

Brookland Federation

'Brookland Infant and Nursery School'

'Brookland Junior School'

Handwriting Policy



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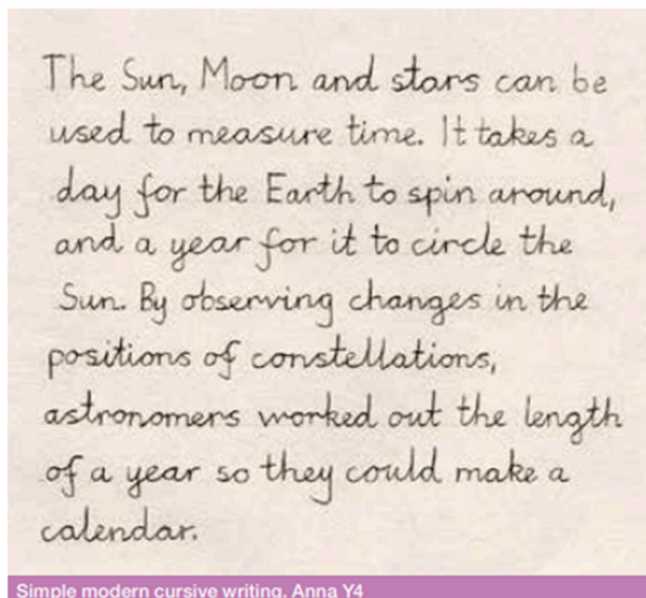
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Handwriting Definition

Handwriting is writing that is carried out with the hand using a pencil, pen, digital stylus or other marking instrument. It is used as a mode of expressing and communicating language. Handwriting involves using a recognised system of symbols. It is sometimes referred to as 'Language by hand'.

Importance and Nature of Handwriting:

The Brookland Federation uses modern cursive handwriting (having previously taught continuous cursive with a lead in). This is to support pupils in being fluent and confident writers. By mastering foundational skills such as handwriting, children can focus their efforts on their composition and are motivated to write for a genuine purpose and audience by ensuring their writing is 'ready for their reader'.



Handwriting is explicitly taught as a timetabled, discrete subject three times a week for 15 minutes and through ongoing reinforcement of skills through everyday written tasks.

Our aims are for all children to:

- Learn and practise appropriate handwriting skills at each stage of development, working towards comfortable handwriting which is legible, fluent and fast.
- Develop as confident writers, to whom, handwriting is automatic and helps them feel pride in their work.

National Curriculum:

Within EYFS, pupils develop their writing through communication and language; physical development; personal, social and emotional development; literacy and expressive arts and design.

- Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. (Early Outcomes: Physical Development 40-60 months)

- They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. (Early Learning Goal 10: Writing: Expected Level)

Year & Age	Statutory Requirements	Non-Statutory Notes and Guidance
Year 1 (Age 5-6)	Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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' (i.e., letters that are formed in similar ways) and practise these	Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided. Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.
Year 2 (Age 6-7)	Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 un-joined• 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	Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Year & Age	Statutory Requirements	Non-Statutory Notes and Guidance
Years 3 & 4 (Age 7-9)	<p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined • increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch] 	<p>Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.</p>
Years 5 & 6 (Age 10-11)	<p>Pupils should be taught to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<p>Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an un-joined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.</p>

Handwriting schemes:

The Brookland Federation does not follow a scheme, instead we teach simple modern cursive.

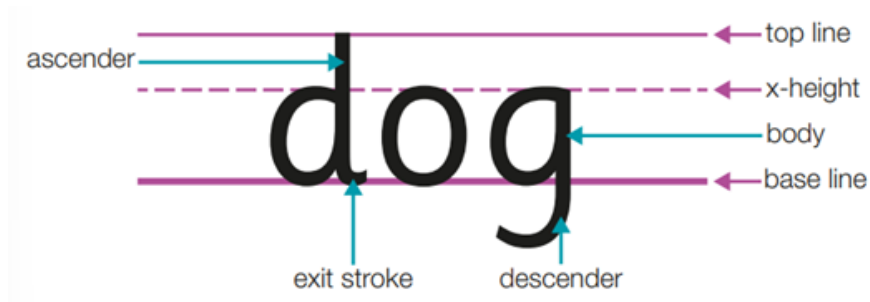
As a Federation, we join the descenders g and y with an "up hill" join.

Simple Modern Cursive

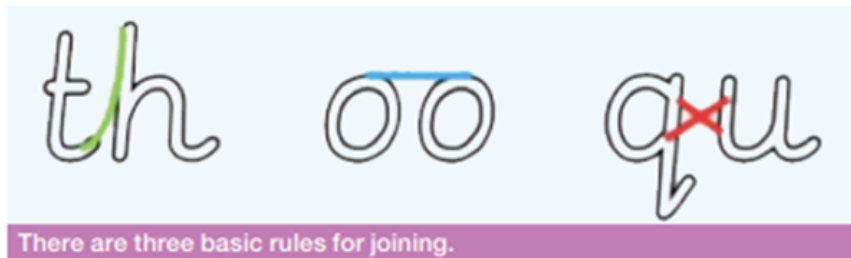
Firstly, individual letters are taught without entry strokes. e.g.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Agreed Language:



- up, down, around, above, below, flick
- capital letters and lower-case letters
- base line
- ascenders, descenders and short letters
- letter bodies
- exit flick
- “Up the hill join” (Diagonal strokes) join from letters which finish on the baseline.
- “Across the bridge line” (Horizontal strokes) join from letters which finish at the top.
- **Break letters** are those which when adjacent to each other are best left un-joined (CAPITALS, q, x and z)



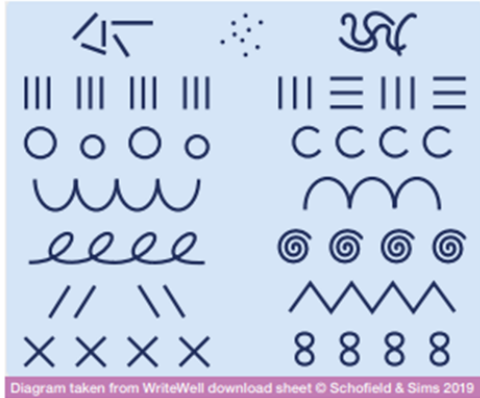
There are three basic rules for joining.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

If using handwriting lines, this will need to be modelled and shown.

EYFS "Handwriting"

Within Brooklands EYFS, correct letter formation is begun to be taught within the first few weeks of Reception. EYFS teachers model essential movements through play, continuous provision and explicit teaching. This includes pre-writing patterning with music, movement and dance.

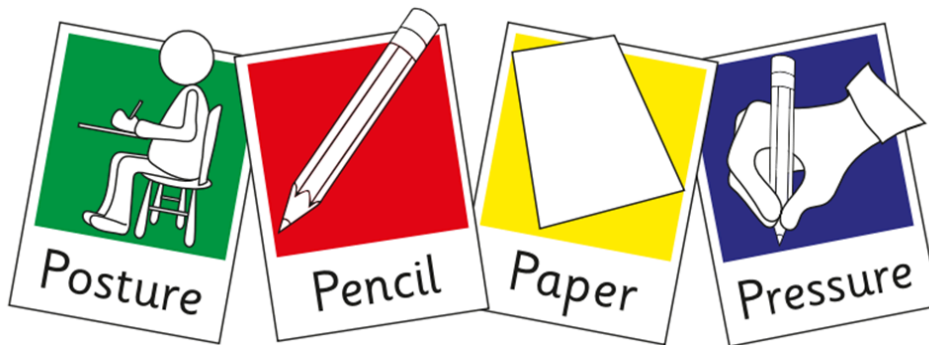


Patterns will be practised and the school's shared vocabulary should be explained and explored within the EYFS classrooms.

When the new phonics scheme is launched in September, videos of the letter formation will be visible for parents on the school website and through parental workshops.

The letters in a child's own name are the ones they will use on a regular basis, so teaching these should be a first priority. Parents and carers should be shown how to write their child's name with the correct starting points and movements. This could be part of an initial home visit or induction for Nursery or Reception. Parents can then confidently model the correct formation in preparation for when the child is ready to write it themselves.

Process (P checks):



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POSTURE:

- Back should be supported by the chair
- Slight tilt forwards
- Hips, knees and ankles at right angles
- Feet flat on the floor (or supported on a step)
- Arms resting comfortably on the table
- Tummy - a fist's distance from the table.
- Other hand used to stabilise paper
- Eyes should be a ruler's length away from the desk

PENCIL:



A hypermobile joint makes the use of the tripod grip uncomfortable



An effective alternative tripod grip

We teach the tripod grip, with variations being acceptable.

When changing a pencil grip, ensure you ask the child "does this hurt". Children will be given access to a choice of grips if these assist their writing or sensory feedback.

PAPER:



Position the paper or exercise book on the table and hold it still with the 'helper' hand. The paper should be slanted parallel to the writing arm at a comfortable distance from the edge of the table. It should not be directly in front of the child but slightly offset, to the right for a right hander and to the left for a left hander.

PRESSURE:

- Writing sessions should begin with warm up and hand relaxation exercises
- Observations of difficulties need to include what is happening with the whole body
- A range of pencil, pens and adaptive equipment is available

Mechanical pencils can support children who are applying too much pressure.

Teaching steps (S factors):



Shape S for Shape – letter formation.

- Ensuring writing is legible and letter formation is accurate
- Right starting point for each letter and following the correct movement pathways

Space S for Space – between letters and words.

- small space between letters in a word.
- Exit flicks and joining strokes can provide this
- spaces should be even, match the size of the writing and be about the same size as one letter o or two - oo
- a lolly stick can be used as a placeholder between words for younger children; coffee stirrers are useful for older children as the spacing between words becomes smaller

Jamesoandtheogiantopeach

Spaces between words should be about the size of one letter o (or two)

Size

S for Size - the relative positioning of letters

Sitting on the line

S for Sitting on the line

- Sitting the letters on the writing line helps legibility.
- After sitting, the next step is to understand the relative sizing of letters.
- Short letters, ascenders and descenders



Stringing together

S for Stringing (Joining)

- Up the hill joins - Letters which finish on the baseline join diagonally
- Across the bridge joins - Letters which finish at the top join horizontally
- Break letters - Some letters are best left un-joined.



Slant

S for Slant

- A slightly forward slant is a natural movement for right-handers and helps to improve fluency and speed.

Year 5/6 subsequently teach the final two S Factors

Speed

S for Speed

- More speed can improve rhythm and fluency but too much can cause illegibility.
- There needs to be awareness that competent writers have two kinds of handwriting - one which is good quality and is used for more formal purposes and the other - a fast, note-taking 'rough' hand which is used when speed is needed. Building up speed takes short regular practice of appropriate tasks: repeating words, phrases, then sentences and paragraphs.

Style

S for Style

- As handwriting develops, and in Upper Key Stage 2, pupils will be encouraged to develop their own legible, accessible style. This is to increase fluency and speed and will be adapted to different writing tasks (eg. printing for scientific diagrams).
- This should only be modelled when all previous S's have been mastered.

Letter families groups

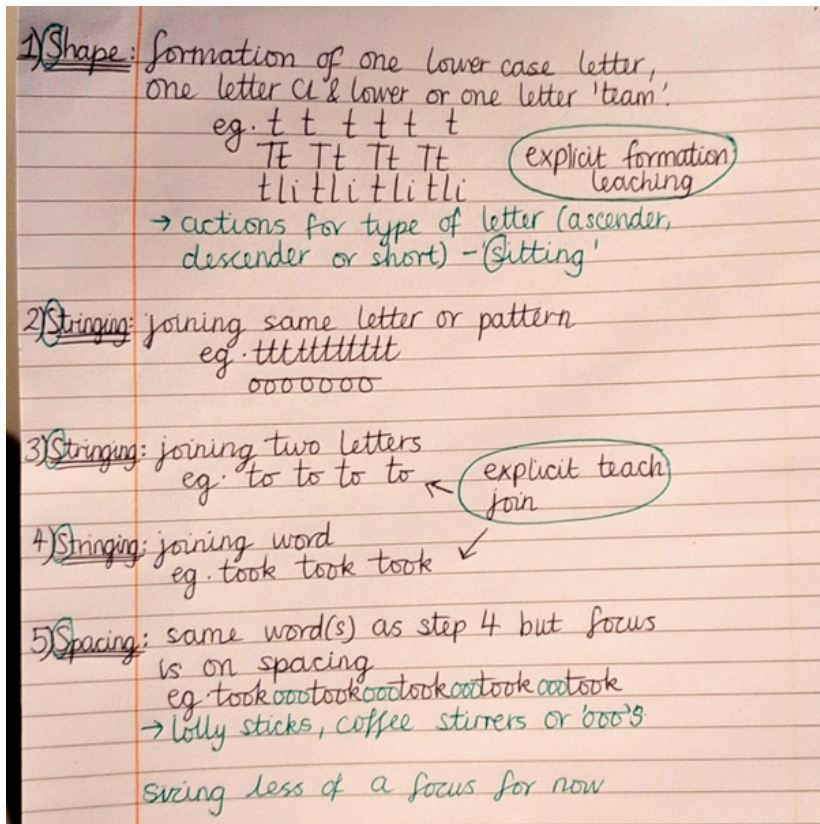
Children should be able to 'sky write' the letter movements correctly before any paper and pencil activities begin.

l t i u y j 1 4	l team																									
r n m h b k p 2 3 5	r team																									
c a d o s g q e f 6 8 9 0	c team																									
<u>z v w x 7</u>	zigzag team																									
<table border="1"><tr><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>C</td><td>D</td><td>E</td></tr><tr><td>F</td><td>G</td><td>H</td><td>I</td><td>J</td></tr><tr><td>K</td><td>L</td><td>M</td><td>N</td><td>O</td></tr><tr><td>P</td><td>Q</td><td>R</td><td>S</td><td>T</td></tr><tr><td>U</td><td>V</td><td>W</td><td>X</td><td>Y</td></tr></table>	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	Capitals
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																						

Progression of teaching:

- PRINT FIRST do not join until secured
- Pay particular attention to process within writing (a, e, o, d, b, g, n, m letters may need particular focus)
- Letter strings with join (patterns)
- When joining, up the hill joins c to u, i to l for example
- Introduce across bridge lesson

Example of weekly sequence:



Left-handed writers:

Left-handed writers may need additional support and modelling when they are writing.

Pupils may benefit from:

- A higher seat
- A sloped writing surface
- Good lighting - make sure the writing hand does not cast a shadow on the writing
- Sit on the left- hand side of right-handed writers so elbows do not bump
- Paper tilted clockwise in the left-handed writer position
- Pencils and pens to suit - ergonomic good grip, soft lead, fast drying ink
- Left-handed scissors
- Investigate arm, hand and pen hold positions to find those which suit
- Explore changes to letter formation and joining movements

Assessment of handwriting:

The original meaning of the word 'assess' means to 'sit beside' which is crucial when assessing letter formation.

Teachers should use formative assessment through observing children in both the writing process and through their product. This will then be considered against the 4Ps and the S factors. Summative assessments will also be used through end of key stage TAF assessments and National Curriculum expectations.

Within EYFS, the word handwriting itself is not used in the profile, but there are references to the writing process in both gross and fine motor skills and the writing ELG (formation of letters, phonics and sentence writing).

Within Key Stage 1, teachers will continuously observe each child to monitor which letters are being formed (in)correctly. Teachers will assess within each part of the teaching sequence.

Wherever possible, marking of handwriting should acknowledge the complexity of the skill and explain, teach and practice the correction in face-to-face contexts, with an adult directly.

Within Key Stage 2, the P checks and S Factors will still be taught explicitly three times a week. Teaching will focus on the process, letter formation and joins, not just the product.

Expectations:

- Taught 3x a week
- Explicit modelling by teacher both on handwriting repeater, use of a visualiser and 1:1 modelling in pupil books