

Handwriting progression at Palmers Cross Primary

– based upon the Nelson Handwriting Scheme 2015

Whole school handwriting approach

Time allocation

- Teach letter formation alongside phonics in EYFS and KS1 + additional timetable slots specifically for handwriting.
- Separate weekly timetable slots in KS2 and reinforce during phonics, spelling and English lessons and across the curriculum.
- Short but often is best. Regular practice

Model letters used (Nelson Handwriting Font)

Lower case

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Capitals

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Numbers

1234567890

Progression of skills to learn for handwriting and presentation.

Getting ready to write

Atmosphere

Try to create a relaxed atmosphere. Wrist shaking exercises, scribbling and practising writing patterns all help to loosen up muscles ready for writing.

Seating and posture

3 Ps - posture, pencil-hold and paper position

The child's chair and table should be at a comfortable height.

The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor.

Children should be encouraged to sit up straight and not to slouch.

The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and the feet flat on the floor.

Tables should be free of clutter and there should be adequate light to allow children to see what they are doing. Ideally, left-handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners so that their movements are not restricted.

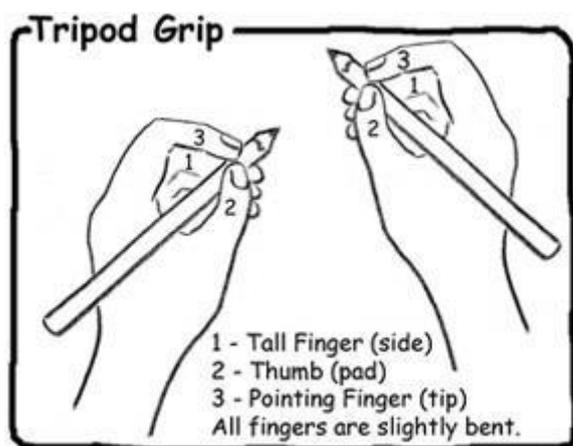
Pencil and pen grip

For all children, especially left-handers, a pen or pencil with a rounded nib or point is best for writing.

For right-handers, a tripod grip is generally accepted as the most efficient way of holding a pen or pencil. It should be held lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm from the point. The middle finger provides additional support. The book or writing paper should be placed to the right, tilted slightly to the left. The left hand should be used to steady the paper.

Left-handers are in a minority, and our handwriting system favours the right hander. Left-handers therefore need plenty of encouragement and support.

When a left-hander makes joining strokes, they are pushed, not pulled, as they are by a right-hander. Encourage them to hold their pencils far enough away from the point to allow them to see what they are writing. The tripod grip should be much the same as for a right-hander. The book or paper should be positioned to the left and tilted slightly to the right.



Writing tools

At KS1 and years 3 & 4 pupils write in pencil. For the vast majority of children an HB pencil will be needed. For Foundation children a thicker style of pencil may be appropriate.

The school handwriting pen is a Berol or gel pen which must be dark blue. Biro should **not** be used unless for a specific reason. Writing in pen should be introduced in Year 5 by which time children should be writing neatly in pencil. Where appropriate, pupils in Years 5 & 6 will continue to write in pencil.

Paper

In the early stages, children should be encouraged to make free flowing movements and be encouraged to produce large patterns, letter and words on large sheets of plain paper (or on an interactive whiteboard). In the Nelson handwriting font, guidelines can be generated using the tramlines facility. As their motor skills increase, the size of the writing should decrease and exercise books can be used for handwriting practice.

From time to time, all children should be encouraged to use unlined paper. This allows them to determine letter size, spacing and the arrangement of the page and to understand how to position them.

Layout

In all subjects work should be dated as appropriate. In Foundation and KS1 it may be more appropriate for pupils to write the number date or for the teacher to write the date to ensure that time is directed to the actual task rather than the laborious copying of the date.

In Foundation and KS1 and lower ability at Years 3 & 4, pupils should write a short learning objective for their work.

In higher ability in years 3&4 and in all abilities in years 5 & 6, all pupils should write a clear learning objective at the start of each piece of work.

Letter formation in EYFS. This needs to be secure before moving onto joins.

In EYFS, children use Rainbow Letters to reinforce the formation of phonemes during daily phonics sessions. In addition to this session, there are additional discrete handwriting sessions where letter families are taught. This will reinforce the learning from phonics sessions, but also make the links between the formations of series of letters.

Techniques for teaching letter formation

- provide demonstrations when introducing and teaching letter shapes.
- Observe individuals as much as possible while they practise. This enables the teacher to recognise and correct bad habits as they arise.
- Talk the children through the process using appropriate language
- Encourage children to verbalise what they are doing.
- Writing involves visual and motor skills. Use the following ideas to reinforce the teaching of letter shapes:
 1. make patterns in the air with ribbons
 2. form letters by drawing in the air
 3. finger trace over tactile letters
 4. write over dotted or shadow writing
 5. draw round templates
 6. write in sand with a finger or stick
 7. write on an interactive whiteboard
 8. write letters boldly with a wax candle and then apply a colour wash
 9. form letters with pegs on a pegboard or with beads in plasticine
 10. form letters with fingers and/or bodies, individually and in groups

Letter families:

Stick family: l i f t u

Stick and over family: r n m h b k

Round family: c o a d e s

Tail family: j g y p q

Odd family: v w x z

Extras: ch sh th tr dr wh

Letters showing correct entry point and direction of movement and proportion (see tramlines)

ā 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

Ā B C D E F G H I J K L M N

Ō P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

vwxyz

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

vwxyz

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
rstuvwxyz

Teaching the joined style

In the early stages the correct movements are more important than the appearance of writing. Children should be discouraged from forming writing with incorrect movements, even if they manage to achieve results that appear satisfactory. However, in later stages a more individual style is encouraged.

- Provide demonstrations when introducing joins
- Observe individuals as much as possible while they practise. This enables the teacher to recognise and correct bad habits as they arise.
- Talk the children through the process using appropriate language
- Encourage children to verbalise what they are doing.
- Most children will need extra practice with making the joins
- Encourage children to use the basic handwriting patterns both for practice and for decorative purposes is a valuable technique for fostering fluency and rhythmic movement.

Break letters

b g j p q x y z

Eight letters after which no join is made. Joins are not made to or from the letter z.

Joins

1. diagonal joins to letters without ascenders : *in, ai, ar, un, am,*
2. horizontal joins to letters without ascenders : *oa, wo, ou, vi, am*
3. diagonal joins to letters with ascenders : *ab, ul, it, ch*
4. horizontal joins to letters with ascenders : *ol, wh, ot, ob*

Joining sets

Set 1

a c d e f h i j k l m n s t u

12 letters with exit flicks plus s

Set 2

a c d e g i j m n o p q r s u v w x y

19 letters which start at the top of the x height

Set 3

b f h k l t

6 letters which start at the top of the ascender

Set 4

f o r v w

5 letters which finish at the top of the x height

Examples of cursive style

The cursive style

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

The cursive slanted style

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Presentation

Careful presentation of work must be stressed at all times. Whilst the overall presentation of work, in terms of layout, may differ between KS1 and KS2 the need for care with presentation does not.

The class teacher sets the standard of presentation for the class. Worksheets, board presentation and written comments in children's books are the most constant example of handwriting that a child has. Teachers should ensure that they set high standards of presentation themselves. Care should also be taken to ensure that where children are still at the printing stage of handwriting that teachers print when adding comments in pupils' book also.

Resources

The Nelson Handwriting Font
Developing skills books

Handwriting in the National Curriculum 2014

Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

YEAR GROUP	Programme of study (statutory requirements)	Notes and guidance (non-statutory)
YEAR ONE	<p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 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.	<p>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.</p> <p>Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.</p>

YEAR TWO	Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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. 	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.
YEARS THREE AND FOUR	Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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, e.g. by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch. 	Pupils should be using joined 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 down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.
YEARS FIVE AND SIX	Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed 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).	labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra) and capital letters (e.g. for filling in a form).

HANDWRITING A.R.E.

YEAR 1

Handwriting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • form capital letters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • form digits 0-9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

YEAR 2

Handwriting
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

YEAR 3 AND YEAR 4

Handwriting
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].

YEAR 5 AND YEAR 6

Handwriting
write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task