



Name of Policy:

## **Handwriting Policy**

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<b>Person responsible for updating policy</b>	English Lead



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## Intent

At Wallace Fields Junior School, we are committed to enable pupils to achieve a high standard of handwriting and presentation of written work, through effective and efficient pen control, good concentration, mark making and writing that starts on the line. Our aim is that the children will be able to write clearly and fluently so that they can cope with the everyday demands of life and school. As children move through into the upper school, they are also encouraged to consider which writing implement is best for the work that they are doing and will be given opportunities to develop speed in their writing.

### Handwriting progression

In Years 3 and 4, children will be taught how to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters, and understand which letters, when they are placed next to each other, are best left un-joined. They will be taught how to increase legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting.

In Years 5 and 6, children will continue to be taught to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed. They will be given opportunities to choose which shape of a letter to use when given choices and decide whether or not to join specific letters. They will also be given opportunities to choose which writing implement is best suited for a specific task.

### What is cursive handwriting?

It has been recognised that a cursive script has an impact on children's reading and writing ability. At Wallace Fields Junior School, we will be referring to two types of cursive handwriting – cursive and continuous cursive. When referring to 'cursive' handwriting, we will be referring to handwriting that is legible and joined, with some letters, when placed adjacent to each other, being better left un-joined. When we refer to 'continuous cursive', we will be referring to the handwriting where all letters have a lead in and all are joined legibly and fluently.

## Implementation

### Handwriting Lessons

Handwriting is taught daily across the school to ensure pupils develop confident, fluent and legible writing. In Years 3, 4 and 5, children take part in a dedicated 30-minute handwriting lesson each week, with a focus on practising and refining the formation of a specific letter or join. In Year 6, the emphasis shifts towards increasing the speed and stamina of fluent handwriting in preparation for secondary expectations. Alongside these sessions, all classes complete additional daily handwriting practice within their English lessons. Teachers use their professional judgement to select the most appropriate letter, join or skill to revisit based on pupils' needs. Pupils are guided to appropriate seating positions and ways to position their paper, whether a child is left-handed or right-handed.

### Handwriting Expectations

- Letters which finish at the top join horizontally
  - Letters which finish at the bottom join diagonally
  - All down strokes are straight and parallel
  - All round letters are closed
  - The horizontal cross line of the letter 't' should be the same height as the lower case letters
  - All same letters are the same height
  - The body of the letter sits on the line
- (See Appendix 1)
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Teachers will model cursive and continuous cursive writing when writing on Mimio- the interactive whiteboard- or in children's books.

### **Ready to Write Routine**

A consistent *Ready to Write* routine is established across all year groups to ensure pupils are physically and mentally prepared for effective handwriting. Following the principles of the Writing Framework, teachers explicitly model how to adopt a correct sitting position, with feet flat on the floor, backs supported by the chair and both arms resting comfortably on the table. Pupils are taught to hold their pencil using an efficient tripod grip and to position their paper at an appropriate angle to support fluent letter formation. Before writing begins, classes take time to ensure that books are correctly placed, lines are visible and that pupils have a clear understanding of the focus for the session. This routine is revisited regularly and reinforced consistently so that all children develop the automatic habits needed for neat, controlled and fluent handwriting.

Example 'Ready to Write' position and clear desks to allow room for a comfortable writing position:



### **Handwriting and reading**

In school, children are exposed to cursive, continuous cursive and print styles, as well as commercial print. They develop an awareness of reading in print and writing in cursive side by side in their learning, such as lessons, prompts around the classroom, labels, teaching aids and through teachers modelling of writing.

### **Handwriting and spelling**

Research shows there is a close link between handwriting and spelling. The body needs to feel a movement of spelling and of writing at the same time. Children need to be given opportunities to understand the left-to-right movement of writing in English, in particular to feel direction from left-to-right to understand spelling and handwriting – dyslexic and children with developmental co-ordination disorder (formerly dyspraxia) – need to feel the direction of movement even more. At Wallace Fields Junior School, children will be taught this skills in increasing difficulty using cursive handwriting. Within their lessons, children will be given opportunities to develop cursive handwriting skills and practise spelling side by side.



## Inclusion

The vast majority of children are able to learn to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support. Children who need handwriting interventions are identified and intervention programmes, such as Bubble Writing Handwriting Scaffold, are implemented as needed. Interventions may be in small group work or staff members will work 1:1 with children to practise letter formation in their daily handwriting during English lessons. Further intervention may be arranged with specialist advice from the SENDCo and other specialists such as Occupation Therapists. Additional resources, such as special seat cushions or pencil grips, will be provided when necessary.

## Pens

Children are encouraged to write in pen in all handwriting lessons. As children progress through the school, they will begin to choose which writing tool to use. The progression of using a pen is as follows:

- **Year 3** – handwriting lesson and when writing a neat draft (choice)
- **Year 4** – handwriting and spelling lessons, and when writing a neat draft (choice)
- **Year 5** – handwriting, spelling, guided comprehension lessons and own choice throughout all other written work
- **Year 6** – own choice to use across the whole curriculum

For handwriting lessons, each class has a selection of Berol handwriting pens for the children to use, however these can be tricky for some children – particularly those that write with their left hand. Children are provided with strategies to support this. Pens must have **blue ink** and have a felt or rollerball nib. No ballpoint or biro pens are permitted as these require a lot of hand pressure, have minimal resistance and give an inconsistent ink flow.

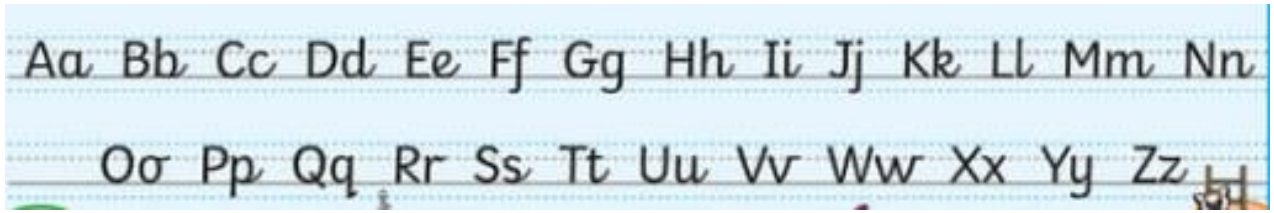
## Impact

All children should be able to develop a neat, cursive style of handwriting and take a pride in the appearance of their work. Some children may require more practice than others and will be invited to take part in intervention sessions to give them more practice time and may also be given more practise at home – all of which will be linked to the lessons and skills that children need to develop. With help and encouragement, legible handwriting is an achievable goal for every child, which will continue to be of benefit to them throughout their school career.

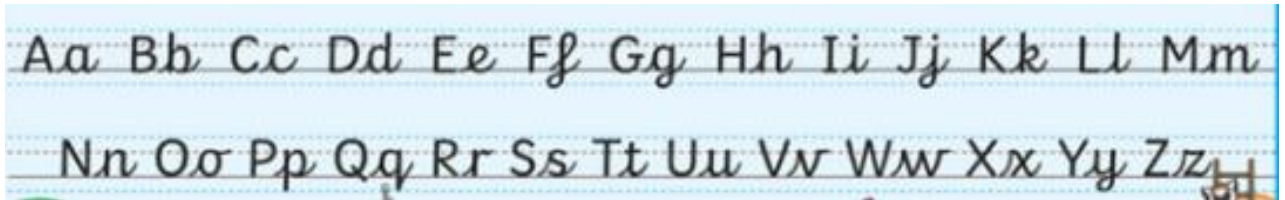
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## Appendix 1

Example of cursive handwriting:



Example of continuous cursive handwriting:



## Appendix 2

Progression of letters in Year 3 and 4:

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12
Autumn	The Ladder Family (l, i, u, t, y and j)						Assess and Review		The One-Armed Robot Family (n, m and h)			Handwriting Practice
Spring	The One-Armed Robot Family (k, b, p and r)				Assess and Review		The Curly Caterpillar Family (c, a, d, e, s and g)					
Summer	The Curly Caterpillar Family (f, q and o)			Assess and Review		The Zigzag Monster Family (z, v, w and x)				Assess and Review		Handwriting Practice

### Year 3 and Year 4 Assessment Statements

By the end of these lessons, most children should be able 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 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.

Progression of letters in Year 5 and 6:

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12
Autumn	The Ladder Family (l, i, u, t, y and j)						Assess and Review		The One-Armed Robot Family (n, m and h)			Handwriting Practice
Spring	The One-Armed Robot Family (k, b, p and r)				Assess and Review		The Curly Caterpillar Family (c, a, d, e, s and g)					
Summer	The Curly Caterpillar Family (f, q and o)			Assess and Review		The Zigzag Monster Family (z, v, w and x)				Assess and Review		Handwriting Practice

### Year 5 and Year 6 Assessment Statements

By the end of these lessons, most children should be able 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.