



St Leonard's

C of E Primary School

Handwriting Policy

This policy was written in:	June 2025
To be reviewed:	June 2028
By:	Kay Proctor & Sally Walsh

'A new commandment I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.'

John 13:34

With God's help, we will be inclusive, independent, inquiring and inspirational.

- We will be inclusive by loving all and embracing differences so that all are treated with dignity and respect.
- We will be independent by persevering and encouraging everyone to be the best they can be, working together as a nurturing, Christian family.
- We will be inquiring by asking questions so that we grow in mind, body and spirit, learning about God's wondrous, diverse world.
- We will be inspirational by following Jesus' example, making a positive difference in the lives of others through love.

Introduction

The skill of handwriting needs to be taught. It is not a natural skill that will grow and develop like speaking or walking. Handwriting is a fine motor activity. A movement stored in the body rather than in the conscious memory. Effective handwriting is based on a style that is quick and easy to learn. At St Leonard's, we aim to teach children to develop a neat, legible style that eventually will become automatic to use. An automatic style releases the brain to concentrate on the content of writing i.e. spelling, grammar, syntax, style and content, rather than on forming the letters.

Handwriting should be taught alongside phonic and spelling knowledge at all stages. Effective teaching of handwriting can only be achieved through modelling. All members of staff (including teaching assistants, supply teachers and students) are provided with appropriate handwriting models and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example. Staff should model accurate handwriting regularly and children must practise by carefully copying and repeating. It is important to observe children writing to ensure they are forming letters correctly.

Aims

Teaching of handwriting aims to ensure that children:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed joined letters
- Develop flow and speed
- Understand the need to develop a good handwriting style
- Eventually produce the letters automatically in their independent writing
- Children at Key Stage 2 are aware that they need to balance speed and neatness to achieve a writing style appropriate to a task

Teaching and learning

- Handwriting is taught as discrete lessons in classes 3 times a week for 10 mins.
- In Year 2-6, Teachers (including teaching assistants, supply teachers and students) must model correctly joined handwriting at all times. In Reception and Y1, teachers (including teaching assistants, supply teachers and students) must print clearly all writing on the board and marking books.
- Where possible, handwriting lessons are linked to phonic and spelling patterns.
- High expectations of handwriting and presentation are required by all staff.
- Displays throughout the school include a variety of print, joined and computer generated writing.
- In Year 5 and 6, children may start to use a black ink.

At St Leonard's, we teach handwriting linked closely to the Read Write Inc Phonics scheme. Handwriting is taught progressively and in-line with the requirements of the National Curriculum. This begins in EYFS where children are taught single letter formation. (See below). In KS1 children are introduced to a simple joined handwriting style. (See below).

Handwriting is taught as a specific skill, little and often. Children in EYFS have handwriting linked to daily phonics sessions. KS1 have lessons dedicated to the development of handwriting skills. In KS2, children practise their handwriting throughout the curriculum. Specific handwriting lessons will be combined with spelling/grammar lessons. Some children in KS2 will receive targeted handwriting support.

EYFS

Through specifically planned activities and experiences, children in EYFS develop the following skills to enable them to become fluent in handwriting:

- Good gross motor control
- Good fine motor control
- A language to talk about shapes and movements

As the children progress through EYFS, they will be encouraged to:

- Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters (Appendix 1)
- How to sit correctly for writing (Appendix 1)
- To hold the pencil far enough away from the end so it doesn't obstruct their line of vision
- Learn letter formation alongside phonics using Read Write Inc letter mnemonics (Appendix 2 and 3)
- Learn where the letter sits – on or below the line
- Learn how to form capital letters correctly, starting in the correct place (Appendix 4)

Year 1

Following on from their learning in Reception, children will recap letter formation in discrete handwriting lessons. Children will learn how to add a finishing 'lead out' to the individual letters that do not already have them.

The RWI mnemonics (Appendix 2 and 3) that aid letter formation and are introduced in Early Years continue to be used in Year 1. The children will also be taught to write with finger spaces between words and develop speed and accuracy.

In discrete handwriting lessons, children learn correct letter formation using the same picture mnemonics they have already learnt in the Speed Sounds Set 1 Lessons.

Once children can form the letters correctly, they learn the relative size and placement.

These letters are taught in handwriting groups:

- '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

If children are secure with their letter formation in Year 1, they will receive direct teaching from the teachers to model how to begin to join some letters. This is the same as what they will be taught in Year 2.

Year 2

Pupils in Year 2 should be taught to:

- 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
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters (Appendix 4)
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

In Year 2, children learn how to join handwriting. Children are taught to add a finishing 'lead out' to the individual letters and extend them into the following letter start point. They will have discrete lessons for this and additional intervention will take place for those children who need it.

The letters 'f' 'j' 'y' 'g' 'k' can be introduced with a more cursive style to help with the joining and speed. This should be modelled and explained clearly during handwriting lessons.

The majority of children will:

- Write legibly, using upper and lower case letters appropriately and correct spacing between words.
- Form ascenders and descenders consistently and correctly.
- Practise writing at speed.

Key Stage 2

In KS2, children will be expected to practise and embed the handwriting skills they have been taught in KS1. They will practise this in English lessons, spelling lessons and discrete handwriting lessons or interventions where this is deemed appropriate by the teacher.

Years 3 and 4

The National Curriculum states that in Year 3 & 4 children should be taught the following in handwriting:

- 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 (letter x)
- increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the downward strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch

It also states:

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.

By the end of Year 3 the majority of children will:

- Form and use basic handwriting joins to develop joined handwriting.
- Further develop writing with speed and stamina.
- Produce writing which sits on the line for the majority of the time.

By the end of Year 4 the majority of children will:

- Use joined handwriting the majority of the time.
- Have ascenders and descenders in the correct place and on the lines
- Write with increasing speed and stamina.

Years 5 and 6

The National Curriculum states that in Year 5 & 6 children should be taught the following in handwriting:

Pupils should be taught to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:

- choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
- choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

The majority of children will:

- Write with consistent size and letter spacing
- Have a cursive, legible, accurate style.
- Be able to write at steady dictation speed.

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils will be able to write fluently and legibly. However, some pupils may need

additional support to develop handwriting skills. Provision will be made through additional sessions that are focused on the child's identified specific difficulty with handwriting.

Additional support and advice is available from our Special Educational Needs Coordinator. Children at both key stages will have access to a range of writing tools (including pencil grips and specialist pens and pencils) and will be given guidance about which are best suited to their needs.

Children with special educational needs will be given opportunities to present written work for display and they will be encouraged to see the need for developing a neat, legible style.

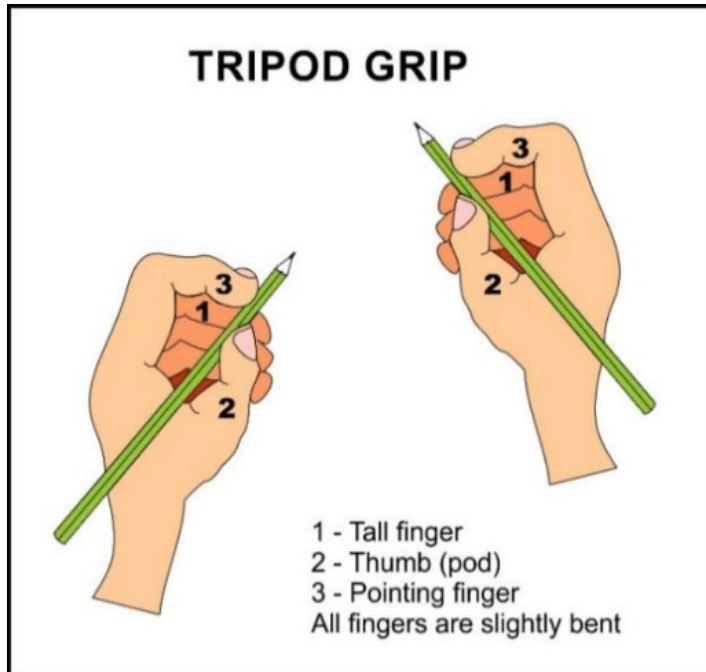
Provision for left handed children

Teachers should be aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision. Paper should be positioned to the left for right-handed pupils and to the right for left handed pupils. Left-handed pupils should be positioned to the left of a right-handed pupil so that they are not competing for space. Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically. They are encouraged to find a comfortable orientation for their paper, usually slightly to the left of centre of their body. Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when they are modelled by a right-handed teacher. Teachers demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.

Appendix 1

Pencil grip

From Reception, children are taught and encouraged to use the correct tripod grip when holding a pencil.



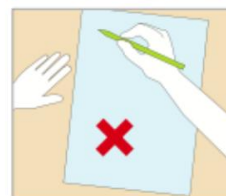
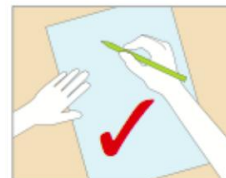
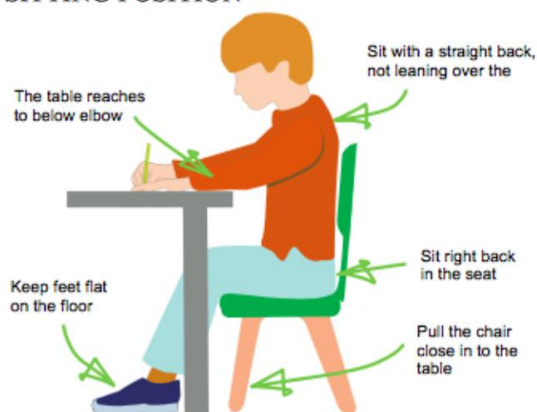
Sitting position

From Reception, children are taught and encouraged to use the correct sitting position for handwriting.

Teach children that when you use the handwriting signal they automatically go into the perfect

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

SITTING POSITION



Paper position for right-handed children

handwriting position:

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

Appendix 2

Read Write Inc – Handwriting Phrases to teach aid Letter Formation

a - Round the apple down the leaf (apple)

b - Down the laces to the heel, round the toe (Boot)

c - Curl around the caterpillar (caterpillar)

d - Round his bottom up his tall neck and down to his feet (dinosaur)

e - Lift off the top and scoop out the egg (egg)

f - Down the stem, and draw the leaves (flower)

g - Round her face down her hair and give her a curl (girl)

h - Down the head to the hooves and over his back (horse)

i - Down his body, and dot for his head (insect)

j - Down his body curl and dot (jack-in-the box)

k - Down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg (kangaroo)

l - Down the long leg (leg)

m - Down Maisie, over the mountain over the mountain (Maisie and mountains)

n - Down Nobby, over his net (football net)

o - All around the orange (orange)

p - Down his plait and around his head (pirate)

q - Round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair (queen)

r - Down his back, then curl over his arm (robot)

s - Slither down the snake (snake)

t - Down the tower across the tower (castle tower)

u - Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle (umbrella)

v - Down a wing, up a wing (vulture)



























w - Down up down up (worm)

x - Down the arm and leg and repeat the other side (Exercise)

y - Down a horn up a horn and under his head (yak)

z - Zig-zag-zig (zip)

Appendix 3

								
Maisey mountain mountain	Around the apple, down the leaf	Slither down the snake	Round his bottom, up his tall neck and down to his feet	Down the tower, across the tower	Down the body, dot for the head	Down Nobby and over his net	Down the plait and over the pirate's face	Round her face, down her hair and give her a curl
								
All around the orange	Curl around the caterpillar	Down the kangaroos body, tail and leg	Down and under, up to the top and draw a puddle	Down the laces, to heel, round the toe	Down the stem and draw the leaves	Lift off the top and scoop out the egg	Down the long leg	Down the head, to the hooves and over his back
								
Down his back, then curl over his arm	Down the body, curl and dot	Down a wing, up a wing	Down a horn , up a horn and under his head	Down up, down up	Zig-zag-zig	Round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair	Down the arm and leg, repeat the other side	

Appendix 4

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