



Pirton Hill Primary School

Handwriting Policy

(Spring 2025)

Originated by: Charleen O'Neill
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Presented to Governors: Autumn 2025
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1. Overarching Values

Expect:

*We all **expect** to work hard, and meet our own high expectations, in a safe environment with access to high quality resources and opportunities that broaden our horizons.*

Believe:

*We all **believe** in ourselves, and each other, and know that everyone has something special to contribute.*

Achieve:

*We all have the opportunity to **achieve**, and fulfil our potential, regardless of our backgrounds.*

Enjoy:

*We all strive to develop passionate and determined life-long learners who **enjoy** learning, understand how to progress and take pleasure in succeeding.*

2. Introduction

At Pirton Hill Primary School we are very proud of our pupil's handwriting and take particular care in our handwriting style. We use Letter-join's on-line handwriting resource and Lesson Planners as the basis of our handwriting policy as it covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum.

In Early Years, the children will be taught handwriting through the printed method, while Year 1 – 6 will be taught handwriting through the cursive method. (See Appendix 1).

2.1 Handwriting is a fundamental skill that supports children's literacy development and confidence in written communication. This policy outlines our school's approach to handwriting, based on the Letter-join scheme, to ensure that all pupils develop fluent, legible, and consistent handwriting.

2.2 This policy aligns with statutory requirements set by the National Curriculum in England (2014), which states that:

- Pupils should develop a legible, fluent, and joined handwriting style.
- Handwriting expectations should be appropriately structured from early years through to Key Stage 2. (English Programmes of Study: Key Stages 1 and 2, DfE, 2014).

2.3 Further, Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework (EIF, 2023) emphasises the importance of high expectations in writing across the curriculum. A structured handwriting programme enhances the quality of pupils' written outcomes.

3. Aims

3.1 To develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style using continuous cursive letters, which leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing.

3.2 To establish and maintain high expectations for the presentation of written work.

3.3 For pupils to understand, by the end of Year 6, the importance of neat presentation and the need for different letterforms (cursive, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly.

4. Our Approach (This might be multiple sections. If so, subsequent numbering will need to change)

4.1 Teaching Progression Across Key Stages

4.1.1 Early Years:

Module 1 Print: Early Years teaches handwriting using the printed method. It starts with fine and gross motor skills warm-up exercises, correct sitting position and tripod pencil grip.

It is divided into three sections covering:

- pre-writing patterns
- easy letters and words
- harder letters and words

At the end of this module, children should be able to recognise and form all the printed, lowercase letters of the alphabet.

4.1.2 Key Stage 1: Years 1 and 2

Teaching progresses from five short, to three longer lessons per week:

- continuing with gross and fine motor skills exercises
- strengthening handwriting, learning and practice
- numerals, capitals and printed letters; where and when to use, learning and practice
- KS1 SATs SPaG exercises

4.1.3 Lower Key Stage 2: Years 3 and 4

Handwriting lessons will continue twice a week in Lower Key Stage 2.

- handwriting practice to support other subjects in the curriculum
- Enabling children to apply the skills they are learning in context and also provide depth to the curriculum.
- producing fluent, consistent and legible cursive handwriting

4.1.4 Upper Key Stage 2: Years 5 and 6

- More advanced handwriting techniques will be taught during two weekly lessons:
- reinforcing cursive handwriting across the curriculum
- form-filling/labelling using printed and capital letters
- dictation exercises promoting quick note-taking and speedy handwriting writing skills
- KS2 SATs SPaG practice

4.2 Handwriting Frequency

- Dedicated handwriting lessons across year groups.
- Reinforcement in cross-curricular activities.
- Regular assessment and feedback.

4.3 Inclusion and Support

- Left-handed pupils receive individual guidance.
- SEN pupils get additional fine motor support.
- Differentiated activities to meet varied needs.

5. Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations

5.1 Staff Responsibilities

- Teachers model correct handwriting consistently in all lessons, such as, modelling on class whiteboard, flipchart, marking of pupils' work and use the appropriate Letter Join font on teaching slides.
- All staff to refer to the "Good practice for Handwriting" document from the National Handwriting Association – Prepare for P checks and S factors for Success (see Appendix 2)
- Teaching assistants support in handwriting interventions and continuity of practice.
- Handwriting leader monitor handwriting standards across the school.
- Provide regular and systematic handwriting lessons.
- Ensure pupils meet expected handwriting standards.

5.2 Pupils' Responsibilities

- Follow correct P checks and S factors from the National Handwriting Association. (see Appendix 2)
- Early Years – Year 3 children to write with a sharp pencil.
- Year 4 – 6 children to write in a blue Bic biro pen in all subjects except for maths.
- Apply handwriting skills in all written work.
- Children will complete Handwriting practice, in books and on LetterJoin worksheets, and English lessons in books using the guideline style of Oxford.

5.3 Parents' Responsibilities

- Handwriting expectations are shared with parents during school workshops and in-home learning guidance.

6. Monitoring Arrangements

6.1 Assessment and Feedback

- Teachers assess handwriting formatively and summatively.
- Regular marking and feedback provided to pupils.
- Year 1 children will be assessed at the end of Autumn term (Assessment week) based on the statutory requirements in order to identify gaps in their learning and development. Class teacher and Teaching assistant will conduct these assessments in small groups. For children to do not pass, they will take part in afternoon interventions. (see Appendix 3 for criteria of assessment).
- Year 3 children will be assessed during the spring/ summer term to identify gaps in their learning and development. By the end of Year 3, children would be expected to join their handwriting (where it makes sense to do so) and their writing should be fast enough to keep pace with what they want to say. Children will be tested in line of the nine statutory requirements from the National curriculum (see Appendix 4) and will be scored (see Appendix 5). For a child to be secure at handwriting they will need to score 18/27. If a child isn't working at age related in handwriting, intervention sessions will take place with a trained teaching assistant focussing on the child's individual targets.

6.2 Consistency across the School

- Moderation exercises to ensure uniform expectations.
- Staff training on handwriting strategies.

6.3 Reviewing and Updating the Policy

- Annual review of handwriting outcomes.
- Adjustments based on curriculum updates and best practices.

Appendix 1 – Handwriting Styles



Pirton Hill Primary School

Handwriting styles

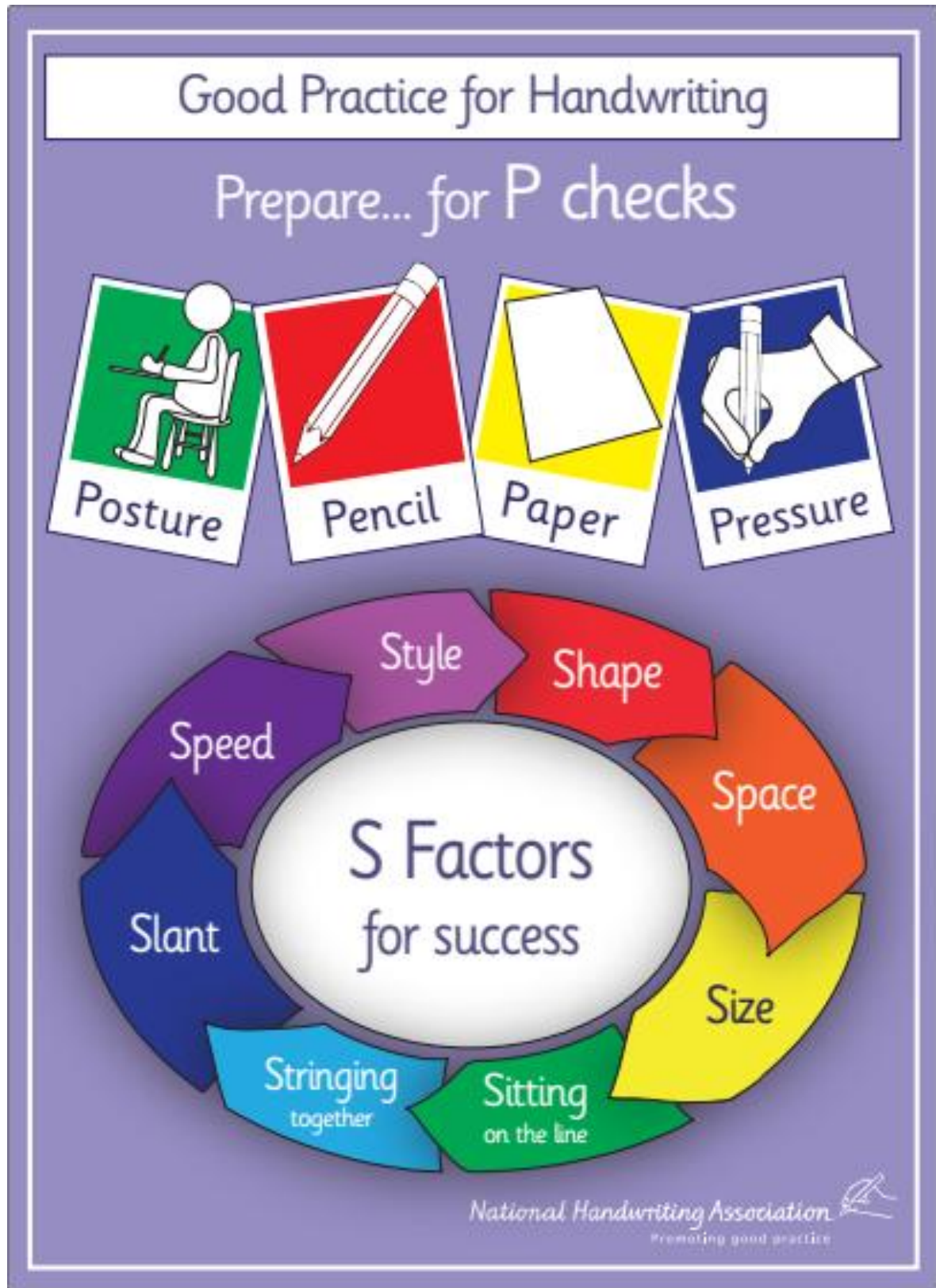
Early years - Printed

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

Year 1 - Year 6 - Cursive

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

Appendix 2 – National Handwriting Association: “Good practice for Handwriting” Summary



Appendix 3 – Year 1 Handwriting Criteria for Assessment Check

Each criteria is worth one mark each. Assessment is out of 14 marks. Please see below grading process.

Foundational Skills

- ☐ Uses correct tripod pencil grip consistently
- ☐ Maintains comfortable and correct sitting posture while writing
- ☐ Positions paper correctly for handedness (right/left)

Letter Formation

- ☐ Can correctly form all letters of the alphabet
- ☐ Forms letters consistently on the baseline
- ☐ Uses correct height for ascenders (b, d, h, k, l, t)
- ☐ Forms letters from each letter family accurately:
 - ☐ Ladder letters (l, i, t, u, j, y)
 - ☐ Caterpillar letters (a, d, c, o, f, e, s, g, q)
 - ☐ Robot letters (b, h, k, m, n, p, r)
 - ☐ Zig-zag letters (v, w, x, z)

Handwriting Conventions

- ☐ Uses appropriate and consistent word spacing (approx. size of a lowercase “o”)
- ☐ Can use capital letters accurately when required.

Fine Motor & Readiness

- ☐ Completes fine motor warm-up exercises effectively before writing

Score Range	Grade	Description & Next Steps
14 / 14	Working at / above handwriting expectations	No intervention needed. Continue to extend and refine style.
10–13 / 14	Working towards handwriting expectations	Monitor progress; provide some targeted support during lessons.
0–9 / 14	Below handwriting expectations – intervention needed	Requires focused handwriting intervention programme

Reasoning:

- To be considered *secure*, children should meet **all the criteria** because handwriting relies on the consistent application of all these foundational skills.
- Pupils scoring **below 70% (fewer than 10)** show multiple gaps that are likely to significantly impact their fluency and legibility, so should enter intervention.

Appendix 4 - Statutory Requirements for Handwriting from the National Curriculum in England

Key Stage 1

Year 1

1. **Sit correctly and hold a pencil** with a comfortable and effective grip.
 2. **Begin to form lowercase letters** in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
 3. **Form capital letters** correctly.
 4. **Form the digits 0–9** correctly.
 5. **Understand which letters belong to which handwriting ‘families’** (i.e. letters formed in similar ways) and practise these.
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Year 2

6. **Form lowercase letters of the correct size** relative to one another.
 7. **Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters**, and understand which letters are best left unjoined.
 8. **Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lowercase letters.**
 9. **Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.**
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Key Stage 2

(Note: No new additional statutory requirements are introduced in KS2 — pupils are expected to continue developing fluency, legibility, and speed building on the KS1 statements above.)

Appendix 5 – Year 3 Handwriting Criteria for Assessment Check

Criteria	Outstanding (3)	Secure (2)	Developing (1)	Needs Support (0)	Comments/Notes
Letter Formation	All letters are consistently well-formed, with no errors.	Most letters are well-formed, with only minor inconsistencies.	Some letters are inconsistently formed, with noticeable errors (e.g., reversals or misplacement).	Many letters are incorrectly formed or illegible.	
Letter Size and Proportion	Letter size is consistent and appropriately proportioned to guidelines (ascenders, descenders clear).	Letter size is mostly consistent; occasional lapses in proportion.	Letter size is inconsistent, and some ascenders/descenders are unclear or improperly scaled.	Letter size is highly inconsistent, and ascenders/descenders are missing or incorrect.	
Spacing Between Letters	Spacing is even and appropriate throughout.	Spacing is mostly even, with occasional uneven gaps.	Spacing is inconsistent, leading to cramped or overly wide spaces.	Spacing is irregular, making text difficult to read.	
Spacing Between Words	Words are clearly separated with consistent spacing.	Most words are appropriately spaced, with minor inconsistencies.	Words often run together or are spaced too far apart.	Words are poorly spaced, severely affecting legibility.	
Use of Joins (if applicable)	Joins are consistently accurate, fluid, and appropriate for the child's development stage.	Joins are mostly accurate, with a few errors in execution.	Joins are inconsistent, with several errors or hesitations.	Joins are missing or incorrectly applied, disrupting the flow of handwriting.	
Alignment with Guidelines	Writing sits perfectly on the lines, with ascenders/descenders properly aligned.	Writing mostly aligns with guidelines; occasional letters float above or below the line.	Writing often floats or drops below the lines, with noticeable alignment issues.	Writing shows little to no alignment with the lines or guidelines.	

Criteria	Outstanding (3)	Secure (2)	Developing (1)	Needs Support (0)	Comments/Notes
Legibility	Writing is fully legible, with clear and distinct letters and words.	Writing is mostly legible, with minor challenges in clarity.	Writing is frequently unclear or difficult to read.	Writing is illegible and requires significant effort to interpret.	
Fluency and Stamina	Writing is fluent and consistent across the task, maintaining quality from start to finish.	Writing is mostly fluent, with slight deterioration in quality towards the end of the task.	Writing is slow or uneven, with clear signs of fatigue impacting quality.	Writing lacks fluency entirely, with frequent interruptions or significant fatigue.	
Punctuation and Presentation	Punctuation and handwriting are well-integrated, enhancing overall presentation.	Punctuation is used appropriately, with minor inconsistencies in presentation.	Punctuation is inconsistent, and handwriting disrupts the presentation.	Punctuation and presentation are poor, significantly impacting the overall quality of the task.	

Scoring and Interpretation

- **Total Points:** Add the scores from each row for a total out of **27 points**.
- **Descriptors:**
 - **23–27:** Outstanding – Exemplary handwriting for the key stage; requires minimal support.
 - **18–22:** Secure – Meets expectations; minor improvements can be made.
 - **10–17:** Developing – Significant areas for improvement; targeted intervention needed.
 - **0–9:** Needs Support – Immediate and intensive intervention required.

Additional Feedback for Pupil

At the bottom of the grid, include a section for qualitative comments:

- **Strengths:** Highlight what the pupil has done well (e.g., "Your letter spacing is excellent!").
- **Areas for Improvement:** Suggest specific, actionable targets (e.g., "Work on making your descenders clearer, especially for letters like 'g' and 'y'.").

This detailed grid allows for precise evaluation, targeted feedback, and structured support, ensuring consistency across assessments.