# Handwriting Policy

## Kenilworth Primary School

**Our Vision**

*'High Aspirations Today, Inspiring the Leaders of Tomorrow.'*

**Reviewed:** November 2026
**Next Review Date:** November 2028
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# Kenilworth Primary School Handwriting Policy

## Aims

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

- Experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across the Early Years and school
- Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line
- Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly
- Take pride in the presentation of their work
- Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting and phonics
- Be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- Use their skills with confidence in real life situations.
- Develop a fluent, joined handwriting style by the end of Year Two.

## Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

**During and at the end of the Foundation Stage:**

Use a pencil, and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters [with 'kicks'/'flicks'], ***most*** of which are correctly formed

**At Year One:**

Write most letters, correctly formed and orientated, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip
Write with spaces between words accurately
Use the spacebar and keyboard to type their name and simple texts

**At Year Two:**

Write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and correct spacing within and between words
Form and use the four basic handwriting joins
Word process short narrative and non-narrative texts

## Teaching of Handwriting

We teach handwriting as a specific skill. Little and often is the most successful way – at least 10 minutes 3 times a week is ideal with additional, independent practise.

Teachers will:
-Check posture check, feet flat on the floor, back touching the chair (page 160 **Developing Early Writing**)
-Teacher modelling
-Children practising independently with teacher model, then from memory

Sessions should be fun, varied and multi-sensory: write letters in the air (sky writing pg 156 **Developing Early Writing**), on backs or on hands, backs then palms if they can bare it!; orally describe letter shapes and joins with children 'the patter'; Books can be used and whiteboards and pens are ideal as mistakes can be wiped away leaving no record of poor performance.

In **Nursery** the children are encouraged to:

- Develop gross motor control
- Develop fine motor control
- Use a range of mark making tools such as pencils, pens and crayons, with confidence and enjoyment
- Develop a recognition of pattern
- Develop a language to talk about shapes and movements

- The main handwriting movements involved in the three basic letter shapes; l, c, and r
- Develop letter-like shapes as appropriate through practical activities.
- Begin to write their first name, using a Capital letter for the beginning and correct letter formation

In **Reception** the children continue to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding from Nursery in addition to:

- Learning letter formation alongside phonics but as discreet lessons
- Learn letter formation using 'shape families: **long ladder** letters l i j t u y
  **one-armed robot** letters r b h k m n p
  **curly caterpillar** letters c a d e g o q f s
  **zigzag** letters z, v, w, x
- Children write in a range of situations including on large pieces of paper, in sand trays with large chalks on the playground, and on whiteboards with lines to support letter positioning and formation.

In **Year One,** children will consolidate their writing skills from Reception. They will focus on ensuring correct orientation and letter formation and use handwriting books to support this.

In **Year 2,** children will use leading lines and progress to correct joins. Daily handwriting will support this alongside use of LetterJoin which has appropriate resources to focus on joining and reducing the size of writing.

The 'Bubble Writing' programme and activities to support developing fine motor skills which focuses on forming letters in bubbles may still be needed for children having difficulties.

In **Year 3,** children will continue to practise joined writing and progress to getting their 'pen licence'.

In **Years 4, 5 and 6**, children will consolidate their handwriting skills through weekly handwriting sessions. The focus will be on developing fluency, consistency and speed whilst maintaining legibility. Children will be expected to use joined handwriting across all subjects. Additional support, including continued use of LetterJoin resources, Bubble Writing or fine motor skills activities, will be provided for children who have not yet achieved fluent, joined handwriting.

The handwriting font used is clearly displayed in the classrooms, on tables in the younger years (EYFS to year 3) and on the wall for the older age groups (years 4 to 6).

## The Joining Style

Joins can be made from all letters except for x
Capital letters do not join to the next letter.

The 4 basic joins:

1. Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders e.g., ai, un, ch
2. Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g., ab, ul, it
3. Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders e.g., oo, we, vi
4. Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g., ol, wh, vk

See Appendix C for further guidance.

## Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and provision will be made for this in Individual Education Plans [IEPs]. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with the SENCO to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc. Outside agencies can be contacted where appropriate.

All teachers are 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 and slanted to suit the individual in either case;
- pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision;
- pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space;
- extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.
- **Developing Early Writing** page 161 has further guidance

Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

## The learning environment

In all classes, writing boxes with suitable materials are available for pupils to work at their own tables. Writing areas/boxes are equipped with a range of writing implements, line guides, word lists and dictionaries. **A model of the agreed handwriting style is displayed in all classrooms**.

## The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers are introduced to the school's handwriting style through a leaflet. Information is shared termly in a letter ahead of Handwriting Focus Week, where children focus on improving their handwriting and presentation, achieving certificates for great effort, consistency and progress. The Foundation Stage staff play an important role in communicating this at an early stage, to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to their children by using only capital letters for the beginning of their names.

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.

## The contribution of handwriting to other aspects of the curriculum

## ICT

The growth in the use of word processing and desktop publishing has increased pupils' awareness of the importance of presentation and the variety of handwriting styles/fonts available. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate a range of fonts and to select whatever is appropriate to suit particular purposes.

Teachers discuss handwriting and presentation in all subjects and aim to model good handwriting themselves. Teachers are **explicit** about different types of handwriting for example, personal note-taking or best handwriting for presentation, but remember not all the children will be able to achieve this in Key Stage One. Teachers give handwriting a high priority in classroom displays. *The over-use of rubbers is discouraged. Mistakes are indicated by marking through with one neat horizontal line.*

## Writing on an interactive whiteboard

Writing needs to be as neat and legible as it would be on an old-fashioned whiteboard. (Although this is more difficult) Here are some tips:

- Make sure you calibrate the board and change the thickness of the pen or stylus.
- Be aware of the legibility of different 'ink' colours. Red, for example, can be hard to read from a distance.
- Press firmly and hold the pen or stylus at a 90° angle.
- Stand to one side of the board when writing so all children can see.
- Explore the templates or gallery in your IWB software — they will include lined and squared paper that will help guide your handwriting and offer a better model.

## Presentation and layout of work.

## Mathematics

Children will write in pencil.
They will write the short date on the top left-hand corner and will underline it with a ruler.
They will leave a line and then write the learning objective below aligned left and underline it with a ruler.
In Key Stage One and for children who find it harder to write, this may be on a label.
Children will write one number per square.

## English and other subjects

Children will write in pencil in Key Stage One.
From the autumn term in Year Three, they will get their pen licence and will write in pen throughout the rest of the key stage.
Children will write the long date (Monday 3rd December 2026) date on the top left-hand corner and will underline it with a ruler.
They will leave a line and then write the title below aligned left and underline it with a ruler.
Younger children and those with SEN may have a label in their books to limit time taken for this.

## Marking and Feedback

Teachers write in green pen children respond to next steps in red (or pencil in earlier years).
Draft books need to be marked.
Teachers tick the learning intention twice if skills are achieved, once if partially achieved or not at all if it is not achieved.
Please see our Feedback and Marking Policy for further detail.

### Resources

Pencils triangular and ordinary
Pencil grips
Paper and books
Handwriting books
*Little Wandle* handwriting scripts - displays and support for the tables
LetterJoin
*Bubble Writing* Intervention Programme

### Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years in line with the school's policy review programme. The subject leader is responsible for reporting to the governors' curriculum committee about the quality of its implementation and its impact on standards. In the light of this, policy amendments may be made.

**Appendix A**

**Activities and exercises to develop Gross Motor Control:**

*Gross Motor Control* is the term used to describe the development of controlled movements of the whole body, or limbs such as the legs or arms. Of particular importance in relation to handwriting is the development of good posture and balance. Activities such as:

- Dancing and skipping
- Running and jumping to music
- Use of small apparatus e.g., throwing, rolling, catching, kicking and bouncing balls
- Cycling
- Gripping climbing frames
- Building with large-scale construction kits
- Hammering
- Consolidate vocabulary of movement by talking about movements such as, *going round and round, making curves, springing up and sliding down, making long, slow movements or quick, jumpy movements*
- Make large movements in the air with arms, hands and shoulders with dance ribbons, use music
- Any activities described in the **Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage** under Physical Development

*Fine Motor Control* is the term used to describe smaller movements, usually of the hand and fingers (or of the feet and toes). Activities and exercises to develop Fine Motor Control:

- Folding paper
- Cutting out shapes from paper and card
- Fitting things into frames like geometric shapes
- Model making
- Building and stacking bricks
- Screw toys and wood working tools
- Pegboards
- Modelling with malleable materials like Play dough, plasticene and clay
- Drawing in sand and sand and water play in general, including sieving, pouring and picking up toys using tools e.g., fishing rods and cranes
- Sewing and weaving
- Chopping and peeling when cooking
- Develop the pincer movement by using tweezers to pick up sequins, beads and feathers, sprinkling glitter, sand and salt
- Scribbling and drawing with chalk, dry wipe pens, felt tip pens and paints on small, large boards and easels and on small and large paper
- Playing with tactile and magnetic letters
- Puzzles
- Games and miming involving finger and wrist movement e.g. finger puppets
- Use increasingly finer tools to make patterns of lines

**Appendix B**

Brain Gym
P.A.C.E. [positive, active, clear, energetic] use daily to "bring the individual into balance"
- Water
- Brain buttons
- Cross crawls
- Hook ups

Specifically for writing
- Lazy 8's
- Double doodles

<u>Hand gym/miming activities to relax fingers and hands before writing</u>
- Washing
- Wringing, rubbing, shaking and folding clothes
- Brushing hair
- Stroking a cat
- Playing a musical instrument
- Playing with snow, bubbles, feathers, balloons
- Picking up sweets to put in a dish or your mouth

Later on:
- Sit in the writing position but with arms dangling limply. While in this position let the hands flutter loosely
- Let the forearms lay limply on the table in the correct writing position. Raise and lower the elbows several times
- Place elbows on the table with the forearms held upright. Let the hands flap loosely backwards and forwards
- Clench and unclench the fists
- Drum lightly with fingers on the table
- Circle the hands, inwards, then outwards
- Hold the pen in the tripod grip lightly. With the forefinger tap the pencil lightly

**Appendix C**

## Reception & Year 1

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Around the astronaut's helmet and down into space. | Down the bear's back, up and round its tummy. | Curl around the cat. | Round the duck's body, up to its head and down to its feet. | Around the elephant's eye and curl down its trunk. | Down the flamingo to its foot and across its wings. | Round the goat's face and curl under its chin. | Down, up and over the helicopter. | Down the iguana and dot the leaf. |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Down the jellyfish and dot its head. | Down the kite, up to the top corner and down to the bottom corner. | Down the lollipop stick | Down, up and over the mouse's ears | Down, up and over the net. | All around the octopus. | Down the penguin's back, up and around its head. | Round the queen's face, up to her crown, down her robe with a flick at the end. | From the cloud to the ground and over the rainbow. |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Down the snake from head to tail. | Down the tiger and across its neck. | Down and around the umbrella, and back to the ground. | Down to the bottom of the volcano and back up to the top. | Down and up and down and up the waves. | From the top, across the box to the bottom. From the top again across the box to the bottom. | Down, around the yo-yo and curl round the string | Across the top of the zebra's head, zig-zag down its neck and along. | |

## Year 2 – Year 6

