

General Policy Document (Statutory)

Document Name: Handwriting Policy

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Reviewed By: All Staff

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Next Review Date: July 2022

Document No: GP006



Handwriting Policy

BPS Handwriting Policy

Aims:

- To have a consistent approach across the whole school to ensure high levels of presentation.
- To create a sense of pride in producing work to a high standard.
- To achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed (and joined) cursive handwriting.
- To develop fluency and speed; writing with confidence and correct orientation.
- To make handwriting automatic so that it doesn't require undue thought during the writing process.
- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books and whiteboards, and when modelling writing.
- To aid spelling through visual and kinaesthetic memory of spelling patterns (as recommended by the British Dyslexia Association).
- To encourage parents to support the use of accurately formed cursive script in all work completed at home.
- To value, encourage and reward good handwriting.
- To adopt an ethos of '*All Writing is Best Writing*'.

Teaching and Learning:

At Bramhope Primary School, children are initially supported to develop fine motor skills and taught to form letters in print within each of the letter families before moving onto the introduction of [cursive handwriting](#). We believe this raises standards in handwriting throughout the whole school, initially promoting confidence and good practice in posture, pencil grip and visual control and then advancing to developing speed, automaticity and fluency. This then allows for greater creativity and mental capacity when writing. In addition, it improves presentation which in turn promotes confidence and self-esteem.

Reception:

- The development of gross and fine motors skills is essential in Reception, including as part of handwriting progression.
 - Climbing, stretching and other large body movements help to develop the large muscle groups in the children's arms and shoulders. Big writing with paintbrushes and chalks, modelling letters using playdough and writing in the sky with our fingers are some of the other activities the children partake in.
 - Small hand movements and building strength and the ability to manipulate things with our fingers is built into our every day with provision, such as: squeezing pegs, sorting items with tweezers, picking up coins and buttons and posting them into small slots.
- Children begin by forming the letters individually in print. These are introduced and taught within their [different shaped letter families](#).
- In line with DfE 2021 supporting documents for the validation of the systematic synthetic phonics programmes, our early years foundation pupils are not taught separate letters that start on the baseline with a lead-in stroke or cursive letter formations but, if assessed as ready, are taught simple exit strokes for letters that end on the line (a, d, h, i, k, l, m, n, t, u) in preparation for cursive joining later in their handwriting journey.
- Children start to form recognisable printed letters and capital letters– with the emphasis on consistent size and correct orientation being encouraged.
- Children start to understand the language needed to describe pencil movements used for letter formation.
- Children are taught the [correct sitting position](#) and to hold a pencil in an effective manner for writing ([tripod pencil grip/shark's fin](#)).
- Children learn the [different shaped letter families](#). These, along with the aforementioned pencil grip and posture, are taught in discrete lessons and encouraged throughout areas of provision, Phonics sessions and within writing tasks. They are also modelled by all teaching staff and present on displays and in areas of provision.

- Children start marking making on plain paper, but are soon introduced to lines to encourage and support the appropriate starting position on the baseline.
- Parents attend a meeting in July prior to their child starting school and again in late September once their child has started school. On both these occasions, good practice in the early development of handwriting is shared and modelled.
- Great emphasis is also placed on the correct [formation of numeral digits](#) (in line with school policy), again with focus on accurate formation in addition to appropriate and consistent size and orientation.

Key Stage 1:

- In Year 1, children should be consolidating their understanding and use of printed letters, including some simple exit strokes for letters that end on the line (a, d, h, i, k, l, m, n, t, u).
- Further practise of print letter formations, alongside the continuation of the teaching, modelling and encouragement of appropriate posture and pencil grip continue to be core.
- For those children still requiring the development of fine motor skill and hand/finger strength, regular opportunities are provided.
- Exit flicks and joins to adjacent letters start to be introduced, primarily in discrete focus handwriting lessons and then progressing into all areas of writing. This may be in letter families or letter/spelling patterns.
- All children write with a pencil (variations in pencil type and pencil grips may be introduced as required).
- There is continual emphasis on consistency in size (inc. capitals relative to lower case) and orientation. In addition, there is continued emphasis placed on appropriate spacing (in relation to letter size) and position on the base line.
- Unless the task dictates differently, children write on lined paper with the width decreasing appropriately according to the child's stage of development.
- Where applicable, intervention takes place (see inclusion).
- The speed and automaticity of writing is developed thus promoting creativity and fluidity in independent writing.
- There continues to be emphasis placed on the correct formation, size and orientation of numbers.
- Children continue to be exposed to cursive script on displays around school; these are modelled by adults during teaching and feedback.
- Children must be joining consistently to be considered for 'working at *Greater Depth*' within the expected standard' and displaying many/most cursive letter formations to be assessed working 'At' the expected standard at end of key Stage 1 assessment.

Key Stage 2:

The majority of children entering Key Stage 2 should be consistently using a joined cursive script which is appropriately sized, positioned appropriately on the base line and produced with increasing fluency and speed.

Fine tuning takes place in Key Stage 2, through discrete and focussed sessions in addition to teaching and encouragement in written work in all subjects – '*All Writing is Best Writing*'. This fine tuning focusses on:

- **Quality:** Ensure letters are consistently sized with equal word spacing and that ascenders and descenders are parallel and sit on the line but do not touch words on the lines above or below.
- **Speed:** Improve speed of handwriting to allow content of writing to take precedence over the task of handwriting and be able to take 'quick notes' at a faster pace.
- **Stamina:** Have the strength and mobility to be able to write for longer periods of time without fatigue.

Where children are successful in the above, the use of a **pen** is allowed. This achievement is celebrated within the classroom setting/amongst peers. At the start of each new academic year, each child is required to write using a pencil for 2 weeks before a pen licence is 're-awarded' thus ensuring the desired standard is maintained.

In Key Stage 2, children are taught to select the appropriate type of handwriting (e.g. cursive joined, print, bold) for different purposes e.g. captions, headings, labels.

Children continue to be exposed to cursive script on displays around school; these are modelled by adults during teaching and feedback.

Inclusion:

For pupils whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills, children with Special Educational Needs, or for children who are finding it difficult to achieve the expectation within their expected age range, **intervention** is implemented to enable a child to make progress in handwriting. This may take the form of 1:1, small group intervention or additional support within the classroom during writing activities. Appropriate resources and support are provided, according to need, e.g. pencil grip, adapted pencil, guide mats, and these are used during all written work. For most children, this intervention is short term, specifically targetted at the individual's need(s) e.g. certain letters being inaccurately joined, words floating above the baseline.

Assessment:

To develop a consistent style, both formative and summative assessment of all written work takes place using this

Handwriting Checklist:

- ✓ **Shape** – are all letters properly formed and clear?
- ✓ **Joining** – are as many letters as possible joined consistently (or cursive flicks present in preparation)?
- ✓ **Slope/Slant** – if the personalised/ adapted 'style' of writing has a slope, is this consistent?
- ✓ **Evenness** – are letters of a consistent and reasonable size? Capitals can be too big, tall letters/ascenders too tall, ascenders not formed long enough, small letters too small
- ✓ **Floating and sinking** – do letters sit on the line? Words sometimes float above the line or sink below the line.
- ✓ **Particular letters** – which letters are really well formed (and accurately joined where relevant)? Which ones need careful practice and possible intervention?
- ✓ **Spacing** – are the spaces between each word (and, in some instances, between each letter) appropriate in relation to the size of the letter formations?
- ✓ **Fluency/Speed** – can pupils produce quality writing at a reasonable pace, whilst maintaining presentation.

A pupil's standard of handwriting should be evident throughout their writing. When assessing it, teachers should consider evidence from a pupil's independent writing to judge whether the statements have been met. Handwriting books or handwriting exercises can provide additional evidence, but this would not be sufficient on its own.

End of Key Stage 1 Assessment

Working towards the expected standard:

- form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
- form lower-case letters in the correct size relative to one another in some of the writing.
- use spacing between words.

Working at the expected standard:

- form 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.

Working at greater depth within the expected standard:

- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in some of their writing.

End of Key Stage 2 Assessment

Working towards the expected standard:

- write legibly (at this standard, there is no specific requirement for a pupil's handwriting to be joined).

Working at the expected standard:

- maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed (The national curriculum states that 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')

Working at greater depth within the expected standard:

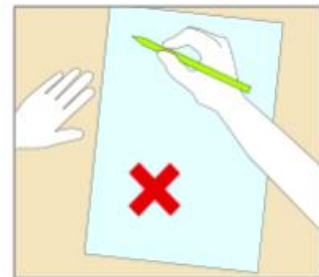
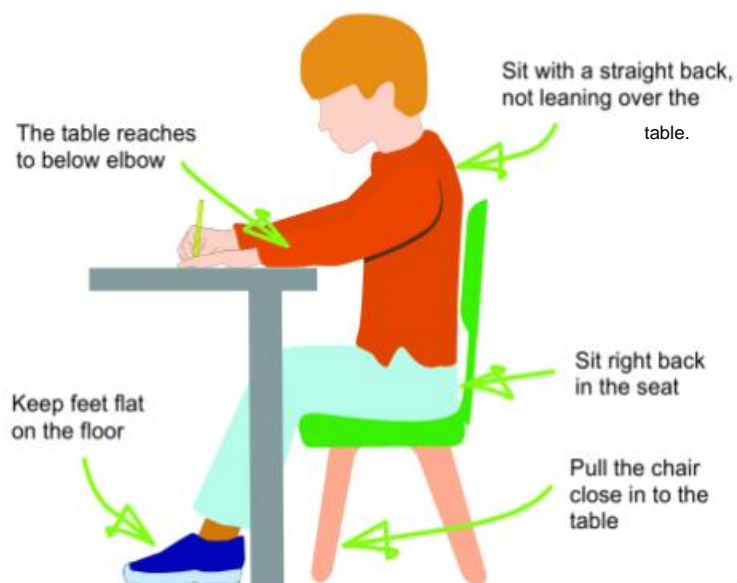
[There are no additional statements for spelling or handwriting]

Appendices:

Correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting

Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

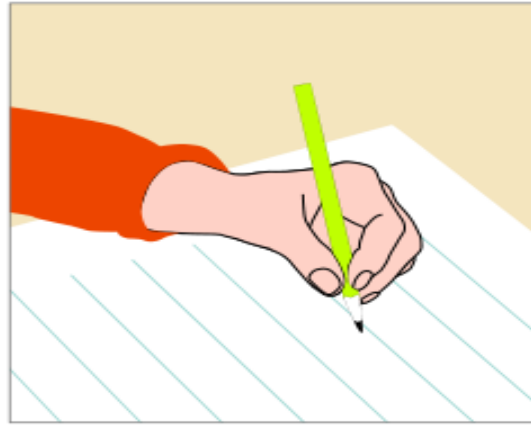
SITTING POSITION



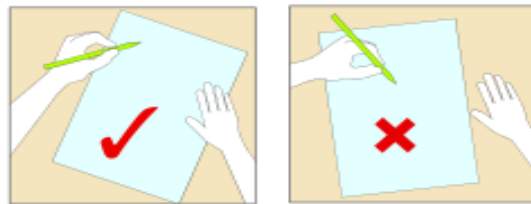
Paper position for right-handed children

LEFT-HANDED CHILDREN

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



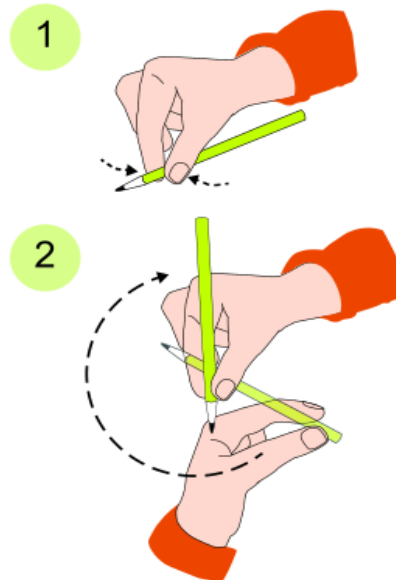
- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice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



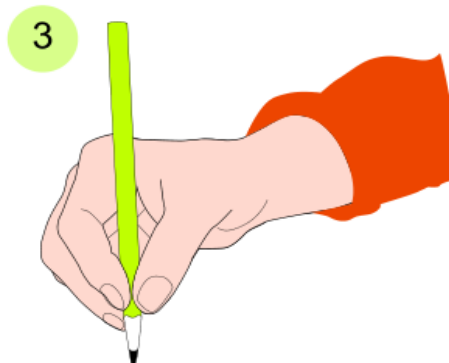
Paper position for left-handed children

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) Grip the pencil with your index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.
- 2) With your free hand, spin the pencil from underneath.
- 3) Use your middle finger to support the underside of the pencil.





Print letter formations

Aa	Bb	Cc	Dd	Ee	Ff	Gg
Hh	Ii	Jj	Kk	Ll	Mm	Nn
Oo	Pp	Qq	Rr	Ss	Tt	Uu
Vv	Ww	Xx	Yy	Zz		



Curly Caterpillar Letters

c c a a o o

q q g g d d

e e s s f f

Ladder Letters

l l i i

t t u u

j j y y

One Armed Robot Letters

r r b b n n

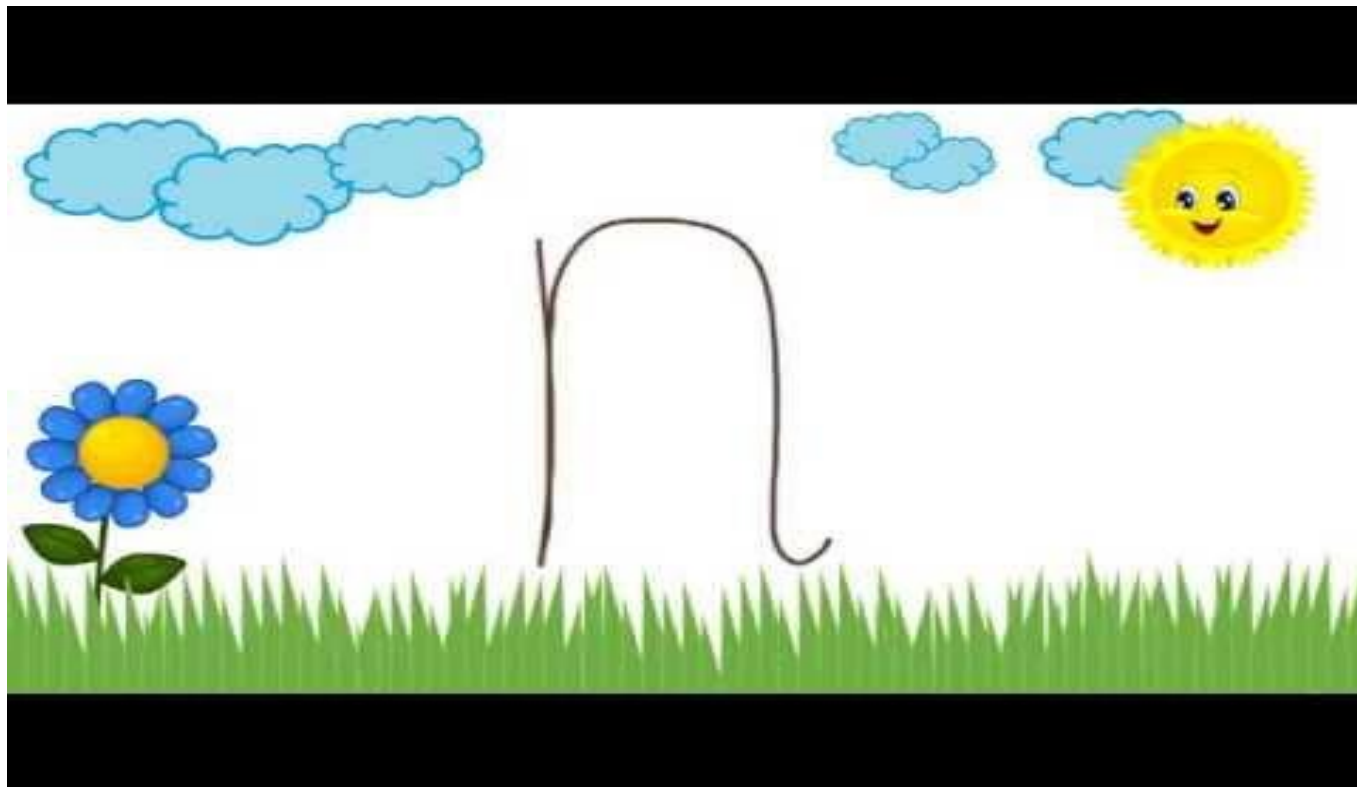
h h m m

k k p p

Zigzag Monster Letters

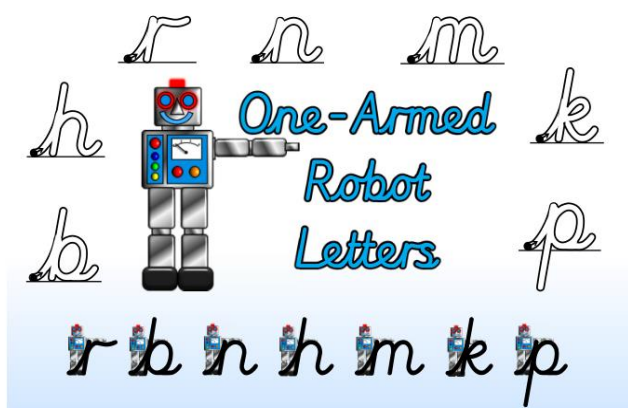
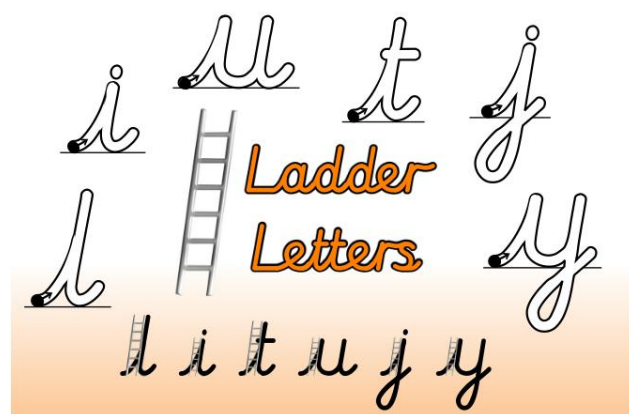
v v w w

x x z z



Cursive letter formations (with lead in and exit strokes)

Letter families



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

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

This font is also installed onto the schools computer network.



Examples of joining digraphs

ng

ai ar au aw

ay ch ck ee

sh

ue

Number Formations

