

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL



Thomas Hickman School Handwriting Policy

Adopted by Thomas Hickman School

This policy was adopted by Chair of Governors :

Adopted by Governors Full GB:

Governing committee accountable for review Reviewed:

SLT member accountable for review:

English Leader

Date of last review:

October 2024

Date of next review:

October 2026

Signed: Date:

Alan Sherwell - Chair of Governors

Read, Write, Inc. Handwriting



Handwriting will be directly taught, once a week, during 'Halfway Handwriting Wednesday!' for 30 minutes. This will be completed straight after lunch.

THS make the physical process of writing – handwriting – enjoyable from the start, so children see themselves as 'writers'. We use mnemonics – memory pictures – to help children visualise the letter or join before they write it down. Children need to ***practise handwriting under the guidance of a teacher so they do not develop habits that will be difficult to undo later.***

Staff may use the visualiser to model or the interactive programme:

<https://edu-tools.github.io/>

The stages of handwriting

Stage 1	EYFS	<p>Children practise correct letter formation on <i>plain paper</i> (see letter formation chart at the end of this document) in Autumn and Spring Term. <i>During Summer Term, the children will move on to wide lined handwriting books.</i></p> <p>The letters are taught in handwriting groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'Around' letters: c a o d g q• 'Down' letters: l t b p k h i j m n r u y• 'Curly' letters: e f s• 'Zig-zag' letters: v w z x.
Stage 2	Year 1	<p>Children learn where to place the letters on the writing line using <i>wide lined handwriting books.</i></p> <p>Picture mnemonics help children to visualise the size and placement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some small letters are called 'boat letters': a c e i m n o r s u v w x z.• Letters that are written below the line are called 'water letters': g j p q y.• Tall letters are called 'sun letters': b d h k l t f. 
Stage 3	Year 2	<p>Children will continue to use wide lined handwriting books.</p> <p>Children learn the <i>two basic joins:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the arm join (diagonal)• the washing line join (horizontal) <p><u>The arm join has three variations:</u></p> <p>a) The arm to boat join</p>  <p>The arm join should not be too straight or too curly. <i>Phrase:</i> 'Sweep up your arm to touch... (say letter).'</p>

Checklist:

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the curl gentle – not too round, not too spiky
- ✓ make the 'arm' sweep up in a gentle curve
- ✓ write the downstroke of the second letter very straight

Use for joining: a c d e h i k l m n t u

to: e i j m n p r u v w x y z

b) The arm to sun join



The arm should meet the next letter just over halfway up. It should sweep smoothly into the sun letter.

Phrase: 'Sweep up your arm to touch... (say letter) and shoot up to the top.'

Checklist:

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the join like an arm – not too straight, not too round
- ✓ continue the line up to the top of the next letter
- ✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining: a e i d h k l m n t u c

to: b h k l t

c) The arm to a round letter join



The arm should touch the around letter's forehead and then go to the back of the head as though resting a hand.

Phrase: 'Sweep up your arm to touch... (say letter) and stroke the head.'

Checklist:

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the join like an arm – not too straight, not too round
- ✓ continue the arm join over the head of the 'around' letter – as though a hand is stroking back the hair
- ✓ go back along the head
- ✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining: a c d e h i k l m n t u

to: a d g c o q

The washing line join has three variations:

a) The washing line to boat join



The washing line should not be too droopy (the clothes get dirty) or too tight (the line breaks in the wind).

Phrase: 'Not too droopy, not too tight.'

Checklist:

✓ write the first letter carefully

✓ make the join like a washing line – not too droopy or too tight

✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining: v w r f o

to: i j m n p r u v w x y z e

b) The washing line to sun join



The washing line should meet the next letter just over halfway up. It should sweep smoothly into the tall letter.

Phrase: 'Not too droopy, not too tight – and shoot up the next letter.'

Checklist:

✓ write the first letter carefully

✓ make the join like a washing line – not too droopy or too tight

✓ continue the washing line up to the top of the next letter

✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining: v w r f o

to: b h k l t

c) The washing line to around letter join



The washing line should touch the around letter's forehead and then go to the back of the head – as though stroking back the hair.

Phrase: 'Not too droopy, not too tight – and stroke the around letter's head.'

Checklist:

✓ write the first letter carefully

✓ make the join like a washing line – not too droopy or too tight

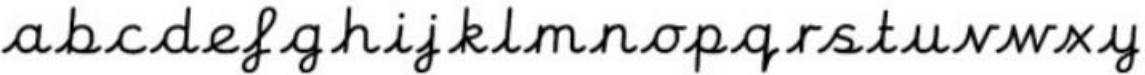
✓ stroke back the around letter's hair

✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining: v w r f o

to: a d g c o q

The 2014 National Curriculum Programme of Study for English states that children 'should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation'. It is H & C's expectation that all children will begin to join their letters at the start of Year 2 and will be secure in writing in a joined style by Year 3.

<p>Stage 4</p>	<p>Year 3 - 6</p>	<p>Continuous Cursive Handwriting – children will practise in their English books.</p> <p><i>Aims and rationale behind this style</i> This handwriting style is recommended by the British Dyslexia Association, to ensure high levels of presentation; a simpler approach to forming joins; and a clearer distinction between capital and lower case letters.</p> <p>We want children to achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting.</p> <p>Each letter begins in the same place on the line and flows from left to right. This reduces the likelihood of reversal mix-ups such as b/d and p/q.</p> <p>A smooth flow improves speed and spelling; children develop fluency whilst writing, with a physical memory of how each letter is written. Eventually, the children are able to write the letters with confidence and correct orientation.</p> <p><i>All adults to adopt correctly and neatly formed cursive handwriting when writing in children’s books, on the interactive whiteboard or when shown on displays / other handwritten resources.</i></p> <p>We provide regular opportunities for children to develop, practise and perfect their skills and provide targeted support for any child experiencing difficulty.</p> <p>Our agreed cursive style is as below:</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All letters will join apart from the letter ‘x’. • Each lower-case letter begins on the line and loops into the main body
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Handwriting position

We teach children that when you use the handwriting signal they automatically go into the perfect handwriting position:

- feet flat on the floor
- bottom at the back of the chair
- body one fist from the table
- shoulders down and relaxed 2
- back leaning forward slightly
- left/right hand holding the page
- left/right hand ready in a tripod grip

High expectations from staff

We have high expectations; valuing work that is the child's best effort and supporting when it clearly is not.

We identify left-handed children and make sure they have sufficient space in which to work and that they are tilting their paper by slanting to the right. We ensure these children in particular maintain a good posture and straight hold of their pencil.

We encourage children to assume a correct sitting position in order to write – as set out above and model how to hold a pencil correctly. The hand that is not holding the pencil is holding the paper.



























Children are provided with appropriate paper and pencils and/or pens (i.e. all pencils must be sharp and of a reasonable length).

Staff reinforce how to form letters, beginning each letter in the same place on the line, using a variety of strategies and materials and demonstrating a fluid motion.

We monitor children's progress through regular observations of how letters and numbers are formed in all subject areas and we implement intervention for those children not forming letters or numbers correctly.

Where necessary, support spotlight children and provide differentiated tasks to ensure progress for all such as allowing children with very poor fine motor skills to print if necessary.

Staff model good handwriting: on the board, in marking children's work, displays, use cursive handwriting font on teaching materials where possible etc.

<p>a</p>  <p>Around the apple and down the leaf.</p>	<p>b</p>  <p>Down the laces to the heel and around the toe.</p>	<p>c</p>  <p>Curl around the caterpillar.</p>	<p>d</p>  <p>Around the dinosaurs bottom, up his tall neck & down to his toes.</p>	<p>e</p>  <p>Lift off the top and scoop out the egg.</p>	<p>f</p>  <p>Down the stem and draw the leaves.</p>
<p>g</p>  <p>Around the girls face, down her hair and give her a curl.</p>	<p>h</p>  <p>Down the head, to his hooves and over his back.</p>	<p>i</p>  <p>Down the body and dot for the head.</p>	<p>j</p>  <p>Down his body, curl, dot for his head.</p>	<p>k</p>  <p>Down the kangaroo's body tail and leg.</p>	<p>l</p>  <p>Down the long leg.</p>
<p>m</p>  <p>Down Maisie, mountain, mountain.</p>	<p>n</p>  <p>Down Nobby and over his net.</p>	<p>o</p>  <p>All around the orange.</p>	<p>p</p>  <p>Down the pirates plait and around his face.</p>	<p>qu</p>  <p>Round her head, up past her earring, down her hair, and flick.</p>	<p>r</p>  <p>Down the robots back and curl over his arm.</p>
<p>s</p>  <p>Slither down the snake.</p>	<p>t</p>  <p>Down the tower, across the tower.</p>	<p>u</p>  <p>Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle.</p>	<p>v</p>  <p>Down a wing, up a wing.</p>	<p>w</p>  <p>Down, up, down, up.</p>	<p>x</p>  <p>Down the arm and leg, repeat the other side.</p>
<p>y</p>  <p>Down a horn, up a horn and under head.</p>	<p>z</p>  <p>Zig-zag-zig.</p>				