



Guidelines for Handwriting

EYFS

In the EYFS, the main emphasis should be on developing hand strength, fine motor control and teaching the children the correct pincer grip.

In Nursery, children should be exposed to lower and upper case letters and engage in mark making activities.

In Reception, the focus should be on developing the children's fine motor skills. The children should take part in a **handwriting workshop** every week. This should involve a range of multi-sensory activities which the children rotate around. As part of this, the teacher and/or TA should lead an activity where the emphasis is on the correct formation of the focus letter on paper, using a pencil.

Correct pencil grip should also be a focus in these sessions, using the teaching model outlined in *Handwriting Without Tears*. The letters should be taught in their natural groupings, e.g. c, o, a; letters with ascenders; letters with descenders etc.

During handwriting workshops, the children should be taught the name, as well as the sound, of the focus letter. Children should also be shown both the upper case and lower case version of the focus letter.

Year 1

In Year 1, children should continue to be taught how to form the letters of the alphabet, through the format of the multi-sensory handwriting workshop.

During the handwriting workshops, the children should be reminded of the name, as well as the sound, of the focus letter.

Correct formation of capital letters should be taught, alongside the correct formation of the lower case version of the letter.

A key emphasis in Year 1 continues to be on ensuring children are using the correct pincer grip.

Year 2

For the first half term, children should have a ten minute handwriting session, three times a week, usually at the end of the day.

Children should be taught one letter at a time; the order the letters are taught in should be grouped according to letter formation, as in Reception and Year 1. The cursive script, 'lead in stroke', should be introduced from the beginning of Year 2. Once the children have been introduced to the cursive form of each letter, they should then learn how to join the letters to each other, using diagonal and horizontal joins.



During their handwriting sessions, the children should use pencil and write on specially lined handwriting paper, to help them form and size their letters correctly.

After the first half term, children should no longer work in a workshop format, but instead should all do the same pencil and paper activity at the same time. This enables the teacher to move around the room monitoring that each child is using the correct letter formation and pencil grip, and offer support where needed.

Left-handed children should have their handwriting sheets adapted so the letters they are copying are on the right of the page.

The following website is useful for demonstrating to the children how to write using the cursive script: <http://www.ictgames.com/writingRepeater/>

Year 3

There should be intense handwriting practice for the first half of the Autumn term, whereby children practise at least three times a week for 10 minutes. The focus should be on refreshing their knowledge of the cursive script, letter formation and joins.

Following on from this initial refresher, handwriting should then be practised once or twice a week. Children can be given pieces of text to copy and then decorate, encouraging them to think about their presentation generally. Children should be expected to use joined up handwriting whenever they write, unless the teacher feels they are not yet ready to.

When completing handwriting practice, the children should use shaded, lined paper, to ensure greater emphasis is now placed on the appropriate sizing of letters and on letters correctly sitting on the line.

Children continue to use pencil in their English and maths books.

Year 4 to 6

Children can now start to use pen when they write. Whatever writing implement the children choose to use, the expectation is that they use joined up handwriting whenever they write, unless they are unable to form the cursive script.

However, when completing handwriting practice activities, all children should use a pen (not pencil) and work on standard, lined paper. Shaded lined paper should only be used for those children who still need it.

The emphasis should now be on children developing their own, individual style of legible, preferably joined-up, handwriting. Handwriting is practised once a week. Children can be given pieces of text to copy and then decorate, encouraging them to think about their presentation generally.