



HANDWRITING POLICY FOR LEIGHTON ACADEMY

Policy lead:	
Approval date:	
Next review date:	
Approval needed by:	

Leighton Academy is part of The Learning Partnership.



How is handwriting taught in reception and year one?

Letter formation is taught in phonics lessons from the first week of the programme in reception as pupils learn the Phase 2 graphemes. It is important to teach pupils correct letter formation from the outset as it is hard to undo incorrect letter formation if this becomes established.

Pupils will be taught the correct letter using the Little Wandle formation phrases. The formation phrases are on the Phase 2 grapheme sheets attached to this policy – see appendix 1.

Whiteboards and pens are used to teach letter formation during phonics lessons and pupils follow clear routines for using them. Additional practice of letter formation in handwriting lessons outside of the phonics lessons takes place sitting comfortably at desks.

Teachers have an awareness of which pupils are left handed or right handed and will seat pupils accordingly to ensure this isn't a barrier to making progress in handwriting. Pupils who require additional support will have reasonable adjustments put into place.

When is handwriting taught?

Letter formation is also taught as part of handwriting lessons. Handwriting is taught outside of the daily phonics lesson using the Little Wandle formation phrases in these lessons. Handwriting lessons will take place at least 3 times per week for 15 minutes. Following the Reading framework's guidance, pupils sit comfortably at a table for these lessons. These lessons focus on correct pencil grip, letter formation and orientation, and correct posture.

The Little Wandle Letter formation practice sheets can be used as part of a handwriting lesson and as additional guided practice of letter formation.

What about capital letters?

Pupils are taught to read and write capital letters towards the end of Phase 2 once they have learned a sound for each letter of the alphabet. 'How to write capital letters' guidance about letter formation is attached to this policy – see appendix 2.

What does progression in handwriting look like at Leighton?

In the summer term of year 1, pupils who are ready will be taught a cursive approach to letter formation which can be developed into joined handwriting in year 2.

How are pupils exposed to a variety of different styles of handwriting?

As part of our school environment, teachers will be proactive in ensuring that pupils are exposed to a variety of styles of handwriting and print in a range of genres. The purpose of this is to ensure pupils can recognise letters formed in a variety of different ways to aid their reading.

How is handwriting taught in years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6?

In these year groups, pupils are taught to write in a cursive style in order to develop the skill of joined handwriting. Letters are taught deliberately in a specific order according to the shape of the letter. Handwriting lessons will take place at least 3 times per week for 15 minutes. Pupils sit comfortably at a table for these lessons. These lessons focus on correct pencil grip, letter formation and orientation, and correct posture and normally linked to spelling patterns or grammatical features. The purpose of this handwriting approach is to develop stamina for writing and promote high quality presentation at all times.

Teachers have an awareness of which pupils are left handed or right handed and will seat pupils accordingly to ensure this isn't a barrier to making progress in handwriting. Pupils who require additional support will have reasonable adjustments put into place. This includes a variety of pencil grips, lined paper which supports their letter formation or additional adult intervention.

Handwriting at Leighton

① cccccc

Teach names for ascender, descender,
entry stroke and exit strokes
Every letter starts on the line

a

c

o (exit stroke on middle line)

d (ascender)

g (descender)

qu (always taught together)

Any letters that don't naturally join, such as o or g are 'tickled'.

② llllll llllll llllll

l

b (tickle)

h

k (all under middle line)

t (crossed on one side only)

f (only letter with ascender and descender - crossed one side only)
(don't join)

③ uuuuuu

uuuuu

i

u

y (tickle)

j (tickle)

v

w

(both exit strokes on middle line)

(don't join)

④ mmmmm

⑤ e

m

n

r (don't join)

z

s (tickle)

x (only letter with no entry stroke)

⑥ Capital letters - no entry or exit strokes, no descenders, all touch top line, no joins.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S
T U V W X Y Z

⑦ Numbers

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

What does the National Curriculum say about handwriting?

“Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.”

Year 1:

Pupils should be taught to:

- 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’ (ie letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

Year 2:

Pupils should be taught to:

- 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

Years 3 and 4:

Pupils should be taught to:

- 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, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch]

Years 5 and 6:

Pupils should be taught to:

- write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
 - 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