



Handwriting Policy

Agreed by Governors: Summer 2023

To be reviewed: Summer 2026

Handwriting Policy

Intent

We aim for all children to achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in a cursive font, eventually producing a fluent joined handwriting style. It is vital that children can write quickly, comfortably and legibly, as it is a skill needed in many curriculum areas. Children's self-esteem is also heightened when they are able to take pride in their handwriting.

At Dohill we use Twinkl Cursive Script. Twinkl Handwriting offers a school-wide consistent approach with a planned sequence of lessons to help teachers ensure they have progressively covered the skills required to meet the aims of the National Curriculum for writing transcription and the related Early Learning Goals.

The Twinkl Handwriting scheme intends to take all pupils on a journey to using fluent, speedy and joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. This, in turn, will help to support their composition and spelling.

Implementation

Planning and assessment

A clear progression in handwriting sets out what children should be learning in each term as they progress through the school (see Appendix 1). This assures quality, sufficient depth and coverage of skills giving teachers the curriculum expertise to deliver effective transcription lessons. Each element of teaching handwriting is explained through the scheme (see Appendix 2) ensuring all adults have the subject knowledge to talk about, model and intervene with pupils handwriting appropriately and consistently.

The scheme's supporting resources enable effective curriculum implementation and can be differentiated to meet all pupils' learning needs. Where gaps are identified the resources can be used within intervention sessions to enhance pupils' capacity to access the full curriculum.

Each lesson has built-in assessment opportunities, which give reliable snapshots of pupil progress. More formal handwriting assessments are completed at the end of each term, pupils self-assess their progress alongside teacher assessment.

Regularity of lessons

Daily lessons are incorporated into Read, Write, Inc lessons and within English lessons in KS1. During the Autumn term, daily handwriting sessions within English lessons in LKS2 support the move towards joined, fluent handwriting. From The Spring term of LKS2 throughout upper KS2, weekly handwriting sessions focus on embedding spellings learned that week into a series of sentences which builds the fluency of consistently joined and legible handwriting.

Teachers use these sessions and English lessons to model, correct and intervene as necessary to develop individuals handwriting.

Tripod grip

We teach a tripod grasp with open web space (The pencil is held with the tip of the thumb and index finger and rests against the side of the third finger. The thumb and index finger form a circle.) However, other functional tripod or quadrapod grips will be accepted where it is not impeding handwriting development.

Staff handwriting

All staff take care to model correctly formed letters, ascenders and descenders and use a joined script as appropriate when modelling, marking or writing comments on children's work. Shared and guided writing activities enable staff to model letter formation and handwriting and provide children with opportunities to practise skills.

Cursive

We teach a cursive style but do not teach a 'lead in' to the letters. Letters are learned with a 'flick' at the end for when children are then taught to join the letters. Fully joined writing is expected by the end of Year 3. During KS2, children will begin to demonstrate a consistent, legible, cursive handwriting script and may start using pen when ready.

Expectations

Average expectations for speed of writing (based on DASH standardised testing) are that pupils can write at the speed of 10 words per minute by the age of 9 and can achieve a speed of 14 words per minute by the age of 11.

At our school, we have therefore set the following expectations:

Year group	Expectation
End of reception	Demonstrate a correct functional pencil grip Correctly form most lower-case letters

End of Y2	Form 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 Demonstrate knowledge of how to join some letters
End of Y4	Have a neat, legible, joined script at the speed of 10 words per minute
End of Y6	Have a fluent, legible, joined script at the speed of 14 words per minute

Level expected at the end of EYFS.	Key Stage 1 National Curriculum Expectations	Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Expectations
Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> show good control and coordination in large and small movements. move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. handle equipment and tools effectively. safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques. 	Pupils should be taught to: <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. 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 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 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. 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. choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

Left-handed children

At least ten per cent of the population is left-handed - a slightly higher proportion of these are males. There is no need for left-handed children to be disadvantaged when writing, if a few simple strategies are employed:

- Model letter formation, skywriting, etc. specifically for left-handed children, with your left hand.
- Make sure that left-handed children sit on the left of right-handed children, otherwise their writing arms will clash.
- Put a mark at the left side of the page to indicate where writing begins, as some left-handed children mirror-write from the right.
- Left-handed children usually need to have the paper slightly to the left of the centre of their body and should be encouraged to tilt their work clockwise so they can see what they have written.
- Experiment with seat height - some left-handed children may need a higher seat to view their work clearly and to prevent the elbow locking into their side as they work across the paper.
- To avoid smudging their work:
 - left-handed children should be encouraged to position their fingers about 1.5cm away from the end of their writing implement
 - the pencil should sit in the 'V' between thumb and forefinger, sitting parallel to the thumb
 - the wrist should be straight.

Writing from left to right is more difficult for left-handed children. They should, therefore, be given more attention in the classroom to ensure that they

do not learn bad habits of position, posture and pen hold which will hinder the development of a fast, fluent and legible hand.

Intervention

The most successful interventions take place alongside and within writing activities. Wherever possible, children are not withdrawn from other lessons to practise handwriting as this reduces their access to the knowledge of a broad and balanced curriculum.

Teachers model and correct handwriting errors using green pen. Children will respond by copying this correctly.

Children who need support with sizes and orientation of letters may use strips of handwriting paper or bubble writing paper within their writing to first practice, and then re-write in their writing book. Again, this may be modelled by an adult first.

Impact


Dothill has a consistent approach where handwriting expectations are clear and the same technical vocabulary is used by all teaching staff and learners.

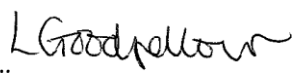
Regular handwriting focused sessions are evident in writing books.

Handwriting is improving at all stages within Dothill school.

There is evidence within writing books of effective intervention by adults for those children who require additional support.

The Handwriting Policy will be reviewed by *Governors* every three years or sooner if issues need addressing.

Signed..........Date 23.3.23
(Head teacher)

Signed..........Date 23.3.23
(Chair of *Governors*)



Appendix 1

Handwriting Progression at Dohill

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
<p>EYFS</p> <p>Twinkl Let's get ready to write</p>	<p>Mark Making - using a variety of equipment Holding a pencil Establish dominant hand Copying patterns Begin to form some lower-case letters</p>	<p>Build on Autumn term skills Form all lower-case letters</p>	<p>Begin to look at letter families Ladder letters One armed robots Curly caterpillars Zig zag monsters</p>
<p>Year 1</p> <p>Twinkl Forming letter families, positioning</p>	<p>Continue single letter formation using Ladder letters One armed robots Curly caterpillars Zig zag monsters Check pencil grip/writing position Form capital letters correctly Form numbers correctly</p>	<p>Continue with letter families through continuous patterns and simple word formation. Focus on correct formation</p> <p>Model, Trace, Copy</p> <p>Practice writing common exception words.</p>	<p>Continue practising word family formation - focus on size</p> <p>Writing common exception words and simple sentences</p>
<p>Year 2</p> <p>Twinkl Forming letter families, positioning, cursive</p>	<p>Practice sizing and formation of lower-case letters through letter families - Ladder letters One armed robots Curly caterpillars Zig zag monsters Correctly size and form capital letters and numbers</p>	<p>Prepare for diagonal joins by adding flicks onto end of letters: use letter families to see which can add a flick Join common exception words Practise joining sentences (emphasis on spacing) Begin to use dictation</p>	<p>Continue practising single letter formation and begin joining with diagonal strokes. Continue dictation sentences Begin to use short extracts/poems for handwriting practice</p>
<p>LKS2</p> <p>Twinkl Joining letters, fluency, style and speed</p>	<p>Revise single letter formation, diagonal joins and introduce horizontal joins. Practise sizing, including capital letters. Learn which letters can/cannot be joined Practice using dictated sentences and short extracts</p>	<p>Concentrate on ascenders and descenders - they should not touch. Practise joining common exception words. Continue with dictation and short extracts</p>	<p>Write longer extracts and concentrate on sustained size, spacing Keep practising single letter formation and joining word families</p>
<p>UKS2</p> <p>Twinkl Joining letters, fluency, style and speed</p>	<p>Keep practising single letter formation including capital letters. Begin to dictate short extracts at speed and concentrate on consistent size and spacing.</p>	<p>Revise ascenders and descenders - they should not touch. Continue to dictate short extracts at speed and concentrate on consistent size and spacing.</p>	<p>Continue to practise/dictate short extracts at speed and concentrate on consistent size and spacing.</p>

Appendix 2

Step 1 (Let's Get Ready to Write) of each Handwriting Help Card aims to help children to develop their fine and gross motor skills and pencil control as a precursor to effective handwriting: to show good control and coordination in large and small movements, to move confidently in a range of ways safely negotiating space, to handle equipment and tools effectively and to safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques.

The Journey to Cursive: The Letter 'j'

Suggested Order
The letter 'j' should be taught as part of a series of lessons which leads to the family it belongs to - the 'lower family' (letters a, c, e, g, i, o, u, v, w, y, z). Letters that are taught in similar length and to practice base.

Gross Motor Warm-Up
Shoulder Squeeze Children start with feet apart (hip width) with arms outstretched to the sides horizontally. Children begin to make small spiral, circular movements first with finger tips, then wrists, then their arms and shoulders. They should be encouraged to increase the size of their movements.

Fine Motor Warm-Up
Paper Scrunching Provide children with a sheet of paper (you could use different types - plain, lined, rough paper, etc.) Children use one hand to scratch their paper into a ball as small as they can. Children then change hands. Do the pupils have one hand that feels stronger than the other?

Let's Get Ready to Write!
Early Learning Goals - Children explore equipment and tools effectively. Children safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, shape, texture, form and function.
Out - Provide children with suitable actions relevant to their stage of writing. Model how to use scissors appropriately, especially the safety aspect of moving with scissors, changing cutting direction, etc. Use the **Cutting Skills Resource Pack** to provide a range of fun and engaging cutting activities. Use the **Lesson Presentation** to show the appropriate ways of using and carrying scissors.
To differentiate this activity, enable children with emergent cutting skills, to complete the straight line cutting activities in the pack, with support.

Forming Letter Families
Year 1 - 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. Use arrows on the Lesson Presentation to show handwriting layout (i.e. letters that are formed in similar length and to practice base).
Year 2 - Introduce the letter name and the sound (phoneme) of the letter 'j'. Show the extension of how to form the lower case letter 'j'. Ask children if they know which letter belongs to the lower family (i.e. a, c, e, g, i, o, u, v, w, y, z). Children practice writing the letter 'j' with their preferred hand. They could also practice writing on the side, on both parts or on a friend's back, where appropriate. Make large and small letter shapes. Remind children of the correct starting position using the **Lesson Presentation** prompts or the **How to Grip a Writing Tool** Poster. Remind them of the appropriate seating.

Positioning & Pre-Cursive
Year 2 - Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.
Explain to the children that they are going to be looking at the letter 'j'. Look at the **Lesson Presentation** which demonstrates how to position the letter 'j' on the line correctly below the baseline and that it is touching the bottom line. Ask the children to talk about other characters that have a cursive 'j' and how all of these letters need to go below the baseline to stay correctly below the baseline. Ask the children to practice these letters on mini whiteboards. Remind the children of the correct starting position, pen/pencil grip and how to position their paper.

Joining Letters
Year 3 and 4 - Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when selected, will join another and not required.
Explain to the children that the letter 'j' is an unjoined letter so you don't join from it, but can join to it. Use the **Lesson Presentation** to guide the children through diagonal joins to the letter 'j', which includes the 'hook' bottom letter join from the letter 'e'. The children can then use the **Letter 'j' More Joining** Practice Activity Sheet to practise more words where the 'j' is left unjoined.
Remind the children of the correct starting position, pen/pencil grip and how to position their paper.

Increasing Fluency, Style & Speed
Year 5 and 6 - Children should be clear about what features of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task.
Ask the children about what they should consider when they are addressing an envelope, why is it important that their handwriting is clear for this particular task? Ask them what type of writing tool should be used and why (i.e. fountain or ball pen may not be suitable and their pencil may not be clear enough). Remind the children of the correct starting position, pen/pencil grip and how to position their paper correctly using the **Lesson Presentation**. The children then fill addresses on the **Addressing Envelopes Activity Sheet**. The addresses for the task are written on the **Lesson Presentation**.
The children could also complete the **Fluency, Style and Speed Practice: The Letter 'j' Activity Sheet**.

Assessment Activities
Step 1 - Can children complete cutting of straight line, circular or more complex shapes? Can children use scissors to cut independently?
Step 2 - Can the children form the letter shape 'j' appropriately, starting and finishing in the correct place? Ask the children to put a 'j' next to the favourite letter 'j' shape that they have written?
Step 3 - Ask all of their letter 'j' shapes that they have written the bottom line? Are all of the public other characters positioned correctly? Are the spaces between their words even?
Step 4 - Can pupils join to a 'j' using an appropriate diagonal join (including a bottom diagonal join)? Do they recognise 'j' as an unjoined letter?
Step 5 - Can the children discuss the importance of a legible handwriting that can be written with increasing fluency, speed and accuracy?

Let's Look Ready to Write

- Place both feet flat on the floor.
- Move your elbows so they're resting off the edge of the desk.
- Move your bottom to the back of the chair.
- Lean your head and shoulders slightly forward.
- Keep your knees bent at a 90° angle.

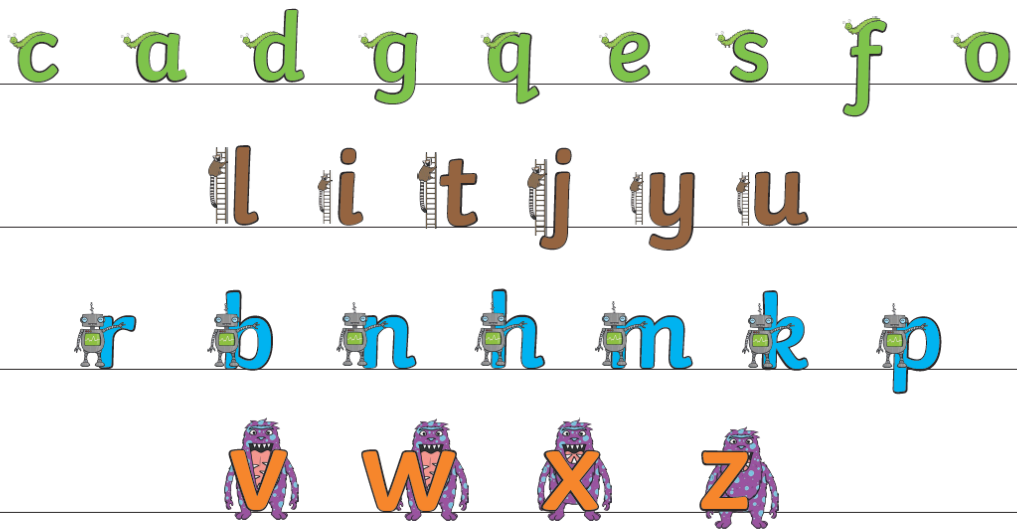
How to Grip a Writing Tool

- Nip**
Choose the writing tool that is best suited to the task. 'Nip' it towards the end.
- Flip**
'Flip' the writing tool around so that it is resting on your hand.
- Grip**
'Grip' the writing tool. Make sure it is pinched between the ball of the thumb and the forefinger, supported by the middle finger with the other fingers tucked away.


Check - Does your grip provide stability and freedom of movement?

Steps 2 and 3 (Forming Letter Families and Positioning & Pre-Cursive) aim to teach children the statutory objectives from the year 1 and 2 curriculum: to sit correctly at a table, to hold a pencil comfortably and correctly, to begin to form lower case letters in the correct direction and of the correct size relative to one another, to start and finish letters in the right place, to form capital letters and the digits 0-9 of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters, to understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families', to start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and to use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Letter Formation



Steps 4 and 5 (Joining Letters and Fluency, Style & Speed) teach the statutory skills from the year 3 - year 6 curriculum: to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters; to increase the legibility, fluency, consistency and quality of their handwriting; to ensure that their lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch; to write with increasing speed by choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters and to choose the writing implement that is best suited for the task.



Joining the Letter 'm'

Continue each line using diagonal joins to these anticlockwise letters.


m _____


ma _____

ms _____





Fluency, Style and Speed Practice: The Letter 'm'

Can you continue these warm-up patterns?

Curved Mounds


Tails in the Hills


Can you copy these riddles out in your most fluent, joined style and then write the 'm' words that answer them?

<p>Riddle 1 If you drop me, I'm sure to crack. Give me a smile and... I'll smile right back! What am I? </p>	<p>Riddle 2 I'm something that is white. In a bottle I am stored. I'm something you can drink. On cereal I am poured. What am I? </p>	<p>Riddle 3 This used to be on paper. Now you get it on your phone. It helps you to find a route. So you don't get lost alone. What am I? </p>	<p>Riddle 4 I am an object in the sky. That seems to shine at night. Some people think I'm made of cheese. I'm Earth's own satellite. What am I? </p>
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