

# The Weald Federation

Of Five Ashes, Frant, Mark Cross and Mayfield Church of England Primary Schools



**With God's love we grow and learn  
together**

To be an inspirational place of learning. Together, with our community, we strive for excellence enabling every child to flourish.

Through our Christian ethos, we aim to empower our pupils to become independent, reflective learners able to contribute to our ever-changing and diverse world.

## Handwriting policy

Led by:	A.Scales/Federation English Leads
Date implemented:	September 2024
Date for next review:	September 2025
Approved by:	EHTs
ESCC policy / School	School

## **Handwriting Policy**

At the Weald Federation all members of staff have high expectations of the standards of work that children produce, including presentation. We also encourage our pupils to have high expectations of themselves.

The ability to write fluently and legibly gives children a means to communicate their thoughts and ideas efficiently. Handwriting is a skill which must be learnt in order to provide a style which becomes simple to produce and easy to read.

### **Intent**

Our objective is to help pupils enjoy learning and developing their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride. We aim for our pupils to develop a neat, legible, joined cursive style that, by the end of Key Stage 2, they are able to maintain when writing at speed. This will be achieved by:

- providing equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in handwriting by developing fluency and accuracy through discreet handwriting lessons and across all curriculum subjects.
- encouraging children to take pride in their work.
- helping children to recognise that handwriting is an important skill and will be a fundamental element of all forms of written communication throughout their lives.
- ensuring that all staff are clear on handwriting expectations and model the Federation and School's handwriting approach when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard and for some displays/resources.

### **Implementation**

#### **Pens and Pencils**

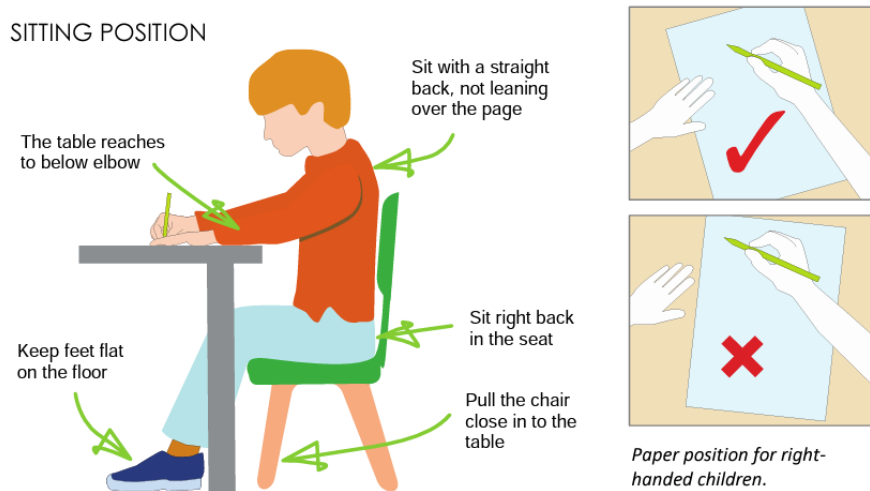
Children will start handwriting using a soft pencil. When fine motor skills have been established, a handwriting pen with blue ink can be used. Handwriting pens will not be used for curriculum work until Year 3 or 4 to enable all pupils to begin their 'pen journey' together. In Upper Key Stage 2 most children should be using a handwriting pen for writing across the curriculum.

#### **Paper**

In Year 1 children are encouraged to write on wide lined paper and from Year 2 onwards, the line size decreases depending on the needs of the child. Teachers and the SENDCo work together to identify any children who may need to work on different paper to suit their needs and abilities to help them succeed.

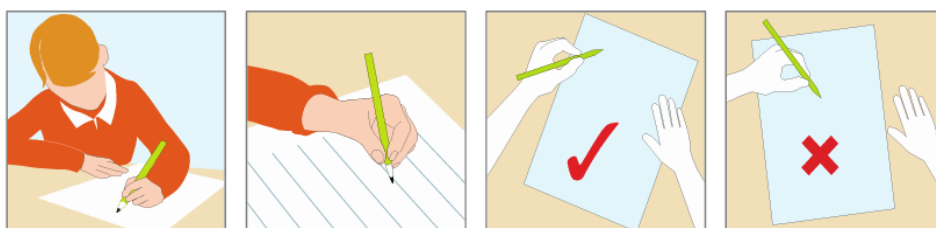
#### **Correct Posture and Pencil Grip for Handwriting**

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



Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow the movements of right-handed teachers as they model letter formation (and visa versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.

- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so they are not competing for space.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted (as shown below)



Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip from EYFS which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib.

### Discrete Handwriting Lessons

Discrete teaching involves the explanation, demonstration and practise of the skill of handwriting. This skill can then be applied or used across the curriculum. Discrete teaching can help to prevent poor handwriting by clearly indicating the relationships between letters and the relationship of each letter to the writing base line

In the discrete teaching of handwriting, each lesson should have a clear and simple focus (e.g. the correct formation of a single letter, revision of a group of letters such as those requiring clockwise movements, the introduction of a particular aspect of linking such as hooks, or the practice of linking letters in commonly found patterns). Letters should be taught in letter family groups and their similarities and differences should be stated clearly as this reduces the amount of new information to be learned as each new letter or type of linking is introduced.

### Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

For our youngest pupils, short, daily handwriting lessons will include one or more of the following:

- opportunities to enhance gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern-making and physical activities
- exercises to develop fine motor skills such as mark making on paper, whiteboards, sensory trays, fastening buttons, cutting, pinching clay etc.
- becoming familiar with letter shapes, their sounds, formation and vocabulary
- understand that letters are written on a base line
- begin to recognise patterns and understand different shaped letter families
- handwriting practice on whiteboards and paper linked to phonics where possible
- correct sitting position and tripod pencil grip for handwriting
- exploring writing using a wide range of materials such as chalk, whiteboard pens, paint, crayons, pens, pencils, sand etc.

By the end of the EYFS, most children should be able to recognise and form all of the lowercase letters of the alphabet and write words using the correct formation (without lead-ins or joining strokes). Children should be exposed to capital letters and some children will begin to use these appropriately.

### **Key Stage 1**

There are opportunities to practise letter formation both as part of the daily phonics lesson and in handwriting lessons. In KS1, children will:

- continue with gross and fine motor skills exercises
- reinforce a comfortable and efficient tripod pencil grip
- consolidate letter formation, ensuring letters are started in the correct place and are formed, orientated and proportioned correctly
- ensure that letters sit on the base line and are consistent in size with ascenders and descenders that are the correct length and formation
- leave the correct space between words (and letters)
- form numerals that are consistent in size and sit on the baseline
- begin to form capital letters and understand when they are used
- schools may begin to introduce joining (once letter formation is correct) by beginning to join similarly formed letters together using diagonal and horizontal strokes (linked to phonics and digraphs/trigraphs)
- use spelling patterns and spelling words in independent and guided handwriting sessions to reinforce, improve and embed spelling skills and knowledge
- improve the speed of writing and begin to write automatically, thereby promoting creativity in independent writing.

By the end of the Key Stage 1, children should be able to form capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters. Spacing between words (and letters) should be appropriate and reflect the size of the letters. Some children will be beginning to use diagonal and horizontal strokes to join some letters.

### **Lower Key Stage 2**

Handwriting lessons should take place once or twice a week (more if required). Children will:

- continue to develop gross and fine motor skills to develop stamina when writing
- reinforce a comfortable and efficient tripod pencil grip

- consolidate letter formation, ensuring letters and digits are correctly sized, orientated, anchored and spaced
- encouraged to use diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters, and to understand which letters are best left unjoined
- increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch

## Upper Key Stage 2

By the time they reach Upper KS2, children should ideally have the building blocks they need to be able to use cursive handwriting fluently and legibly, maintaining legibility even when writing at speed. Children will also be encouraged to independently apply different forms of handwriting for different purposes:

- Neat, joined, cursive letters for writing passages and large amounts of text, lists and letters
- Printed or capital letters for posters, notices, headings, labels and form filling
- Speedy handwriting for note-taking and dictation where neatness is not as important and shortcuts such as + instead of 'and' can be used

Pupils will continue to have discreet handwriting sessions if required, but predominantly, the aim is to improve quality, speed and stamina of handwriting across all curriculum subjects as follows:

- **Quality:** Ensure letters are consistently sized with equal word spacing and that ascenders and descenders are parallel and do not touch words on the lines above and below.
- **Speed:** Improve speed of handwriting to allow creative writing to take precedence over the task of handwriting and be able to take 'quick notes' at a faster pace
- **Stamina:** Have the strength and mobility to be able to write for longer periods of time without fatigue.

## Font and Handwriting Style

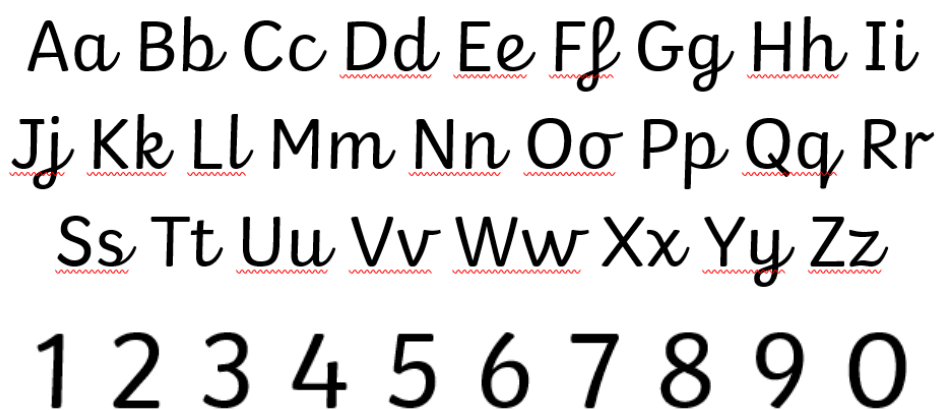
The Weald Federation has adopted the **Twinkl Handwriting Scheme** as it offers a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting, with planned sequences of lessons covering the skills required to meet the aims of the National Curriculum.

This ensures that there is consistency throughout each school and across the Federation, allowing us to share our handwriting expectations with parents and carers and to ensure that any printed work in the learning environment reflects the model of handwriting that we would like the children to use.

Children in Reception and KS1 are encouraged to write in print following the **Twinkl School Font**.

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  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

In Lower KS2 (and in KS1 if appropriate) children are taught to join their letters using the **Twinkl Cursive Looped Font**. This font has no lead-ins, but has lead-outs.



### **Learning environment**

A mixture of print and cursive writing should be displayed around each classroom and on display boards around the school. Modelled examples on Interactive Whiteboards or on display should mirror and support the handwriting style of that year group/key stage. Upper and lower case letters should be displayed in the classroom in the appropriate font to serve as a reminder and prompt for children.

### **Expectations of All Adults**

Adults in school are the most important role model for presentation and high expectations. They are responsible for modelling good practice, ensuring all children understand and follow handwriting expectations and intervene to ensure all children present their work to the best of their ability.

### **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

All children will have the opportunity to develop their handwriting skills of legibility and fluency. Some pupils may need more support and a specific Individual Education Plan, intervention or group programme would be implemented and monitored by the class teacher and SENDCO.

Pupils who experience difficulties in fine motor movement will be given lots of opportunities to develop control through rehearsal with large body movements. Pencil grips, thicker pencils, triangular pencils, erasable pens and wider lines may be used by children who experience challenge when writing.

### **Homework**

The Weald Federation expects the work completed by children at home to reflect the same standard of handwriting and presentation that they produce at school. Class teachers should be mindful that some families may need support from their school to access resources such as a handwriting pen with blue ink to meet the school's policy.

### **Impact**

Handwriting is an essential life skill. Children who write smoothly and clearly are better able to use writing to record their thoughts and ideas. When handwriting is automatic, their ideas can flow. When children write well, they are more able to better express themselves. The systematic approach outlined in this document ensures that each child and cohort are given opportunities to develop their handwriting. Children take pride in their written work and achieve proficiency. Outcomes in children's wider curriculum work, as well as in their literacy books and on school displays, evidence the progress that children make.

