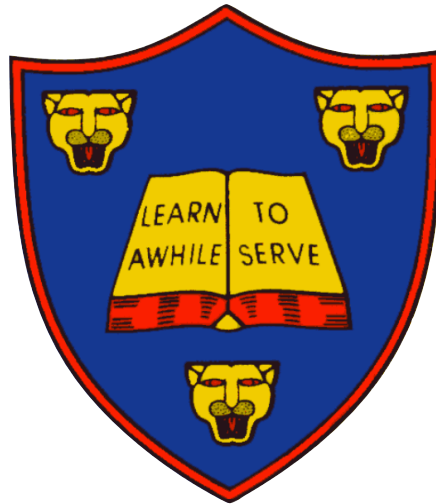


# Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School



## English curriculum: Handwriting

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### Intent

As a school our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will:

- Learn handwriting in a way which reduces cognitive load and enables regular, precise practise
- Receive specific live feedback in a way which prevents misconceptions from becoming embedded
- Develop a cursive handwriting style that enables them to write fluently
- Understand the importance of good presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly
- Take pride in the presentation of their work, and therefore work across the curriculum is presented to the same high standard
- Understand the difference between note-taking handwriting for speed and best handwriting for presentation, and be supported to identify when each are appropriate
- Use their skills with confidence in real life situations

### Intended impact milestones ahead of using cursive writing in KS2

#### By the end of Reception:

- all pupils will have developed sufficient core and fine motor strength to use appropriate pencil grip and to sit with correct posture for writing at a table
- **most pupils will be able to form lower case letters correctly and most upper case letters**
- pupils who cannot form most letters correctly will be identified and interventions planned for

#### By the end of Year 1:

- **all pupils will use appropriate grip and form all letters correctly**
- all pupils will use handwriting lined paper in exercise books to support their developing understanding of proportionality, including ascenders and descenders

#### By the end of Year 2:

- all pupils will form their letters correctly
- **most pupils have begun to join their letters correctly**
- some pupils will now be writing on lined paper instead of handwriting lines as a scaffold
- some pupils will use pens

#### By the end of Year 3:

- all pupils will be using lined paper
- **most pupils will write using cursive handwriting**
- all pupils will use appropriate proportionality (ascenders and descenders)
- all pupils will use pens

#### By the end of Year 4:

- **All pupils will write using cursive handwriting**



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### **Implementation:**

We follow the guidance outlined in 'Development Matters' and English curriculum. Our progressive approach to the teaching of handwriting is informed by Nelson Handwriting by Oxford Owl, though adapted to meet the needs of children within our school.

### **EYFS**

Children take part in engaging activities to develop their gross motor skills to build sufficient core strength to have good posture for writing by the time they exit Reception.

Purposeful stations within continuous provision encourage gross and fine motor development, with a construction area and Funky Fingers station permanent aspects of this environment. Stations are continually adapted to respond to pupil motivations and current topics to ensure motivation to independently access opportunities is as high as possible.

They are provided with engaging activities within the provision which encourage the development of fine motor strength (such as pinching, twisting, pressing and cutting).

Pupils are encouraged to transition to purposeful mark-making as they, for example, use their index finger in sand or paint.

When ready, pupils are taught tripod pencil grip and writing posture when sitting at a table with both feet on the ground and straight backs.

Children begin by mark making with a pencil, tracing over lines and exciting shapes.

Teachers direct letter formation practice and, by the end of Reception, differentiated dictation.

Engaging activities are provided within continuous provision for them to rehearse this new learning. Adults maximise upon opportunities to encourage and correct, whilst ensuring the impact of these corrections does not dampen enthusiasm for writing.

### **Year 1**

Children will continue to develop fine and gross motor-skills with a range of multi-sensory activities.

At the start of Year 1, children focus upon consolidating their lower case letter formation whilst direct teaching focuses primarily upon securing their knowledge and skills when writing upper case letters.

Adults continue to guide children on how to write letters correctly, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip.

Pupils have a directed handwriting lesson daily where an adult explicitly models a letter formation for the children to imitate.

Adults circulate to conduct AFL and offer live feedback to prevent misconceptions from becoming embedded. Adults may tick great examples or remodel and ask pupils to imitate.

In addition to tightly-focused daily letter formation lessons, handwriting is discussed within, and linked to, phonics sessions.

Dictation is a core component of our phonics sessions. Adults feedback immediately to address misconceptions in terms of letter formation and phoneme-grapheme correspondence.

When writing across the curriculum, pupils use handwriting lines to ensure proportionality: children form ascenders, descenders and capital letters with appropriate size differentiation.

**By the end of Year 1, pupils can form all lower case and capital letters correctly (or pupils have been identified for rapid catch up handwriting interventions which are a priority within the Summer term so they become Year 2 ready).**



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**Year 2**

Pupils have a directed handwriting lesson daily where an adult explicitly models a letter formation for the children to imitate.

Adults circulate to conduct AFL and offer live feedback to prevent misconceptions from becoming embedded. Adults may tick great examples or remodel and ask pupils to imitate.

Pupils use handwriting lines to ensure proportionality, forming ascenders, descenders and capital letters with appropriate size differentiation.

When ready, children begin to learn to join their letters in a guided and progressive way.

Some children begin to use a pen.

**Year 3**

Pupils continue to access regular handwriting lessons to continue teaching joins.

Once the curriculum is completed, children need to continue to access handwriting rehearsal lessons so that this becomes fluent and embedded. This must be separate to other lessons so that the focus is clear and cognitive load managed.

**Year 4 onwards**

Children continue to have direct teaching and regular practice of handwriting so that they develop a clear, fluent style upon entering Year 6.

Children are explicitly taught to adapt their handwriting for the for different purposes (using a neat, legible hand for finished and published work; using a faster script for note-taking).



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### **Closing the gap**

Pupils who are working significantly below age related expectations access timely interventions with SMART targets. These are mentioned in IEPs and learning plans. The impact of these interventions is tightly monitored by teachers, Teaching Assistants and the SLT.

Closing the handwriting gap is a particular priority in EYFS and KS1, so that pupils are on track by the time that they exit Year 2. Without this skill, pupils will struggle to write across the curriculum as the pace and demands of the KS2 curriculum are introduced. Therefore, handwriting and phonics interventions are given precedence over other English curriculum learning in these phases to ensure rapid gains are made.

These interventions may look like:

- Regular Funky Fingers interventions to build fine motor strength
- 1:1 or small group tightly-focused additional handwriting lessons with adults modelling accurate formation and offering specific remodelling corrections
- Short blast, daily practise homework sent home with accompanying videos to support families

Interventions should:

- Be 1:1 or in small groups to enable adults to offer quality, specific, immediate feedback
- Short blasts to ensure high engagement
- Tightly-focused upon one letter and practised until secure before moving on (e.g. one letter may take a week, or longer, of daily rehearsal)
- (In KS1) Using handwriting lines as a scaffold appropriate to the pupil's stage of learning (e.g. wider ones if pupils are still forming large letters)
- When using a pencil, always sat at a table using correct grip and writing posture



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**Our letter formation expectations**

