8 9 0

Correct posture, pencil grip and paper position for handwriting

Pupils are taught to sit correctly at a table and hold a pencil comfortably and correctly.

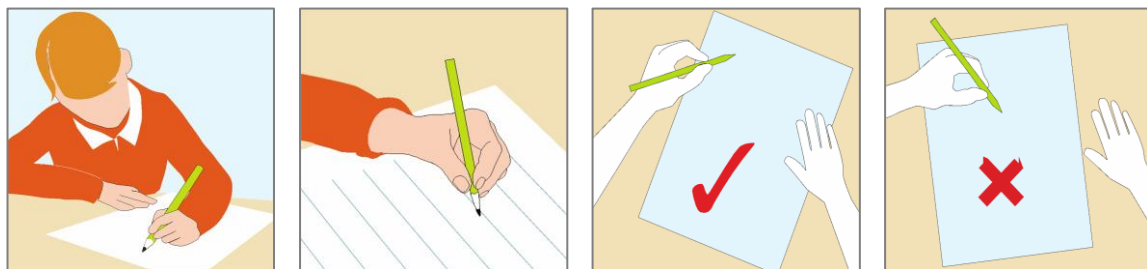
Sitting position



Left-handed writer

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow the movements of right-handed teachers as they model letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers will demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.

- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.



Left-handed paper position.

The Tripod Pencil Grip

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

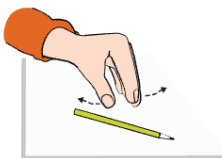
We use the Tripod Grip rhyme:

Right-handed pencil grip



Point away the pencil, Pinch it near the tip, Lift it off the table, Spin it round... and grip.

Left-handed pencil grip



Point away the pencil, Pinch it near the tip, Lift it off the table, Spin it round... and grip.