

To ensure all children **enjoy** their learning and attending school.
To provide opportunities for children to **embrace** learning through real-life, hands-on experiences.
To prepare children to **evolve** into the next stage of their schooling.

Intent

At Delph Side Community Primary School, we aim to help children **#enjoy** learning and develop their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride. We aim for children to write fluently and legibly, giving them a means to communicate their thoughts and ideas effectively. Handwriting is a learned skill that should be easy to produce and read.

Implementation

Handwriting is taught using **Read Write Inc. (RWI) Handwriting** in Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1, and into Year 3, with **Penpals Handwriting** in Years 4–6. This approach meets statutory requirements from the English Programmes of Study and the EYFS Framework.

In Foundation Stage and Year 1, letter formation is introduced within daily RWI phonics lessons and reinforced in separate ten-minute handwriting sessions.

In Years 2–6, handwriting is taught at least three times per week within English lessons, around twenty minutes per session.

We ensure handwriting is enjoyable to help children see themselves as writers. Mnemonics and visual memory aids, such as phrases or rhymes, support the formation of letters and joins. All lessons include adult modelling, with teachers and teaching assistants guiding correct letter formation, posture, and pencil grip to prevent unhelpful habits. Children are encouraged to visualise and memorise movements rather than copy letters.

Handwriting posture and positioning is emphasised in every lesson:

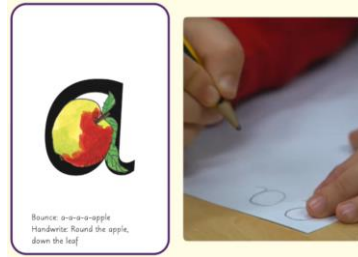
- Feet flat on the floor
- Bottom to the back of the chair
- Body one fist from the table
- Shoulders relaxed, leaning slightly forward
- Non-writing hand holding the page
- Writing hand in tripod grip

Books are laid out with the date on the left, missing a line before beginning handwriting. EYFS and KS1 may have printed dates. Books should include visible adult guidance and corrections rather than formal marking.

Handwriting Policy and Intent, Implementation and Impact February 2026

Stages of Teaching (RWI 2025)

Stage 1, taught in Reception and Year 1, begins when most children can read Set 1 sounds. Children learn correct letter formation using visual mnemonics and handwriting phrases such as "Round the apple, down the leaf."



Stage 2, for Year 1 and Year 2, focuses on pre-joined letters, relative size, and spacing, forming letters that flow naturally into a joined style.

Hill to jam letter Hill to top sponge letter Hill to 'sister' letter



Bridge to jam letter Bridge to top sponge letter Bridge to 'sister' letter



Stage 3, in Years 2 and 3, revisits Letter Village resources and introduces the two basic joins: the hill join and the bridge join, with variations. Most letters join with the hill or bridge joins, with exceptions including g, j, q, y, and z.

gap jump quit yak zoo

Some letters, such as r, e, and s, are adapted to join more easily.

Welcome back to Letter Village. At
Stage 3, children learn the 'hill'
and 'bridge' joins.

Stage 4, beginning in Year 3, develops a mature, speedy handwriting style and fluency, with full implementation planned for 2026.



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RWI 2025 replaces the previous “arm/washing line joins” terminology with “bridge/hill joins.”

Handwriting Progression

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children develop gross and fine motor skills through a range of activities including squiggle movements, air-writing, pattern-making, dancing, and practical play with sand, water, play dough, threading, and cutting. These activities strengthen the shoulders, wrists, and hands to prepare children for letter formation.

In Reception (Stage 1), children focus on correct letter formation, posture, and pencil grip, writing on plain paper with attention to shape and orientation.

In Stage 2 (Year 1), children refine letter size, spacing, and consistency, with letters flowing naturally into joins, supported by visual cues and partner checks, using wide-lined or tram-lined books.

Stage 3 (Year 2) introduces basic joins, developing rhythm and fluency, with joined handwriting applied in sentences and extended writing.

In Stage 4 (Years 3–6), children develop a fluent, personal handwriting style, improving speed while maintaining legibility, gradually transitioning from RWI Stage 3–4 to Penpals Handwriting.

In Years 4–6, children consolidate all joins, practice break letters, focus on consistency, legibility, and stamina, and apply joined handwriting across all subjects.

Inclusion

All children have the opportunity to develop legible and fluent handwriting. Those who require additional support are provided with tailored programmes or individual education plans, monitored by class teachers and the SENCO, with support from Occupational Therapy or other external agencies where necessary. Posture, pencil grip, and letter formation are closely observed, especially for children with fine motor difficulties. Left-handed children are seated to avoid competing for space, and tools such as triangular pencils or wider lines are provided as needed.

Impact

By the end of their primary education, children at Delph Side will write fluently, legibly, and at a natural speed, focusing on content rather than letter formation. They will demonstrate competence in both transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition, maintain correct posture and pencil grip, and present work clearly and coherently across subjects.



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Expected outcomes by year group:

- **By Year 2:** Children write with correct letter size and spacing.
- **By Year 4:** Handwriting is joined and fluent.
- **By Year 6:** Handwriting is automatic, clear, efficient, and in a personal style suitable for secondary school.

Progress is monitored through book looks, learning walks, and pupil voice. All adults act as handwriting role models and consistently demonstrate high standards of presentation.