



Member of staff responsible: Carmen Dewhurst

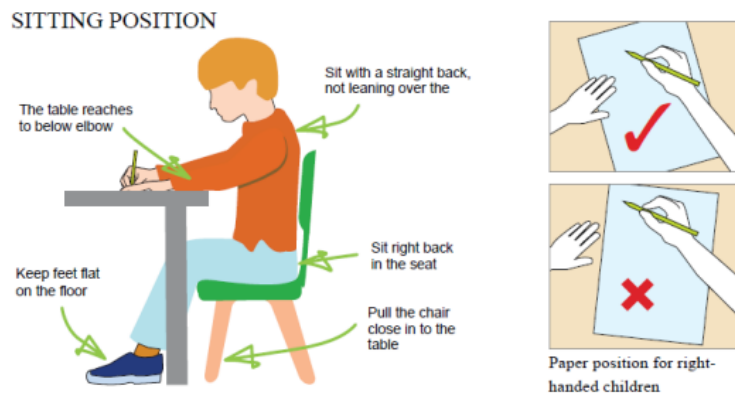
Date: May 2023

Date to be reviewed: May 2025

## Handwriting policy

### Expectations

All staff model handwriting to a high standard and their writing style mirrors what is expected of the class. This includes in marking, modelling writing and on displays. Writing is positioned neatly on the line and line sizing is carefully considered for the age and ability of the individual. A variety of handwriting styles are displayed through school to ensure children are exposed to a wide variety of fonts. From the early years, children are encouraged to sit with **good posture and use the tripod pencil grip**.



Children should be encouraged to use a tripod pencil grip, where the pencil is gripped between the index finger and the thumb. The middle finger is then used to support the underside of the pencil as shown here.



### Right-handed pencil grip

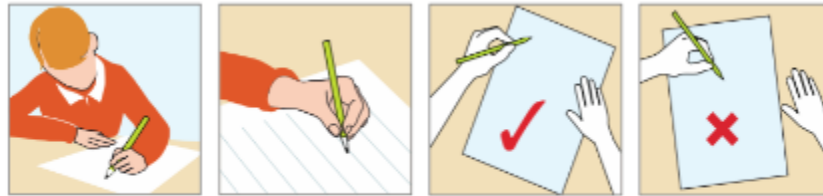


Where necessary, additional resources (e.g., triangular pencils, grip aids etc.) are introduced to aid this process.

The national Curriculum states, "**Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching.**" Most year groups are taught handwriting and children are expected to use their handwriting skills across all areas of the curriculum. Capital letters are not joined because they do not start from the line.

## Left-handed children

Left-handed writers may find it difficult to follow the movements of right-handed teachers as they model letter formation (and vice-versa). 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 below. Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.



Paper position for left-handed children.

## Assessment

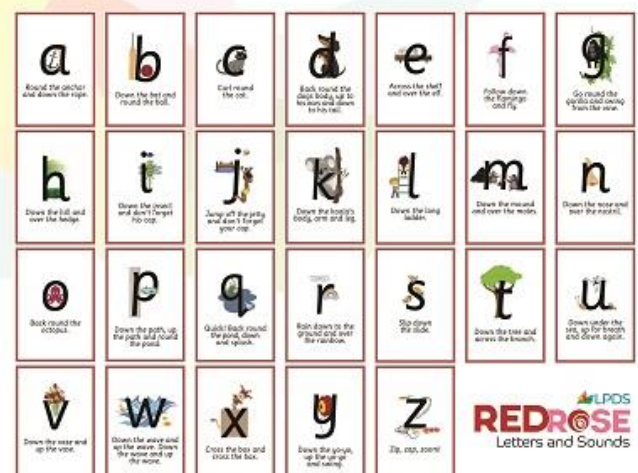
Assessment of handwriting is carried out regularly by class teachers to ensure that children are making adequate progress. If necessary, children who require additional support will undertake focus sessions for letter formation, joins, hand and finger strength etc. Overall handwriting objectives are monitored termly, using the Lancashire Key Learning Indicators of Performance (KLIPs) documents, based on the National Curriculum in England English programme of study.

If a teacher has concerns about a child's handwriting, they can make a referral to the SENDCo and implement appropriate support for the individual alongside the class teacher.

## Progression

### Reception

Handwriting is practised in both phonics and discrete taught handwriting sessions. From January, the taught sessions will have developed to 3 sessions per week and the children will be using books in these sessions. Children will begin to practise writing the letter in the air, on the carpet, on the palm of their hands or on their partners back. Children are mostly encouraged to sit at a table to write promoting good posture for writing. "Letter formation patter" from the Red Rose Lancashire Scheme are used to support children with their handwriting.



## Year 1

In Year 1, it is hoped that children are confident in forming most letters correctly, so to begin with children are introduced to **lead ins and lead outs**.

Children are taught their handwriting in order of letter families.

- Form digits 0-9 correctly.
- Practise forming letters in handwriting families
  - 'Long ladders' - i, j, l, t, u,
  - 'One armed robots' - b, h, m, n p, r
  - 'Curly caterpillars' - c, a, d, e, g, o, q, f, s
  - Zig-zag letters - k, v, w, x, y, z

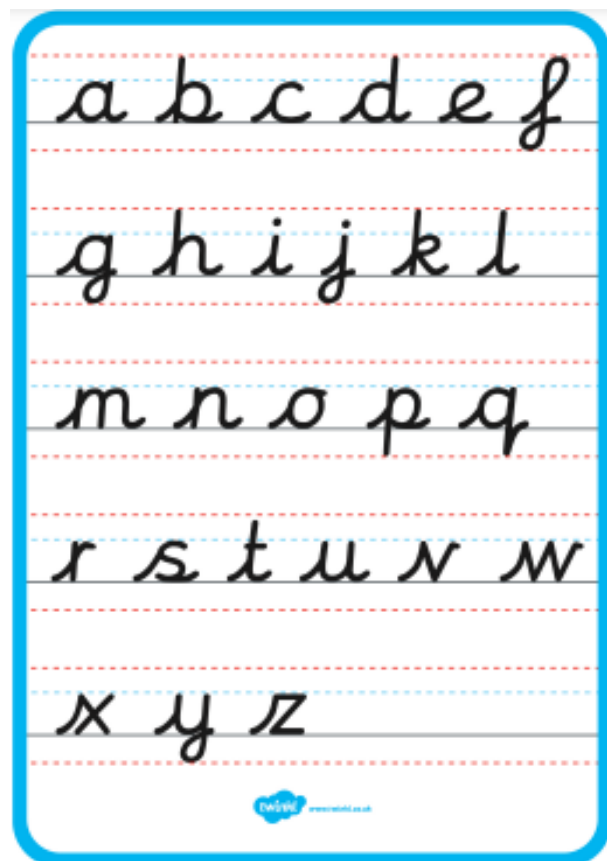
For Autumn term, the children will learn to use the lead ins and lead outs.

For the Spring Term, the children will learn to use the basic joins.

In the Summer term, the children will begin to join their writing using the cursive script.

*In Year 1, the children will have at least 3 discrete taught handwriting sessions per week.*

The cursive script agreed at Longridge CE Primary school is shown below.



## 4 basic handwriting joins

Here are the 4 basic joins and the order that they need to be taught.

1. Join to letters without ascenders. For example:

un um ig eg an ing ung

2. Join to letters with ascenders. For example:

ch th ll ll ill ck ack ink unk

3. Join horizontal joins. For example:

od re ve oon

4. Join horizontal joins to letters with ascenders. For example:

wt vt wh ff fl

## Year 2

Year 2 will also focus on writing tricky words and high frequency words using cursive handwriting. Interventions are put in place for children that require extra support with letter formation. By the end of year two it is hoped that all children can form all individual letters in cursive handwriting with letters sitting on the line and showing consistencies in height. The children will be joining their handwriting using the cursive script.

They will have 3 taught discrete handwriting sessions per week.

**From Year 3 upwards**, children are encouraged to write in a joined cursive style. From Year 4, children can gain a 'pen licence' for correct formation of letters, consistent fluidity and correct joins. This must be evident in their handwriting in all areas of the curriculum. Black handwriting pens (not biro) will be used. Children in LKS2, will continue to have 3 discrete taught handwriting sessions per week.

In UKS2, the handwriting practise sessions will only be necessary for teacher intervention groups. However, if cohorts of children are struggling with aspects of handwriting then this must be addressed and taught.

## Terminology

- **ascender**: a letter that goes above the **mid-point**. Letters that go above the x-height are: b d f h k l t and all capital letters.
- **baseline**: the line on which most letters rest. Picture a line under the letters in this sentence- that's the baseline.
- **descender**: a letter that goes below the **baseline**. Letters that go below the baseline are: g j p q y. The part that goes below the baseline is called the **tail**.
- **downstroke**: any movement downward with the writing instrument.
- **fine motor skills**: Fine motor skills are the ability to make movements using the small muscles in our hands and wrists

- **gross motor skills:** Gross motor skills are abilities that let us do tasks that involve large muscles in our torso, legs, and arms. They involve whole-body movements
- **mid-point** -midpoint, it's the height of all letters that are not **ascenders** and **descenders**. On the paper kids use for learning handwriting, there is a dotted line at the x-height. Letters that do not go above the x-height are: a c e m n o r s u v w x z
- **tripod grip:** is a grip using three fingers of the hand - the thumb, index and middle fingers. A child typically develops this grip around the age of three or four. It is a functional grasp which is essential for a number of tasks, such as holding a pencil or fastening buttons.
- **upstroke:** any movement upward with the writing instrument.

## Intervention

For groups of children who are struggling with letter formation we use the handwriting intervention 'Bubble Handwriting'. This simple scaffold provides a guide to consistently form cursive letters and ensure each letter is uniform in both height and width. Children are able to leave equal spaces between words and see clearly whether or not there is enough space at the end of each line for the next word they intend to write.

## Resources

- Lancashire Red Rose 'Handwriting patter'
- Agreed cursive handwriting style
- Tripod pencil grips
- Bubble handwriting (intervention)

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