

Canonbury Handwriting Policy

	Name	Date
Prepared by:	Kaya Affleck	2021.03
Checked and Reviewed by:	C&S Committee	2021.03
Approved by:	C&S Committee	2021.03
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Handwriting policy

We aim for our children to leave in Year 6 with the ability to write using their own style of fast, fluent, legible and sustainable handwriting, as well as other styles of writing for specific purposes. In addition to teaching handwriting during our regular handwriting lessons, we have high expectations that what is taught and practised in handwriting lessons will be used in all writing activities. We believe that handwriting is integral to a child's personal development and know that children's engagement and self-esteem can be improved by their satisfaction and pride in good quality presentation.

Aims

Handwriting is a taught skill that develops at different rates for different children. All of the teachers in the school prioritise the teaching of handwriting and have high expectations for handwriting across the curriculum. Our school uses *Penpals for Handwriting* to ensure that:

- The importance of handwriting is recognised and given appropriate time.
- The progression of handwriting is consistent across the school.
- Handwriting is acknowledged to be a whole body activity and emphasis is placed on correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting (see appendix 1 and 2).
- Expectations of left-handed children are equal to those of right-handed children, and appropriate advice and resources are available to ensure that they learn to write with a comfortable, straight wrist.
- Handwriting is linked to grammar, punctuation and spelling in order to practise and contextualise all of the transcriptional and stylistic skills for writing.
- Children learn to self-assess their own writing and develop understanding and responsibility for improving it.
- Children learn to write in different styles for different purposes such as print for labelling a diagram, illustrated capitals letters for creating a poster, swift jottings for writing notes, making a 'best copy' for presentation and fast, fluent and legible writing across the curriculum.

Progression of skills

In order to secure progression in the development of handwriting from year to year, teachers use:

1. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Development Matters and Early Learning Goals descriptors for the development of handwriting (Appendix 6)
2. The Penpals sequence of learning for Years 1-6 (Appendix 7)

When teaching handwriting skills in EYFS and Key Stage One, teachers and children say the mnemonics from the Read Write Inc. phonics scheme while demonstrating letter formation. This is to support the continuous development of fluent and accurate handwriting (Appendix 5)

- First, children experience the foundation of handwriting through multi-sensory activities across EYFS which is closely linked to Read Write Inc. Phonics letter formations and mnemonics (see appendix 5).
- Correct letter formation is taught, practised, applied and consolidated within phonics lessons (EYFS-Y1).
- Joining is introduced only after correct letter formation is used automatically.
- Joins are introduced systematically and cumulatively (Y2–Y6).
- As children practise joining, they pay attention to the size, proportion and spacing of their letters and words (Y3–Y6).
- Once the joins are secure, a slope is introduced in order to support increased speed and fluency (Y5).
- Children are introduced to different ways of joining in order that they can develop their own preferred personal style (Y6).

In using *Penpals*, we ensure that our children follow the requirements and recommendations of the National Curriculum. We share the aspirations that children’s handwriting should be ‘sufficiently fluent and effortless for them to manage the general demands of the curriculum’ and that ‘problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say’.

Handwriting Lessons

The teaching of handwriting is organised according to age-appropriate teaching methods.

Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception):

Children have access to mark-making tools as part of their daily continuous provision and have a wide range of opportunities to develop fine and gross motor skills.

Teachers provide opportunities and support children in developing motor skills in preparation for writing during:

- Child-initiated activities, adult-led tasks and continuous provision in the ‘7 areas of learning’ (Nursery and Reception)
- Adult-led motor skills activities including the daily ‘Funky Fingers’ lesson (Nursery)
- Weekly ‘Dough Disco’ session (Reception)
- Daily Phonics activities (Nursery)
- Daily Phonics lessons (Reception)
- Writing sessions, both adult-led and child-initiated (Reception)

Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2):

3 handwriting lessons per week lasting 15 minutes each.

Lower Key Stage Two (Years 3 and 4):

3 handwriting lessons per week lasting 15 minutes each.

Upper Key Stage Two:

Handwriting skills are reinforced within English lessons and discrete handwriting lessons

timetabled for whole class or groups where a need is identified via assessment, monitoring and/or progress reviews with leaders.

Assessment of skills

Handwriting at Canonbury is assessed through writing moderation conducted by class teachers with school leaders during staff meetings. Standards in handwriting inform overall teacher assessment of children's writing achievement according to National Curriculum expectations for their age – these expectations are provided in Appendix 9.

Handwriting tools

Throughout their time in school, children use a range of tools for different purposes and styles of handwriting including:

- A wide range of tools and media for mark-making in the EYFS.
- Whiteboard pens throughout the school.
- Fingers when writing on the interactive whiteboard.
- Art supplies including coloured pens and pencils for posters, displays and artwork.
- Sharp pencils for most writing until they begin to use handwriting pens in Year 4.
- Handwriting pens for final drafts of extended writing from years 4-6

Handwriting is always introduced and practised in lined handwriting books so that children quickly learn about letter orientation and size, including ascenders and descenders. As children's fine motor skills improve and their letter formation or joining becomes increasingly accurate, the width between the lines they write on gradually decreases.

Equality of opportunity

All children have equal access to handwriting lessons and to the resources available. We recognise that some children take longer to develop the necessary skills and we cater for those children by providing additional opportunities for skills development. Children who need specific fine motor or handwriting interventions are identified early and the impact of interventions is carefully monitored. Children with a physical disability are catered for, and progress is monitored, according to their individual action plans.

Interventions

The Penpals for Handwriting Intervention Programme, comprising three intervention books, help teachers to identify students who need additional support and provide practical advice on how to develop and progress learner's handwriting.

Identified children follow the 'Securing Letter Formation 1, Securing the Joins 2 and Securing Fluency 3' Intervention books.

For children identified with SEND who require a more intensive level of support, the school uses 'Handwriting Without Tears' to provide a further level of support.

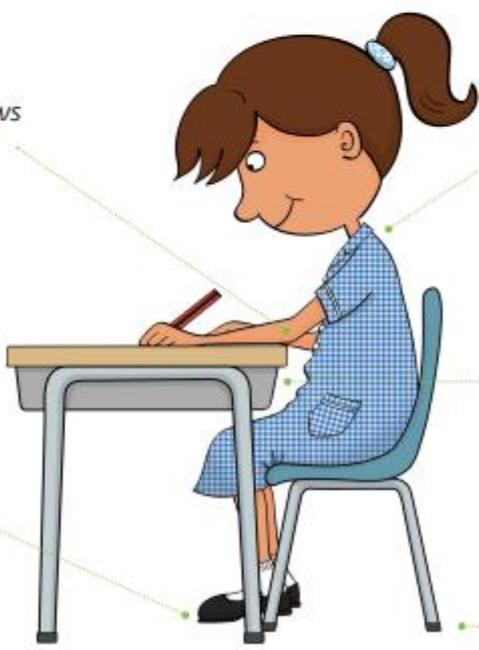
Messages for parents

We provide guidance on how parents can support their child to develop their handwriting according to this policy throughout Year 1-6 - this can be found in Appendix 8.

Appendix 1 – Writing Posture: The 7 Point Check

Do the **PENPALS** 7 point check!

Are you ready for handwriting? Relax!



Are your elbows off the desk?

Sit up and lean slightly forward

Is your body a fist width away from the desk?

Are your feet flat on the floor?

Are all chair legs touching the ground?

Left Handers



Is there a circle gap between your thumb and finger?

Is your paper tilted at a slight angle?

Right Handers



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Appendix 2 - Development levels of pencil hold



Developmental levels of pencil hold



1 Whole-hand grasp: using a fist hand.

- Around 1–2 years.
- Use of upper body muscles.
- Movement comes mainly from the shoulder with the arm moving as a unit.



2 Beginning to use the fingers: no longer using whole-hand grasp.

- Around 2–3 years.
- Use of forearm.
- Movement is still quite stiff but there may be some wrist movement.



a



b

3 Holds pencil between thumb and two fingers: no longer using whole-hand grasp.

- Around 3–4 years.
- Both of these grips are the crude beginnings of the tripod grip. The hand tends to move as a unit, with limited wrist movement.

Children at this stage need more experiences that will strengthen their muscles (cutting, working with dough etc.) to increase readiness for a precision pen hold.



4 Moving towards the tripod grip.

- Around 4–6 years.
- Holds pencil near point between first two fingers and thumb and uses it with good control.
- Finger movements and wrist now in play.
- Moving to a comfortable and efficient tripod grip: a precise three-way or tripod use of thumb, index and middle fingers.

PENPALS for
Handwriting

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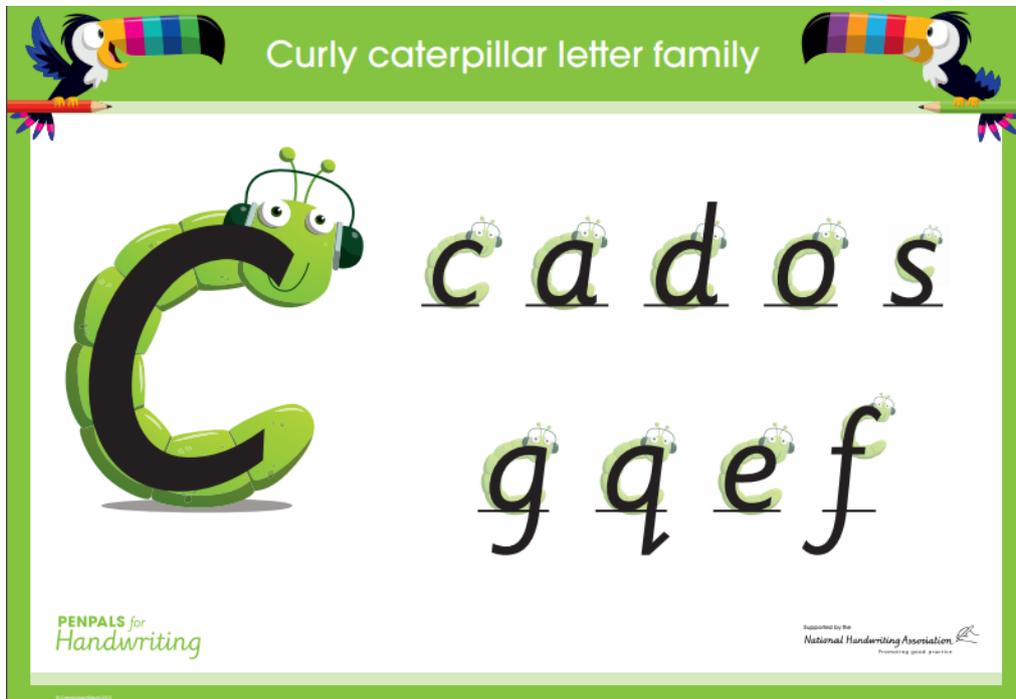
Appendix 3- Upper and Lower case alphabet formation



Appendix 4a- Letter Families for Handwriting

Letters that start with a similar pen movement are taught as a family in order to develop fluency.

Letters that start with an anti-clockwise curve:



Curly caterpillar letter family

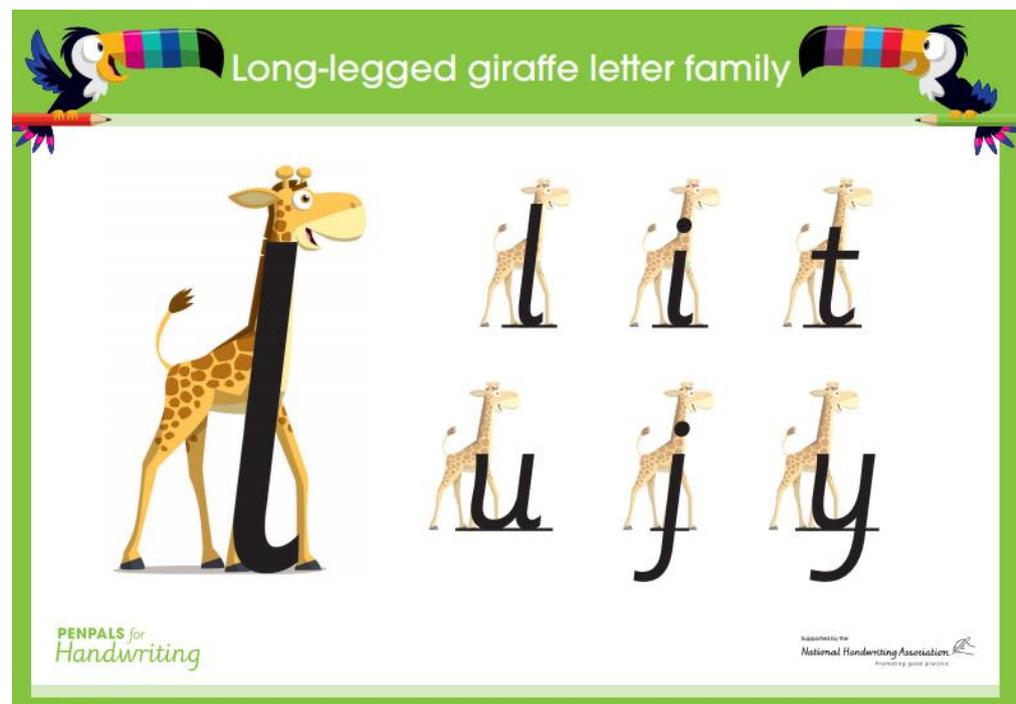
C c a d o s
g q e f

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This worksheet is titled "Curly caterpillar letter family" and features a green header with two toucan birds. The main content area is white with a green border. On the left, a large green caterpillar is shaped like the letter 'C'. To its right, the letters 'c', 'a', 'd', 'o', and 's' are shown on a baseline, each with a small caterpillar head on top. Below these, the letters 'g', 'q', 'e', and 'f' are shown on a baseline, each with a small caterpillar head on top. The bottom left corner has the logo "PENPALS for Handwriting" and the bottom right corner has the logo "Supported by the National Handwriting Association Promoting good practice".

Letters that start with a downward stroke and curve round:



Long-legged giraffe letter family

l l i t
u j y

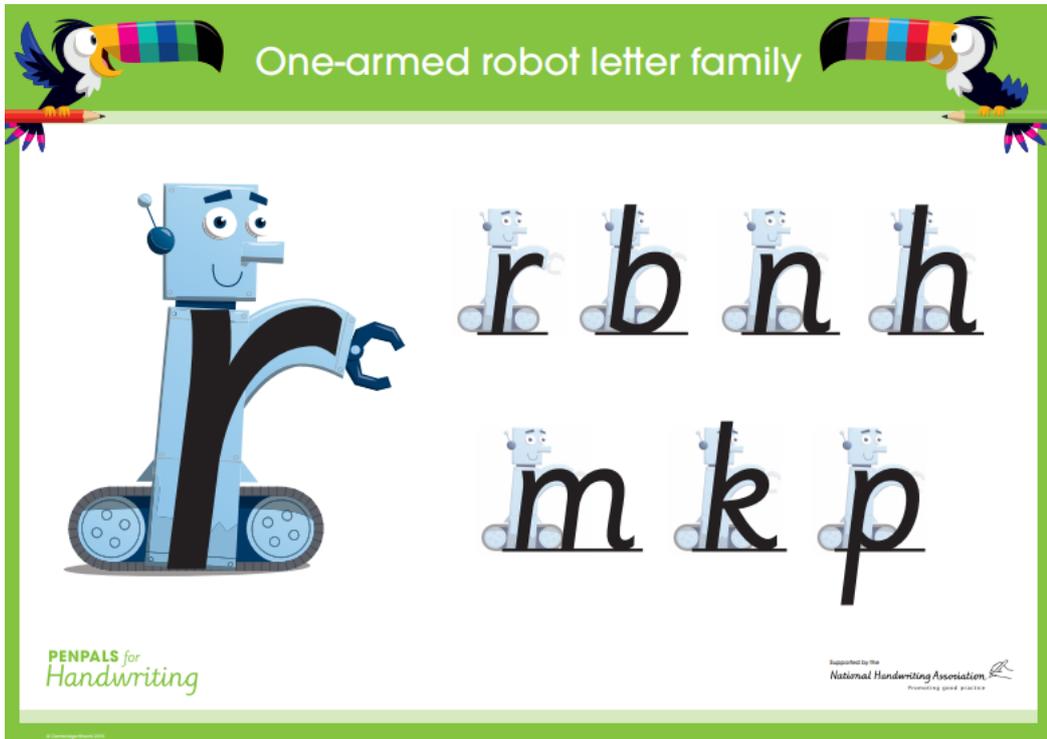
PENPALS for Handwriting

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This worksheet is titled "Long-legged giraffe letter family" and features a green header with two toucan birds. The main content area is white with a green border. On the left, a large giraffe is shaped like the letter 'l'. To its right, the letters 'l', 'i', and 't' are shown on a baseline, each with a small giraffe on top. Below these, the letters 'u', 'j', and 'y' are shown on a baseline, each with a small giraffe on top. The bottom left corner has the logo "PENPALS for Handwriting" and the bottom right corner has the logo "Supported by the National Handwriting Association Promoting good practice".

Appendix 4a contd.

Letters that start with a downward stroke followed by an upward stroke:



One-armed robot letter family

r **r** **b** **n** **h**

m **k** **p**

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This worksheet features a green header with two toucan illustrations and a pencil. The title 'One-armed robot letter family' is centered. On the left, a large blue robot is shaped like the letter 'r'. To its right, two rows of smaller letters are shown, each with a small robot character integrated into its structure. The first row contains 'r', 'b', 'n', and 'h'. The second row contains 'm', 'k', and 'p'. The bottom left corner has the 'PENPALS for Handwriting' logo, and the bottom right corner has the 'National Handwriting Association' logo with the tagline 'Promoting good practice'.

Letters with an angular 'zig-zag' formation:



Zig-zag monster letter family

Z **z** **v** **w** **x**

PENPALS for Handwriting

Supported by the National Handwriting Association
Promoting good practice

This worksheet features a green header with two toucan illustrations and a pencil. The title 'Zig-zag monster letter family' is centered. On the left, a large red monster is shaped like the letter 'Z'. To its right, two rows of smaller letters are shown, each with a small monster character integrated into its structure. The first row contains 'z', 'v', 'w', and 'x'. The bottom left corner has the 'PENPALS for Handwriting' logo, and the bottom right corner has the 'National Handwriting Association' logo with the tagline 'Promoting good practice'.

Appendix 4b

Individual joins and break letters

Join	Letters in this box	To letters in this box	Joins taught
Diagonal join to ascender	a c e i l t	h k l t	ch, th, ck, al, el, at, il, ill, ok, ot, ob, ol
Diagonal join, no ascender	a c d e i k l n t u	e i n r y	ai, ay, ir, er, ie, ue, ee, le, ar, ur, in, ui, ey, aw, an, ip
		a c d g s (anticlockwise letters)	ea, ig, dg, ng, ed, cc, eg, ic, ad, ug, dd, ag, as, es, os, ns, ds, is, ls, ts, ks
Horizontal join, no ascender	o v w	e i n p r u v w y	ow, ou, oe, ve, or, oi, oy, on, op, ov
		a c d g o s (anticlockwise letters)	oo, oa, wa, wo, oc, og, od, va, vo
Horizontal join, to ascender	o w	h	wh, oh
Break letters			
These letters do not join: g j x y z			
We do not join from these letters yet: b f p q s r			

Appendix 5- Read Write Inc. letter formation mnemonics

Teachers and children say these mnemonics from the Read Write Inc. phonics scheme as they write the letters to aid fluent and accurate formation:

Letter	Phrase
m	Maisey, mountain mountain
a	Round the apple, down the leaf
s	Slither down the snake
d	Round his bottom, up his tall neck, down to his feet
t	Down the tower, across the tower
i	Down the body, dot for the head
n	Down Nobby and over his net.
p	Down the plait and over the pirates face
g	Round her face, down her hair and give her a curl
o	All around the orange
c	Curl around the caterpillar
k	Down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg
u	Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle
b	Down the laces to the heel, round the toe
f	Down the stem and draw the leaves
e	Lift off the top and scoop out the egg
l	Down the long leg
h	Down the head to the hooves and over his back
sh	Slither down the snake, down the head to the hooves and over his back
r	Down his back, then curl over his arm
j	Down his body, curl and dot
v	Down a wing, up a wing
y	Down a horn up a horn and under his head
w	Down, up, down, up
th	Down the tower, across the tower, then down the horses head to the hooves and over his back
z	Zig-zag-zig
ch	Curl round the caterpillar, then go down the horse's head to the hooves and over his back
q	Round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair
x	Down the arm and leg and repeat the other side

Appendix 6 – EYFS Stages of Handwriting Development

Early Years Foundation Stage

Stages of development in handwriting

Nursery 30 – 50 months

- Draws lines and circles using gross motor movements.
- Uses one-handed tools and equipment, e.g. makes snips in paper with child scissors.
- Holds pencil between thumb and two fingers, no longer using whole-hand grasp.
- Holds pencil near point between first two fingers and thumb 12 and uses it with good control.
- Can copy some letters, e.g. letters from their name.

Reception 40 - 60 months

- Shows a preference for a dominant hand.
- Begins to use anticlockwise movement and retrace vertical lines.
- Begins to form recognisable letters.
- Uses a pencil and holds it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.

Aspects of the Early Learning Goals (ELG) related to handwriting

Physical development - moving and handling: Children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.

Literacy - writing: Children write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others.

Nursery

Funky fingers – whole class session to develop arm, hand and finger muscle strength.

Daily provision of activities indoors and outdoors to develop gross motor skills (including core muscles for posture, upper arm development and circular, anti-clockwise movements with the whole arm).

Daily provision of activities indoors and outdoors to develop fine motor skills (including pincer movements, eg pegs or threading)

Daily provision of mark making activities using a range of tools. These may be standing, sitting or lying on the floor.

Reception	<p>Continuous daily provision as in Nursery.</p> <p>Starting from September: Practise RWI letter formation when new sounds are taught in print form only. Pupils memorise the phonics rhymes for letter formation.</p> <p>Teach correct posture when writing.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for children to engage and practise handwriting patterns throughout the year in addition to RWI lessons.</p> <p>Dough disco weekly whole class session to develop arm, hand and finger muscle strength.</p>
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Appendix 7- Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Sequence of Learning

Year 1/Primary 2

Term 1

- 1 Practising long-legged giraffe letters
- 2 Writing words with *ll*
- 3 Introducing capitals for long-legged giraffe letters
- 4 Practising one-armed robot letters
- 5 Practising long-legged giraffe letters and one-armed robot letters
- 6 Introducing capitals for one-armed robot letters
- 7 Practising curly caterpillar letters
- 8 Writing words with double *ff*
- 9 Writing words with double *ss*
- 10 Introducing capitals for curly caterpillar letters

Term 2

- 11 Practising long-legged giraffe letters, one-armed robot letters and curly caterpillar letters
- 12 Practising zig-zag monster letters
- 13 Writing words with double *zz*
- 14 Mixing all the letter families
- 15 Practising all the capital letters
- 16 Practising all the numbers 0-9
- 17 Writing words with *ck* and *qu*
- 18 Practising long vowel phonemes: *ai, igh, oo*
- 19 Practising vowels with adjacent consonants: *ee, oa, oo*
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Numbers 10-20: spacing
- 22 Practising *ch* unjoined
- 23 Introducing diagonal join to ascender: *ch*
- 24 Practising *ai* unjoined
- 25 Introducing diagonal join, no ascender: *ai*
- 26 Practising *wh* unjoined
- 27 Introducing horizontal join to ascender: *wh*
- 28 Practising *ow* unjoined
- 29 Introducing horizontal join, no ascender: *ow*
- 30 Assessment

Year 2/Primary 3

Term 1

- 1 Practising diagonal join to ascender: *th, ch*
- 2 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: *ai, ay*
- 3 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: *ir, er*
- 4 Practising horizontal join to ascender: *wh, oh*
- 5 Practising horizontal join, no ascender: *ow, ou*
- 6 Introducing diagonal join to e: *ie, ue*
- 7 Introducing horizontal join to e: *oe, ve*
- 8 Introducing *ee*
- 9 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: *le*
- 10 Writing numbers 1-100

Term 2

- 11 Introducing diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: *ea*
- 12 Practising diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: *igh*
- 13 Practising diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: *dg, ng*
- 14 Introducing horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: *oo, oa*
- 15 Practising horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: *wa, wo*
- 16 Introducing mixed joins for three letters: *air, ear*
- 17 Practising mixed joins for three letters: *oor, our*
- 18 Practising mixed joins for three letters: *ing*
- 19 Size and spacing
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Building on diagonal join to ascender: *ck, al, el, at, il, ill*
- 22 Building on diagonal join, no ascender: *ui, ey, aw, ur, an, ip*
- 23 Building on horizontal join to ascender: *ok, ot, ob, ol*
- 24 Building on horizontal join, no ascender: *oi, oy, on, op, ov*
- 25 Building on diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: *ed, cc, eg, ic, ad, ug, dd, ag*
- 26 Building on horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: *oc, og, od, va, vo*
- 27 Introducing joins to s: *as, es, is, os, ws, ns, ds, ls, ts, ks*
- 28 Practising joining *ed* and *ing*
- 29 Assessment
- 30 Capitals

Year 3/Primary 4

Term 1

- 1 Practising joining through a word in stages: no ascenders or descenders
- 2 Practising joining through a word in stages: parallel ascenders
- 3 Introducing joining from s to ascender: *sh, sl, st, sk*
- 4 Introducing joining from s, no ascender: *sw, sl, se, sm, sr, sp, sl*
- 5 Introducing joining from s to an anticlockwise letter: *sa, sc, sd, sq, so, sq*
- 6 Introducing joining from r to an ascender: *rh, rk, rl, rt*
- 7 Introducing joining from r, no ascender: *ri, ru, rr, rp*
- 8 Introducing joining from r to an anticlockwise letter: *ra, rd, rr, ro*
- 9 Introducing joining from r to e: *are, ere, ure, ore, ire*
- 10 Introducing break letters: *g, j, y, f, b, p, x, z*

Term 2

- 11 Introducing joining to f: *ff, ef, of, of*
- 12 Introducing joining from t to an ascender: *ft, ft*
- 13 Introducing joining from t, no ascender: *fe, fi, fu, fr, fy*
- 14 Introducing joining from t to an anticlockwise letter: *fo, fa*
- 15 Introducing *ff*
- 16 Introducing *rr*
- 17 Introducing *ss*
- 18 Introducing *qu*
- 19 Revising parallel ascenders and descenders
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Revising joins: letter spacing
- 22 Revising joins: spacing between words
- 23 Revising joins: consistency of size
- 24 Revising joins: fluency
- 25 Revising joins: parallel ascenders
- 26 Revising joins: parallel ascenders and descenders
- 27 Revising horizontal join from r to an anticlockwise letter: *r*
- 28 Revising break letters
- 29 Assessment
- 30 Revising capital letters

Year 4/Primary 5

Term 1

- 1 Introducing diagonal join from p and b to ascender: *ph, pl, bl*
- 2 Introducing diagonal join from p and b, no ascender: *bu, bi, be, pu, pl, pe*
- 3 Introducing diagonal join from p and b to an anticlockwise letter: *pa, po, ps, ba, bo, ba*
- 4 Revising parallel ascenders and descenders: *bb, pp*
- 5 Break letters: *x, z*
- 6 Spacing in common exception words
- 7 Consistent size of letters
- 8 Relative size of capitals
- 9 Speed and fluency
- 10 End-of-term check

Term 2

- 11 Revising parallel ascenders
- 12 Revising parallel ascenders and break letters
- 13 Relative sizes of letters
- 14 Proportion of letters
- 15 Spacing between letters
- 16 Spacing between words
- 17 Writing of speed
- 18 Improving fluency
- 19 Speed and fluency
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Consistency of size
- 22 Proportion
- 23 Spacing between letters and words
- 24 Size: proportion and spacing
- 25 Fluency: writing longer words
- 26 Speed and fluency
- 27 Revising break letters
- 28 Print alphabet: presentation
- 29 Assessment
- 30 Capital letters: presentation

Year 5/Primary 6

Term 1

- 1 Introducing sloped writing in letter families
- 2 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join to ascender: *th, sh, nb, nd, ht, st*
- 3 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join, no ascender: *ai, ay, bu, er, ur, en*
- 4 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join to an anticlockwise letter: *ac, sc, bo, da, ea, ho*
- 5 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join to ascender: *wh, wl, oh, of, ob*
- 6 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join, no ascender: *ou, op, ue*
- 7 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join to an anticlockwise letter: *ou, oa, ura, ura, ua, oo*
- 8 Practising sloped writing: joining from r: *ra, re, ri, ro, ru*
- 9 Practising sloped writing: joining from s: *sh, su, sr, sl, su, sp*
- 10 End-of-term check

Term 2

- 11 Practising sloped writing: proportion – joining from t to ascender: *ft, ft*
- 12 Practising sloped writing: size – joining from t, no ascender: *fa, fe, fo, fu*
- 13 Different styles for different purposes: writing a paragraph
- 14 Practising sloped writing: speed: *ff*
- 15 Practising sloped writing: speed and legibility: *rr*
- 16 Practising sloped writing: size, proportion and spacing: *ss*
- 17 Practising sloped writing: building speed: *qu*
- 18 Different styles for different purposes: decorative alphabets
- 19 Different styles for different purposes
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Sloped writing: proportion, joining p and b to ascenders: *ph, pl, bl*
- 22 Handwriting for different purposes: joining from p and b, no ascender: *bu, bu, pe, pu, pu, pr*
- 23 Practising sloped writing: parallel downstrokes: *pp, bb*
- 24 Practising sloped writing: all double letters
- 25 Practising sloped writing for speed: *tal, cal*
- 26 Practising sloped writing for fluency
- 27 Personal style
- 28 Handwriting for different purposes: print alphabet
- 29 Assessment
- 30 Capitals

Year 6/Primary 7

Term 1

- 1 Style for speed: crossbar join from t: *th, ti, tr, ta, tt*
- 2 Style for speed: looping from g: *gl, gl, gr, ga, gg*
- 3 Style for speed: looping from j and y: *je, jo, je, yr, yo*
- 4 Style for speed: looping from f
- 5 Style for speed: different joins to s
- 6 Style for speed: looping from b
- 7 Style for speed: joining from v, w, x and z
- 8 Handwriting for different purposes: abbreviations
- 9 Spacing between words
- 10 End-of-term check

Term 2

- 11 Improving handwriting: the importance of consistent sizing
- 12 Improving handwriting: the importance of proportion
- 13 Improving handwriting: the importance of spacing
- 14 Improving handwriting: the importance of consistent sizing of parallel ascenders and descenders
- 15 Improving handwriting: the importance of closed and open letters
- 16 Improving handwriting: pen breaks in longer words
- 17 Handwriting for different purposes: annotations
- 18 Handwriting for different purposes
- 19 Choice of handwriting tools
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Handwriting for different purposes: fast-joined and print letters
- 22 Handwriting for different purposes: note making
- 23 Handwriting for different purposes: neat writing
- 24 Handwriting for different purposes: print letters for personal details
- 25 Different styles of writing
- 26 Handwriting for different purposes: decoration
- 27 Handwriting for different purposes: decorated capitals
- 28 Handwriting for different purposes: layout
- 29 Assessment
- 30 Handwriting for different purposes: handwriting patterns



Messages for Parents

PENPALS for Handwriting

1

During this year, correct letter formation should become an automatic habit. Don't encourage your child to write too small or too quickly. Trying to enforce small handwriting too soon can lead to a very cramped style, which is then difficult to make fluent. At the very end of this year, children will begin to join some pairs of letters within a word.

As a reminder, correct letter formation for lower-case letters is as follows. The arrows show the direction of your child's pencil:

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

Capital letters are formed as follows:

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

Letter families

Your child will still be thinking about the four letter families (similar letter shapes grouped together to help children form letters consistently).

Long-legged giraffe *l i t u j y* *ll* *L I T U J Y*

One-armed robot *r b n h m k p* *R B N H M K P*

Curly caterpillar *c a d o s g q e f* *ff ss* *C A D O S G Q E F*

Zig-zag monster *z v w x* *zz* *Z V W X*

Letter combinations *ck qu* *ai igh oo* *ee oa ow* *ch wh*

Joins

These four joins are introduced at the end of the year, so if your child is keen to start joining, then these are a good place to start.

Diagonal join to ascender *ch* Diagonal join, no ascender *ai*

Horizontal join to ascender *wh* Horizontal join, no ascender *ow*





Messages for Parents

PENPALS *for Handwriting*

2

During this school year, your child will learn all of the basic handwriting joins. However, if your child isn't confident forming all their letters yet, they should concentrate on this before they worry about joining. Your child will gradually be introduced to more pairs of letters that are joined in the same way. At first, they are only asked to copy joins that they have seen before, but gradually they are encouraged to explore and experiment joining more and more letters with the joins they know. This should be encouraged if they begin to naturally explore - there's no point in holding them back. For example, the movement for the join *wh* (i.e. horizontal join to ascender) is exactly the same as for joining *oh, ot, ot, ob* and so on - so your child may naturally begin to discover this.

Once a join has been introduced between pairs of letters (e.g. *wh*), your child will always be expected to copy the model showing those joined letter pairs whenever they write those letters. In this way, they will gradually be introduced to the idea of joining more than one pair of letters within a word.

In the final term of Year 2, your child will be introduced to other pairs of letters that are joined using the same joining strokes, if they have not already begun to identify and use them.

In this year your child may well sit a test or check. In England the SATS test for Y2 occurs in the Summer Term and handwriting is part of the English test. Although the formal English papers don't include a writing test, children's writing will be assessed by their teacher. Pupils will be asked to write a short piece and their teacher will look at their handwriting as part of this. They need to show legible writing including:

- Forming lower-case letters correctly, using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.
- Writing capital letters of the correct size and relationship to lower-case letters.
- Spacing their words correctly.
- To be awarded 'working towards' or 'working at expected' standards, pupils do not need to demonstrate joined up handwriting.
- To be awarded 'working at greater depth' at the end of key stage 1, pupils must demonstrate joined up handwriting, using the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in most of their writing.

Join	Letters in this box	To letters in this box	Joins taught
Diagonal join to ascender	<i>a c e i l t</i>	<i>h k l t</i>	<i>ch, th, ck, al, el, at, il, ill, ok, ot, ob, ol</i>
Diagonal join, no ascender	<i>a c d e i k l n t u</i>	<i>e i n r y</i>	<i>ai, ay, ir, er, ie, ue, ee, le, ar, ur, in, ui, ey, aw, an, ip</i>
		<i>a c d g s</i> (anticlockwise letters)	<i>ea, ig, dg, ng, ed, cc, eg, ic, ad, ug, dd, ag, as, es, os, ns, ds, is, ls, ts, ks</i>
Horizontal join, no ascender	<i>o v w</i>	<i>e i n p r u v w y</i>	<i>ow, ou, oe, ve, or, oi, oy, on, op, ov</i>
		<i>a c d g o s</i> (anticlockwise letters)	<i>oo, oa, wa, wo, oc, og, od, va, vo</i>
Horizontal join, to ascender	<i>o w</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>wh, oh</i>

Break letters

These letters do not join: *g j x y z*

We do not join from these letters yet: *b f p q s r*

Appendix 8 contd.



Messages for Parents

PENPALS for Handwriting

3

During Years 3 and 4, your child will be introduced to the idea of joining most of the letters in a word and to trickier joins such as joining from *r*, *s* and *f*.

As the movement for joins becomes more familiar and fluent, the focus moves to develop a neat and even style by looking at size and proportion, parallel downwards strokes and spacing.

Joining letter sets for Year 3/Primary 4

Diagonal join to ascender (e.g. *at*)
This join is used to join letters in this box ...

a b c d e h i k l m n p s t u

to letters in this box.

b f h k l t

Diagonal join, no ascender (e.g. *da*)
This join is used to join letters in this box ...

a c d e h i k l m n q s t u

to letters in this box.

e i j m n p r u v w y
** a c d g o q s*

Horizontal join, no ascender (e.g. *wo*)
This join is used to join letters in this box ...

f o r v w

to letters in this box.

e i j m n p r u v w y
** a c d g o q s*

Horizontal join to ascender (e.g. *oh*)
This join is used to join letters in this box ...

f o r v w

to letters in this box.

b f h k l t

Break letters
These letters do not join.

g j x y z

These letters do not join yet.

b p

* anticlockwise letters



Messages for Parents

PENPALS *for Handwriting*

4

During Years 3 and 4, your child will be introduced to the idea of joining most of the letters in a word and to trickier joins such as joining from *r, s* and *f*.

As the movement for joins becomes more familiar and fluent, the focus moves to develop a neat and even style by looking at size and proportion, parallel downwards strokes and spacing.

Joining letter sets for Year 4/Primary 5

<p>Diagonal join to ascender (e.g. <i>at</i>) This join is used to join letters in this box ...</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> <i>a b c d e h i k l m n p s t u</i> </div>	<p>to letters in this box.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> <i>b f h k l t</i> </div>
<p>Diagonal join, no ascender (e.g. <i>da</i>) This join is used to join letters in this box ...</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> <i>a c d e h i k l m n q s t u</i> </div>	<p>to letters in this box.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> <i>e i j m n p r u v w y</i> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> <i>* a c d g o q s</i> </div>
<p>Horizontal join, no ascender (e.g. <i>wO</i>) This join is used to join letters in this box ...</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> <i>f o r v w</i> </div>	<p>to letters in this box.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> <i>e i j m n p r u v w y</i> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> <i>* a c d g o q s</i> </div>
<p>Horizontal join to ascender (e.g. <i>oh</i>) This join is used to join letters in this box ...</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> <i>f o r v w</i> </div>	<p>to letters in this box.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> <i>b f h k l t</i> </div>
<p>Break letters These letters do not join.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> <i>g j y</i> </div>	<p>These letters do not join yet.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"> <i>x z</i> </div>

* anticlockwise letters



Messages for Parents

PENPALS *for Handwriting*

5

This year we are working on a more sloped style to enable speedier writing. All of the letters and joins taught previously will be revisited to enable your child to practise the slope in familiar contexts. We will also focus on issues of proportion, size, legibility and different styles for different purposes.

For reference, here are the lower-case letters in the more sloped style:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Capital letters are written as follows:

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Joining letter sets for Year 5/Primary 6

<p>Diagonal join to ascender (e.g. at) This join is used to join letters in this box ...</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> a b c d e h i k l m n p s t u </div> <p>Diagonal join, no ascender (e.g. da) This join is used to join letters in this box ...</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> a c d e h i k l m n q s t u </div> <p>Horizontal join, no ascender (e.g. wo) This join is used to join letters in this box ...</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> f o r v w </div> <p>Horizontal join to ascender (e.g. oh) This join is used to join letters in this box ...</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> f o r v w </div> <p>Break letters These letters do not join.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> g j y </div>	<p>to letters in this box.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> b f h k l t </div> <p>to letters in this box.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> e i j m n p r u v w y * a c d g o q s </div> <p>to letters in this box.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> e i j m n p r u v w y * a c d g o q s </div> <p>to letters in this box.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> b f h k l t </div> <p>These letters do not join yet.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #76b82a; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> x z </div>
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* anticlockwise letters



Messages for Parents

PENPALS *for Handwriting*

6

Our emphasis this year is on developing a personal, fast, fluent and legible handwriting style. Children are given opportunities to practise a range of ways of joining, with the expectation that they will develop a style that 'works' for them. Additionally, children continue to focus on key issues for legibility and speed as well as styles and writing tools for different purposes.

At the end of this year there may well be a test before children begin secondary education. In England the SATs test for Y6 occurs in the Summer Term and handwriting is part of the English test. Although the formal English papers don't include a writing test, children's writing will be assessed by their teacher. Pupils will be asked to write a short piece and as part of this, their handwriting will be assessed. They should be:

- Producing legible joined handwriting.
- Maintaining legibility, fluency and speed in handwriting by choosing whether or not to join specific letters.

Joining letter sets for Y6/P7

<p>Diagonal join to ascender (e.g. <i>at</i>) This join is used to join letters in this box ...</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"><i>abcdefghijklmnopstu</i></div>	<p>to letters in this box.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"><i>bfhklt</i></div>
<p>Diagonal join, no ascender (e.g. <i>da</i>) This join is used to join letters in this box ...</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"><i>abcdefghijklmnopqstu</i></div>	<p>to letters in this box.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"><i>eijnpruvwy</i></div> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"><i>*acdgoqs</i></div>
<p>Horizontal join, no ascender (e.g. <i>wv</i>) This join is used to join letters in this box ...</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"><i>foruv</i></div>	<p>to letters in this box.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"><i>eijnpruvwy</i></div> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"><i>*acdgoqs</i></div>
<p>Horizontal join to ascender (e.g. <i>oh</i>) This join is used to join letters in this box ...</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"><i>foruv</i></div>	<p>to letters in this box.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;"><i>bfhklt</i></div>

Personal style
It is possible to experiment with new letter formations and joins to develop a personal style.

<p>Break letters Joins are not usually made from these letters, but you may wish to try.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin: 5px 0;"> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"><i>g j y</i></div> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"><i>g j y</i></div> </div>	<p>Joins are not usually made to or from these letters, but you may wish to try these style variations:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin: 5px 0;"> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"><i>x z</i></div> <div style="border: 1px solid #4CAF50; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"><i>x 3</i></div> </div>
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Alternative letter shapes and joins

lv ff m th va wa

* anticlockwise letters

Appendix 9- Assessment for Handwriting: National Curriculum Expectations (DfE)

Year 1

National Curriculum expectations- statutory requirements and non- statutory guidance:

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' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to 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

National Curriculum expectations statutory requirements and non-statutory guidance.

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.

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.

Lower KS2 (Years 3 and 4)

National Curriculum expectations statutory requirements and non-statutory guidance.

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 down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].

Pupils should be joining 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 what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

Upper KS2 (Years 5 and 6)

National Curriculum expectations statutory requirements and non-statutory guidance.

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.

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.