

# Ayresome Primary School

## Handwriting Policy

**2022-2023**



<b>Date of next review:</b>	<b>Summer 2023</b>
<b>Leaders Responsible:</b>	<b>Louise Farrington Amanda Colclough</b>

## **1. Introduction**

The skill of handwriting needs to be taught: it is not a natural skill that will grow and develop like speaking or walking. Handwriting is a motor activity; a movement stored in the body rather than in the conscious memory. An effective handwriting policy is based on a style that is quick and easy to learn. At Ayresome, we aim to teach children to develop a neat, legible style that will eventually become automatic to use. An automatic style releases the brain to concentrate on the content of writing i.e. spelling, grammar, syntax, style and content. Handwriting should be taught alongside phonic and spelling knowledge at all stages.

Effective teaching of handwriting can only be achieved through modelling; therefore, all members of staff (including support staff, supply teachers and students) are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example. Staff should model accurate handwriting regularly and children must practise by carefully copying and repeating. It is important to observe children whilst they are writing, to ensure timely intervention to correct poor letter formation, grip or posture.

## **2. Aims**

Teaching of handwriting aims to ensure the following:

- The teaching of handwriting is consistent from EYFS to Year 6
- Adults throughout school adopt and model a consistent approach when writing in books, on displays and on flipcharts or whiteboards
- Children achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters
- Children develop flow and speed
- Children eventually produce the letters automatically in their independent writing
- Children at Key Stage 2 are aware that they need to balance speed and neatness to achieve a writing style appropriate to a task

## **3. Teaching and learning**

All staff have high expectations of handwriting and presentation and use our agreed style. Handwriting is taught regularly and systematically as discrete lessons in classes, groups or individually as appropriate, and is written in handwriting books. Where possible, handwriting lessons are linked to phonic and spelling patterns. Lessons follow a 'Teach, Practise, Apply' cycle, as set out in the Ayresome Handwriting Progression documents.

Adults should model handwriting using the agreed style and mantras, then observe as children practise, to help children maintain accurate letter formation. The teacher, who circulates and intervenes to secure understanding and progress, will continuously correct pencil grips; sitting position; and letter formation, size or placement, in order to prevent poor habits forming.

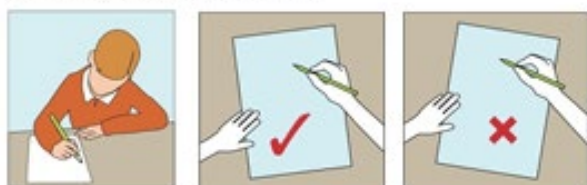
Correct handwriting posture:

### Right handed children

How to sit correctly to be comfortable for handwriting.



How to hold and position the paper.



### Left handed children

How to sit correctly to be comfortable for handwriting.



How to hold and position the paper.



## THE TRIPOD PENCIL GRIP

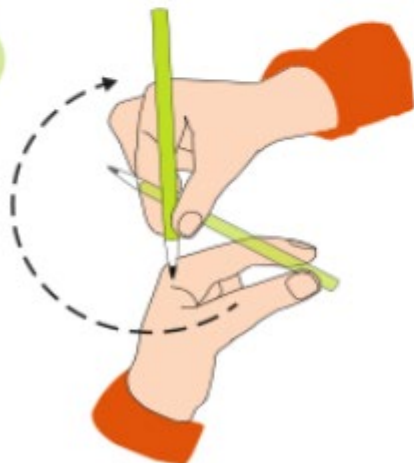
Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib.

1



1) Grip the pencil with your index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.

2



2) With your free hand, spin the pencil from underneath.

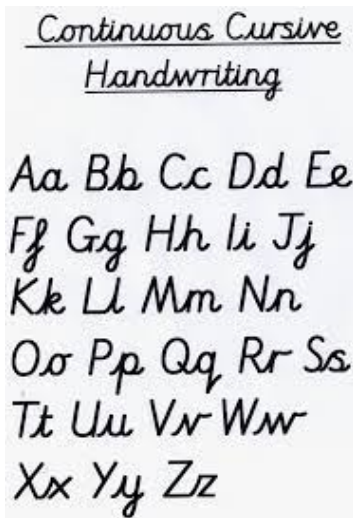
3



3) Use your middle finger to support the underside of the pencil.

Children in EYFS are taught to form individual letters appropriately and accurately first, without lead-in strokes, so that they can read what they write. The order that we teach letter formations follows the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised Programme Phase 2 Grapheme Progression*. The associated formation phrases should be explicitly referred to when teaching handwriting. These can be found in the EYFS Handwriting Booklet, as well as outlined in Appendix 1. In KS1, children will be taught to form letters accurately in the order which is set out in the KS1 Handwriting Progression document.

Handwriting lessons focus on upper and lower case letters and the teaching of writing from left to right and from top to bottom.



When children can write legibly and quickly, they are taught a joined continuous cursive style. This usually starts at the beginning of Year 3.

Continuous cursive should be taught in the letter groups as set out in Appendix 2.

From Year 3 onwards, all children should start to use a blue ink pen; handwriting licenses should not be used.

#### 4. Knowledge, skills and understanding

##### Early Years

Children take part in activities to develop their fine and gross motor-skills and recognition of patterns, for example, to form letters using their index finger in sand or using paint. Children should learn how to correctly grip a pencil, then how to use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. They should be given frequent opportunities to develop their handwriting to their full potential at that age.

Children should be taught the correct start and exit points for each letter, which should not include 'lead-in' strokes from the line. All children in Early Years will participate in daily 'Dough Disco' and 'Squiggle' sessions to support their skills in early writing.

For the EYFS teaching sequence, see Appendix 3.

##### Key Stage 1

Children will continue to develop fine and gross motor-skills with a range of multi-sensory activities. In Y1, 'Dough disco' sessions are continued daily. Handwriting should be discussed

within and linked to phonics sessions. Teachers and support staff continue to guide children on how to write letters correctly, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip. Children should now be leaving spaces between words accurately. By the end of Key Stage 1 children will be able to write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and correct spacing between words. Some children, towards the end of Year 2, may begin to learn to join using a continuous cursive style.

For the KS1 teaching sequence, see Appendix 4.

## **Key Stage 2**

During this stage, the children will be taught to join, using a continuous cursive style of handwriting. They will continue to have direct teaching and regular practice of handwriting, and will progress to using a pen from the beginning of Year 3. We aim for them to develop a clear, fluent style and, by the end of Year 6, to be able to adapt their handwriting for different purposes: a neat, legible hand for finished, presented work, a faster script for note making and the ability to print for labelling diagrams etc.

For the KS2 teaching sequence, see Appendix 5.

## **Provision for left-handed children**

At least 10% of the population are left-handed, the majority of whom are boys. 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

Teachers are aware of the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

## **Capital letters**

Capital letters stand alone and are not joined to the next letter. Children must practise starting sentences and writing names using a capital letter and not joining the subsequent letter. This should be modelled by the teacher during English and phonics sessions.






















## **The role of parents/carers**

Parents/carers are made aware of our agreed handwriting style and encouraged to practise this with their children at home.















# Appendix 1 Little Wandle Phase 2 grapheme information sheet

## Phase 2 grapheme information sheet












Autumn 1

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
 	 <p>snake</p>	Show your teeth and and let the s hiss out <b>ssssss ssssss</b>	Under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail.
 	 <p>astronaut</p>	Open your mouth wide and make the <b>a</b> sound at the back of your mouth <b>a a a</b>	Around the astronaut's helmet and down into space.
 	 <p>tiger</p>	Open your lips; put the tip of your tongue behind your teeth and press <b>t t t</b>	From the tiger's nose to its tail, then follow the stripe across the tiger.
 	 <p>penguin</p>	Bring your lips together, push them open and say <b>p p p</b>	Down the penguin's back, up and around its head.
 	 <p>iguana</p>	Pull your lips back and make the <b>i</b> sound at the back of your mouth <b>i i i</b>	Down the iguana's body, then draw a dot [on the leaf] at the top.
 	 <p>net</p>	Open your lips a bit, put your tongue behind your teeth and make the <b>n n n n</b> sound <b>n n n n</b>	Down the stick, up and over the net.
 	 <p>mouse</p>	Put your lips together and make the <b>m m m m</b> sound <b>m m m m</b>	Down, up and over the mouse's ears, then add a flick on the nose.



Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
 d	 duck	Put your tongue to the top and front of your mouth and make a quick <b>d</b> sound <b>d d d</b>	Round the duck's body, up to its head and down to its feet.
 g	 goat	Give me a big smile that shows your teeth; press the middle of your tongue to the top and back of your mouth; push your tongue down and forward to make the <b>g</b> sound <b>g g g</b>	Round the goat's face, up to his ear; down and curl under his chin.
 o	 octopus	Make your mouth into round shape and say <b>o o o</b>	All around the octopus.
 c	 cat	Open your mouth into a little smile; make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say <b>e e e</b>	Curly around the cat.
 k	 kite	Open your mouth into a little smile; make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say <b>k k k</b>	Down the kite, up and across, back and down to the corner.
 ck	 sock	Open your mouth into a little smile; make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say <b>e e e</b>	c Curl round the heel of the sock. k Down the sock, up and across, back and down and to the corner. <b>Catchphrase:</b> Rock that sock!
 e	 elephant	Open your mouth wide and say <b>e e e</b>	Around the elephant's eye and down its trunk.















Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
 u	 umbrella	Open your mouth wide and say u u u	Down and around the umbrella, stop at the top and down to the bottom and flick
 r	 rainbow	Show me your teeth to make a rrrrr sound rrrrr rrrrr	From the cloud to the ground, up the arch and over the rainbow.
 h	 helicopter	Open your mouth and breathe out sharply h h h	Down, up and over the helicopter
 b	 bear	Put your lips together and say b as you open them b b b	Down bear's back, up and round his big tummy.
 f	 flamingo	Open your lips a little, put your teeth on your bottom lip and push the air out to make the sound ffff ffff	Down the flamingo's neck, all the way to its foot, then across its wings.
 l	 lollipop	Open your mouth a little, put your tongue up to the top of your mouth, behind your teeth, and press lllll lllll	All the way down the lollipop.





# Phase 2 grapheme information sheet

Autumn 2

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
	 jellyfish	Pucker your lips and show your teeth use your tongue as you say <b>j j j</b>	All the way down the jellyfish. Dot on its head.
	 volcano	Put your teeth against your bottom lip and make a buzzing <b>v v v v v v v v v v</b>	Down to the bottom of the volcano and back up to the top.
	 wave	Pucker your lips and keep them small as you say <b>w w w</b>	From the top of the wave to the bottom, up the wave, down the wave, then up again.
	 box	Mouth open, then push the <b>cs/x</b> sound through as you close your mouth <b>cs cs cs (x x x)</b>	Start at the top, then across to the bottom of the box. Start at the top, then across to the bottom of the box.
	 yo-yo	Smile, tongue to the top of your mouth, say <b>y</b> without opening your mouth <b>yyy</b>	Down and round the yo-yo, then follow the string round.
	 zebra	Show me your teeth and buzz the <b>z</b> sound <b>zzzzz zzzzz</b>	Zip across, zag down and across the zebra.

## Appendix 2 Continuous cursive letter groupings

### Curly Caterpillar Letters:

- c lead up, rock back
- a lead up, rock back, up and down, lead on
- o lead up, rock back, round the top, lead on
- d lead up, rock back, to the top, down, lead on
- g lead up, rock back, up, down, loop round
- q lead up, rock back, up, down, flick
- e lead up, loop around
- s lead up, curly whirly, lead on

### Ladder Letters:

- l lead up to the top, drop down, lead on
- i lead up, drop down, lead on, dot
- t lead up, drop down, lead on, cross
- u lead up, smile, down, lead on

### One-Armed Robot Letters:

- r lead up, drop down, back up, over the hat
- b lead up to the top, drop down, curve around, lead on
- n lead up, drop down, over the hill, lead on
- h lead up to the top, drop down, over the hill, lead on
- m lead up, drop down, over the hill, over the hill, lead on
- k lead up to the top, drop down, loop, down, lead on
- p lead up, drop down, up and round, lead on

### Zigzag Monster Letters:

- v lead up, zig zag, lead on
- w lead up, zig zag, zig lag, lead on

x lead up, down, lead on, cross

z lead up, across, zig zag

More complex letters from the four families:

f lead up, loop back, drop down, loop round

j lead up, drop down, loop round, dot

y lead up, smile, drop down, loop round

### **Appendix 3 Early Years**

## Reception (4 - 5 year olds)

The statutory framework for the early years foundation stage – 1st September 2021

### Early Learning goals - Literacy

#### "ELG: Writing (page 13)

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others."

### Early Learning goals - Physical Development

#### "ELG: Gross Motor Skills (page 12)

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others;
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing;
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

#### "ELG: Fine Motor Skills (page 13)

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases;
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery;
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing."

*Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five; Published: 31 March 2021; Effective: 1 September 2021 (Department for Education)*

**PRE-WRITING SHAPES**

Children should be able to form these 9 pre-writing strokes before asking them to write.

Vertical line	Horizontal line	Circle	Cross
2 years	2½ years	3 years	3½-4 years
Square	Diagonal line (top-left to bottom-right)	Diagonal line (top-right to bottom-left)	Oblique cross
4 years	4½ years	4½ years	4 years 11 months
			Triangle
			5 years 3 months

Children who can adequately draw the oblique cross can copy a significantly higher number of letters than little ones who cannot.

In the early stages of handwriting development, children are introduced to activities to establish fine motor skills. Patterning, drawing and colouring helps establish the feeling of continuous flow and teaches the hands the most frequently used movements.

**EYFS children should be taught the following:**

- To hold a pencil comfortably and correctly
- Be given frequent opportunities to develop arm muscles
- Take part in activities to develop gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern making and dancing
- Complete exercises to develop fine motor skills such as mark making on paper, whiteboards, blackboards, sand trays and iPads
- Learn to form the letter shapes taught by Little Wandle to familiarise children with the letter shapes, formation and sounds

### Suggestions

- Create patterns using a variety of tools e.g. felt tips, paint, chalk, glitter pens.
- Go outside and use playground chalks or water from squeeze bottles to create patterns on the ground.
- Introduce finger painting, painting over pre-drawn spirals and wavy lines.
- Develop fine motor control by embellishing the finished patterns with felt tip pens.
- Use a variety of surfaces e.g. white boards, black boards, different coloured paper on a horizontal or vertical surface,
- Stimulate touch by using different materials such as textured boards made of velour, carpet, sandpaper.
- Use trays containing sand, salt, shaving foam to practise patterns.
- Encourage motor memory by using blindfolds, tracing in the air or on other children's backs.
- Verbalise the movements with the children to encourage auditory and kinaesthetic links in memory.
- Encourage the children to produce big patterns. Large movements relax the hand and arm muscles and release a tense, tight grip. With practice, movements can reduce in size.
- Trace large patterns on the floor in P.E. using hands and feet.
- Develop physical strength and co-ordination by teaching finger rhymes and games.
- Introduce play-dough activities involving pulling, shaping and squeezing.
- Strengthen pencil grip by tearing paper to create collages.
- Develop confident pencil control.

## Year 1 (5 - 6 year olds)

### Statutory Requirements - Handwriting

Pupils should be taught to:

- 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.

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided. Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.

## Year 2 (6 - 7 year olds)

### Statutory Requirements – Handwriting

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 unjoined
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

### Year 1 children should be taught the following:

- A minimum of five x 10 minute handwriting sessions a week
- To sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- Letter formation in the order as set out the KS1 Handwriting Progression document, so that they understand which letters are formed in similar ways and that we practise these together
- To begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- To write with finger spaces between words accurately
- To form capital letters accurately
- To form digits 0-9 correctly formed and orientated
- To make links with handwriting, phonics and spelling
- While children are in Little Wandle phonics groups, to refer to letters by their sound, rather than letter names

**Year 2 children should be taught the following:**

- A minimum of five x 10 minute handwriting sessions a week
- To form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- To 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:
  - Arm joins to small letters e.g. am
  - Arm join to tall letters e.g. al
  - Arm joins to sister letters e.g. nd
  - Washing line joins to small letters e.g. ow
  - Washing line joins to tall letters e.g. wl
  - Washing line joins to sister letters e.g. wa
- To write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- To use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters
- To make links with phonics and spelling
- While children are in Little Wandle phonics groups, to refer to letters by their sound, rather than letter names

## Appendix 5 KS2

### Lower Key Stage 2 - Year 3 and 4 (7 - 9 year olds)

#### Statutory Requirements - Handwriting

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

#### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should be joining handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

### Upper Key Stage 2 - Year 5 and 6 (9 - 11 year olds)

#### Statutory Requirements - Handwriting

Pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
- Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
- Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

#### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.

#### LKS2 children should be taught the following:

- A minimum of five x 10 minute handwriting sessions a week, following the KS2 Handwriting Progression document
- 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
- To increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch
- Handwriting should be linked to spellings where possible
- Blue pens are used from Year 3 onwards unless there is a specific SEND need to use pencil – the awarding of a 'pen licence' is not permitted
- If new starters have their own personalised handwriting that its neat, legible and they can write at speed, there is no need to encourage them to change their style.



**UKS2 children should be taught the following:**

- A minimum of five x 10 minute handwriting sessions a week following the KS2 Handwriting Progression document
- To write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed and personal style by:
  - Choosing 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
  - Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters)
  - Handwriting should be linked to spellings where possible
  - If new starters have their own personalised handwriting that its neat, legible and they can write at speed, there is no need to encourage them to change their style.