



Moorthorpe Primary School with Inclusion Resource Handwriting Progression

Handwriting Progression – EYFS to Year 6

Stage 1: Early Mark-Making and Gross Motor Development (Nursery – Pre-Formal Writing)

Focus: Gross and fine motor skill development, early mark making, pencil grip introduction.

Key Programme: *Wiggle Me Into Squiggle*

- Wiggle me in to Squiggle is everything a very young child needs to improve their early developmental movements to make them a strong writer for when they reach that stage of school. It is essential we move our very young children as much as possible, but to become an early writer the child needs to experience a specific set of developmental moves to strengthen muscles and their brain.
- Wiggle me into Squiggle is the pre-mark making moves needed before the child becomes a mark maker and future writer.
- Children engage in large, physical movements using flappers, ribbons, scarves, or their whole bodies to mimic the motions required for writing (e.g., up/down, side-to-side, circular).
- Sessions are multisensory, often set to music, and help develop core strength, crossing the midline, and body awareness—all crucial for handwriting.

Developmental Aims:

- Strengthen shoulder, elbow, and wrist muscles.
- Introduce mark making with various media: chalks, finger paint, sand trays, crayons.
- Encourage expressive movement and early drawing (lines, circles, dots).

Pencil Grip Progression:

- From palmar grasp (whole hand) to tripod grip through fine motor activities such as threading, tweezers, peg boards, and playdough manipulation.



Stage 2: Early Writing and Letter Formation (Reception)

Focus: Introduction to correct letter formation, developing tripod grip, starting to write letters and words in print.

Programmes Used:

- ***Read Write Inc. Phonics*** – Integrates letter formation into daily phonics teaching in addition to separate handwriting sessions
- ***Letter Formation Phrases*** – Help embed correct formation through auditory memory (e.g., “down Maisie, mountain, mountain” for ‘m’).
- ***Squiggle Whilst You Wiggle*** - Children engage in large, physical movements using flappers, ribbons, scarves, or their whole bodies to mimic the motions required for writing (e.g., up/down, side-to-side, circular). Sessions are multisensory, often set to music, and help develop core strength, crossing the midline, and body awareness—all crucial for handwriting.

Teaching Approach:

The Squiggle Moves:

Move 1 – i,l,t

Move 2 – the wiggle

Move 3 – c,o,a,d

Move 4 – m,n,r,u

Move 5 – q,p,h – k,b,y – g,j,f

Move 6 – e

Move 7 – a gentle wave

Move 8 – s

Move 9 – v,w,z,x

Fine Motor Focus:

- Continued provision of threading, cutting, pinching, and mark-making activities.
- Pencil grip refinement to dynamic tripod grip (thumb, index, and middle finger control).



Stage 3: Developing Fluency and Consistency (Year 1–2)

Focus: Embedding correct letter formation in print, consistent sizing, clear spacing, and line alignment.

Programmes used:

- ***Squiggle me into a writer*** - Squiggle uses neurological and physiological movements to create marks. Squiggle can be done whole class, in smaller groups or even as a writing intervention.

Letter Families Reinforced:

- Children revisit and practise letter families with greater independence.
- Capital letters and numbers are taught with distinct start points and sizes.

Key Objectives:

- Form all letters correctly and sit them on lines.
- Maintain consistent size and spacing.
- Begin joining in preparation for cursive script.

Handwriting Sessions:

- Short, focused sessions on posture, pencil grip, and muscle memory.
- Regular practice through dictation, sentence writing, and writing across the curriculum.



Stage 4: Introduction to Cursive Handwriting (Year 2–3)

Focus: Transition to cursive writing style using leading lines.

Programme used: Sheffield Handwriting Scheme – this introduces the leading lines to cursive handwriting.

Key Features:

- Introduction to **pre-cursive letters** in Year 2 Summer Term:
 - Each letter begins on the line with a **leading join** (entry stroke).
 - No lead-ins for capital letters.

Cursive Teaching Progression:

- Year 3: Children begin to write in fully **joined cursive script**, focusing on:
 - Correct joins within and between words.
 - Neatness, speed, and legibility.
 - Awareness of when joining is not appropriate (e.g., between capital and lowercase).

Support:

- Scaffolded joins
- Differentiated practice based on need (e.g., larger lines, coloured paper, pencil grips).
- Use of pens for children who struggle to achieve 'flow'/fluency or pressure with their handwriting



Stage 5: Consolidation and Personal Style Development (Year 4 onwards)

Focus: Increasing fluency, developing personal handwriting style, and applying handwriting across the curriculum.

Objectives:

- Maintain legibility and stamina during longer writing tasks.
- Write with appropriate speed while maintaining neatness.
- Adapt handwriting for purpose (e.g., note-taking vs final presentation).

Support Strategies:

- Additional support/intervention for children with persistent handwriting difficulties.

Inclusive Adaptive Practice and Interventions

- Regular assessment of fine motor and handwriting skills.
- Targeted interventions (e.g., Finger Gym, Dough Disco, OT programmes).
- Adaptive resources: pencil grips, sloped desks, alternative writing tools.



Progression Overview Table

Stage	Year Group	Focus	Key Tools/Programs	Outcomes
1	Nursery	Gross motor & mark making	Squiggle While You Wiggle	Early movement patterns & mark making
2	Reception	Letter formation	Read Write Inc., Letter Families	Tripod grip, correct formation
3	Year 1–2	Fluency & spacing	Letter families, RWInc	Consistent sizing, line placement
4	Year 2–3	Pre-cursive & cursive	Leading lines, cursive joins	Joined handwriting
5	Year 4+	Fluency & speed	Independent application	Personal style, stamina

Final Notes

- Handwriting is taught **discretely** and **embedded across the curriculum**.
- Emphasis is on **muscle memory**, **fine motor development**, and **confidence**.
- The aim is to support every child to write fluently, legibly, and with pride in their presentation.