

Willow Wood Community Primary School

Handwriting Policy

March 2026



Letter-join 

Printed lowercase letters

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

Handwriting Policy

We are very proud of our pupils' handwriting and take particular care with our handwriting style. In line with the Writing Framework 2025, handwriting is taught explicitly and regularly across the school beginning in reception, in addition to writing in phonics lessons. We use Letter-join's whole school handwriting scheme as the basis of our handwriting policy, which enables us to meet National Curriculum requirements through a structured teaching programme.

Objective

Handwriting is a core skill which influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils should have the ability to produce fluent, legible and speedy joined handwriting, and to understand that different styles of handwriting are used for different purposes.

Our intention is to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.

Aims

- Develop neat, legible and speedy handwriting where letters and words are automatically produced in independent writing.
- Establish and maintain high expectations for the presentation of written work.
- Understand, by the end of Year 6, the importance of neat presentation and the need for different handwriting styles (joined, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly.



Expectations

All teaching staff are encouraged to model the style of handwriting chosen for each year group in our school in all their handwriting, whether on whiteboards, displays or in pupils' books.

Consistency throughout the school

Pupils should experience coherence and continuity in the teaching and learning of handwriting across all school years and be encouraged to take pride in their work. We want to help pupils enjoy learning and developing their handwriting, so they feel a sense of achievement and pride.

Handwriting frequency

Handwriting is a cross-curricular task and will be taken into consideration during all lessons. Formal teaching of handwriting will be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure key stage targets are met throughout learning, as emphasised in the 2025 Writing Framework.

Pens and pencils

Pupils will first learn to write with chunky crayons, chalk or soft pencils while developing a proper grip before exploring with large scale drawing and writing to build fine motor skills, then moving to smaller, more precise writing tools.

When their fine motor skills are established, pupils may progress to using a handwriting pen.

Inclusion

For children who experience handwriting difficulties due to fine motor development, including those who are left-handed and/or with special educational needs, appropriate additional support will be put in place. Letter-join's Lesson Planners include differentiation activities for extra practice/challenge and their Handwriting Recovery Programme is used as an intervention for our key stage 2 pupils to give structured support if they find handwriting challenging.



Handwriting at home

Pupils are encouraged to practise their handwriting at home using the Letter-join Pupil login.

Teachers may set Home Learning Tasks, but children can also explore Letter-join's handwriting resources, including watching and practising letter and word animations (with parents) and playing online interactive games. Letter-join's online games and activities include:



Early Years and Key Stage 1:

- **Magic Patterns** - supports the development of fine motor skills through tracing patterns, shapes and mazes.
- **Magic Words** - gives children the freedom to practise handwriting by tracing their own choice of letters and words.
- **Write it Right!** - awards stars for practising and improving letter shapes and joins.
- **When I Grow Up** - lets learners select fun characters while learning to write their names.
- **LetterMatch** - helps children learn the sounds and names of letters.
- **LetterLotto** - rewards pupils when they correctly recognise and trace letters.
- **Letter Families** - is a fun activity for learning which letter family each letter of the alphabet belongs to.



Key Stage 2:

- **Write in Time!** - is a fun, timed activity to support the development of fast and fluent handwriting.
- **Remember Write** - helps boost spelling and writing while testing pupils' memory skills.

All Key Stages:

- **Word Bank** - a bank of words created by a teacher to support the learning of spelling and vocabulary for pupils to practise.
- **Word Search** - pupils have fun finding words while learning tricky spellings.
- **Spelling lists** - pupils practise high frequency, common exception and statutory words.

Key Stage Teaching

Early Years

We teach short, daily handwriting lessons, which may include:

- warm-up activities to get ready for handwriting
- air writing, pattern making and physical activities to develop gross motor skills
- correct sitting position and pencil grip for writing
- mark making on paper, whiteboards, sensory trays and tablets, etc. to develop and refine fine motor skills
- the introduction of letter shapes, their sounds, formation and vocabulary.



Early Years Foundation Stage

Prior to and working alongside the development of letter formation, children in the EYFS will have access to both fine and gross motor skill activities, that are both child initiated and adult supported.

Executive Functioning Skills

Executive functioning skills (like attention, working memory, impulse control, and flexible thinking) can be developed in nursery through play. Here are simple, fun games that work well in early years settings and at home.



Executive Functioning Skills						
Attention	Organisation	Working Memory	Flexible Thinking	Self-Correction	Task Initiation	Task Completion
<p>Simon Says</p> <p>Builds listening skills and self-control.</p> <p>Start simple (“touch your nose”), then add actions.</p> <p>Freeze Dance</p> <p>Dance to music → freeze when it stops.</p>	<p>Build It Together</p> <p>Use blocks or Lego to follow simple plans.</p> <p>Tidy-Up Challenge</p> <p>“First the blocks, then the books”</p> <p>Introduces sequencing.</p>	<p>Copy Me</p> <p>Adult does 1–3 actions; child repeats.</p> <p>Increase steps gradually.</p> <p>Kim’s Game</p> <p>Show 3–5 objects, hide one, child guesses.</p> <p>Strengthens</p>	<p>Sorting Games</p> <p>Sort by colour → then by size → then by shape</p> <p>Opposites Game</p> <p>“When I say fast, you move slow”</p> <p>Encourages thinking differently.</p>	<p>Matching Cards</p> <p>Match socks, animals, or shapes.</p> <p>If it doesn’t match, prompt: “Let’s check again”</p> <p>Inset Puzzles</p> <p>Child matches the puzzle piece to the inset.</p>	<p>Ready–Steady–Go</p> <p>Adult says “Ready... Steady...”</p> <p>Child starts the task on “Go!”</p> <p>Works well for drawing, building, tidying.</p> <p>Now and Next Board</p>	<p>Finish the Picture</p> <p>Give a picture missing one or two parts.</p> <p>Child completes it and says: “I’m finished!”</p> <p>Last Piece Puzzle</p> <p>Adult completes most of the puzzle</p>

<p>Helps attention and impulse control.</p> <p>I Spy</p> <p>“I spy something red”</p> <p>Encourages visual scanning and focus</p>		<p>memory.</p> <p>Nursery Rhyme Actions</p> <p>Sing rhymes with actions (e.g., Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes).</p> <p>Remembering sequences builds memory.</p>		<p>Fix the Tower</p> <p>Build a wobbly block tower together.</p> <p>When it falls: “What could we change?”</p> <p>Encourages planning and adjusting.</p> <p>Shape Sorter Switch</p> <p>Put a shape in the wrong hole on purpose.</p>	<p>Show 2 pictures: First blocks → Then bubbles.</p> <p>Child starts the first task knowing what comes next.</p>	<p>Child adds the final piece(s).</p> <p>Obstacle Course Finish Line</p> <p>Clear start and finish.</p> <p>Child completes course to reach the finish marker.</p> <p>Action Sequence</p> <p>Jump → clap → sit</p>
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				Pause and ask: "Does that fit?"		Completion = end of sequence. Build to Match Child builds until it matches a picture.
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Pencil Control –Directionality

This is the ability to change and control the direction of a pencil on a page.

Obstacle Course

Using different pieces of equipment the children can demonstrate a movement or a preposition of their choice. Their job is to then share with others what they are doing.

“I am on top of the bench.”

“I am walking across the rope.”

“I am crawling under the bench.”

Children can then give instructions to each other or describe what they are doing.

Disco

Using lights or ribbons, the children will be given an instructions and will use their lights or ribbons to follow the instruction.

Follow the Leader

One child is the leader and the others follow their instructions such as, “Put your hands up.”

You can incorporate objects such as bean bags and cones.

Adults to ensure the instructions include circular and diagonal movements such as, “move the beanbag across the hoop.”

Junk Modelling

Using a number of materials, children can be given a number of instructions to follow such as, “Place the bottle on top of the cardboard box.”

Mazes

Could be on a piece of paper or made on the ground using sticks or rope.

Children can complete the maze by following instructions.

Children can complete the maze and explain how they have completed it.

Preposition Action Figures

With a selection of figures, toys and plastic cups, the adult will place the figures and cups.

Adult to model, "The pig is beside the boy." The adult can then set up another scenario, "the duck is inside of the cup." Where is the duck?

Following this the children can then create their own scenario and describe what they can created.

Pencil Control – Pressure

Teachers and support staff may find it useful to consider pressure control when they are supporting the development of handwriting skills. In order for writing implements to make marks on the page, a certain amount of pressure needs to be applied. If children struggle with this then it can made it difficult for them to develop writing fluidity.

Pop

Children use their pincer griper of their doing hand to pop as many bubbles of the fidget toy as they can with the time given, using their less dominant hand to hold it.

Encourage them to try popping with more force or less force and ask them what happened.

Bulldog Line

With a number of pegs and a washing line, children to clip as many pegs onto the line in the time given. They can use their pincer grip or tripod grasp.

Try with different clips or pegs.

Bumpy Surfaces

Using different surfaces such as pavement, sandpaper etc. Children to place paper over the top and using crayon, chalk etc. they will make marks to experience the different resistance and pressure needed.

Clicky Pen Orchestra

Children will need a retractable pen.

Holding the 'clicky' pen in their less dominant hand, the adult should use the fingers of their more dominant hand to click to a piece of music or nursery rhyme. The children should copy the adults' movements using each finger. This should give the children time to practice using all of their fingers at different speeds.

Pencil Control – Shape Manipulation

Shape manipulation is the ability to change the way a shape is formed such as making it bigger or smaller.

Body Shapes

Working together children should use their bodies to create different shapes. For example, three children could make a triangle.

Construction

When shown a photograph/picture of a construction made from bricks or cubes, children to recreate the construction by putting individual pieces together.

Dot to Dot Shapes





Using dotted paper, children to draw a large shape such as a square using the dots.
Inside the larger shape, children to use the dots to create a series of smaller shapes.


Jigsaws

Use jigsaws to support children to put different pieces together.

Pencil Grip Development

Children in reception will be provided with a range of mark making and writing opportunities that are both adult supported and child initiated. The children will be encouraged to explore a variety of pencil grips through mark making opportunities using a variety of different media. The children will be supported to achieving an appropriate pencil grip for their level of development, leading to improved and accurate letter formation. Throughout the year, Teachers and support staff will assess the children through observation and they will identify children who may need intervention for fine motor support. Below you will find a progression grid for pencil grip development.

<p>Fisted grasp or Palmar Supinate Grasp</p> <p>Pencil is held in the palm.</p> <p>All fingers and thumb are used.</p> <p>Movement is from the shoulder; the arm and the hand move as a unit. Light scribbles are produced with this pencil grip.</p>	
<p>Digital Pronate Grasp</p> <p>All fingers are holding the pencil but the wrist is turned so that the palm is facing down towards the page.</p> <p>Movement comes mostly from the elbow and the shoulder is now stabilized.</p> <p>Horizontal lines, vertical lines and circular lines are able to be copied.</p>	
<p>Four-Finger Grasp</p> <p>Fingers are held on the pencil shaft opposite the thumb, beginning to form the arc between the thumb and index finger.</p> <p>Movement occurs from the wrist; the hand and fingers move as a whole unit.</p> <p>Zigzag lines, crossed lines and simple humans can be drawn with this grip.</p>	
<p>Static Tripod Grasp or Static Quadropod Grasp</p> <p>A three-finger grasp, where the thumb, index finger and middle finger work as one unit.</p> <p>Movement is usually from the wrist with this static grasp. A static quadropod grip has a fourth finger involved.</p> <p>Triangles, circles and squares can be copied</p>	

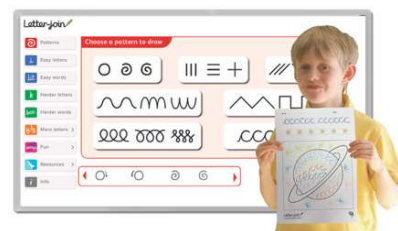
with this grip.	
<p>Dynamic Tripod Grasp</p> <p>Pencil is held in a stable position between the thumb, index and middle finger.</p> <p>The ring and little fingers are bent and rest comfortably on the table. The index finger and thumb form an open space.</p> <p>Movement comes from the fingertips.</p> <p>This is the ideal grip to move the pencil efficiently, accurately and for letter formation practice.</p>	

Module 1 Lesson Planner

***Module 1 Print** teaches handwriting using a printed font style.

This module 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 lowercase letters of the alphabet in a printed style.

Key Stage 1: Years 1 and 2

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

- continuing with gross and fine motor skills activities
- practise to strengthening handwriting learning
- learning where and when to use capitals and printed letters, reinforced by practice
- practising handwriting with spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG).



Module 2 Lesson Planner: Year 1

Module 2 Print to Cursive teaches how to correctly use and write capital letters, printed letters, numbers, punctuation, maths symbols and other symbols. Children are then introduced to pre-writing patterns and cursive letters in preparation for Module 3 when they are required to start joining their handwriting.

This module is divided into three sections covering:

- warm-up activities, letter families and capital letters
- the uses of printed letters
- numbers and symbols
- the introduction of pre-cursive patterns and cursive letters.

On completion of this module, children should be confident in writing all capital and printed letters, numbers and symbols and have some familiarity with the orientation of cursive letters.

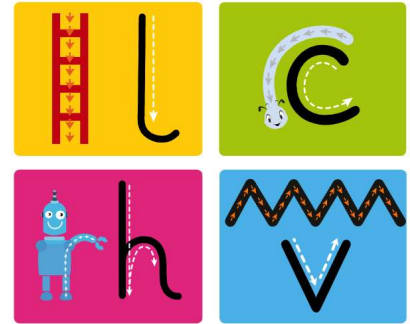
Module 3 Lesson Planner: Year 2

Module 3 Starting Cursive introduces children to cursive letters and how to join them which is reinforced with regular practice in letter formation and joining.

The sections in this module cover:

- cursive letters and words
- revisiting letter families
- high frequency words
- joining techniques
- sequencing sentences
- dictation exercises
- times table facts
- spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) practice.

With regular handwriting practice throughout this module, children should now be developing fluency and speed in their writing.



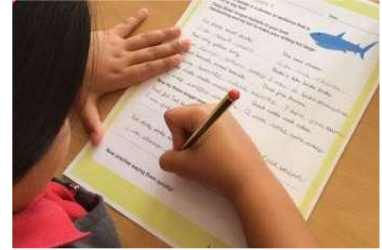
Lower Key Stage 2: Years 3 and 4

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

Module 4 Lesson Planner: Year 3

Module 4 teaches pupils to use a joined style throughout their independent writing in all subjects, helping them to refine their handwriting based on the requirements of each lesson. This module covers topics such as dictation, double letters, number vocabulary, palindromes, tongue twisters, modern foreign languages (French and Spanish), onomatopoeia, simile and statutory spellings.

Through a variety of resources which link handwriting to other areas of the curriculum, on completion of this module, the legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting should be improving.



Module 5 Lesson Planner: Year 4

Module 5 focuses on handwriting practice which supports other subjects in the curriculum and, at the same time, builds on fluency and consistency. This module aims to promote meaningful links with other subjects such as English, maths, science, geography, French and Spanish. Making such links enables children to apply the skills they are learning in context and, also provides depth to the curriculum.

Learners will continue to build on producing fluent, consistent and legible handwriting through the regular practice offered in this module's lessons.

On concluding this module, children will have practised applying size-appropriate handwriting to all areas of the curriculum whilst maintaining fluency and legibility.



Upper Key Stage 2: Years 5 and 6

More advanced handwriting techniques will be taught during two weekly lessons:

- reinforcing joined handwriting across the curriculum
- form-filling/labelling using printed and capital letters
- dictation exercises promoting quick note-taking and speedy handwriting writing skills
- SATs spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) practice.

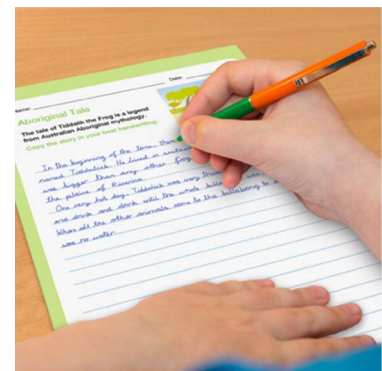


Module 6 Lesson Planner: Year 5

Module 6 continues to build on combining fluent handwriting with other subjects across the curriculum.

In this module, learners will have plenty of opportunity to develop the skills and stamina needed to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation. With Letter-join's wide range of resources they will be able to work towards producing consistently neat and well-presented handwriting in all curriculum subjects.

On completing this module, children should be producing joined writing automatically, enabling them to focus on the content of their work rather than the process of writing.

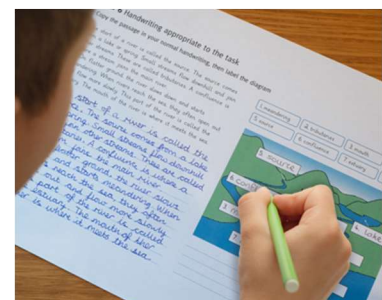


Module 7 Lesson Planner: Year 6

Module 7 presents learners with a range of tasks where they need to decide on an appropriate style of handwriting. Promoting speedy, fluent writing continues to be a strong feature. Challenging dictation exercises help refine pupils' revising and checking skills as well as boosting their handwriting speed, stamina and fluency. A range of curriculum-based worksheets offer opportunities to practise writing at length.

Module 7 also contains a series of worksheets to support SATs SPaG revision. They are designed to support pupils in meeting expected standards for spelling, punctuation and grammar, with lots of SPaG preparation and plenty of handwriting practice.

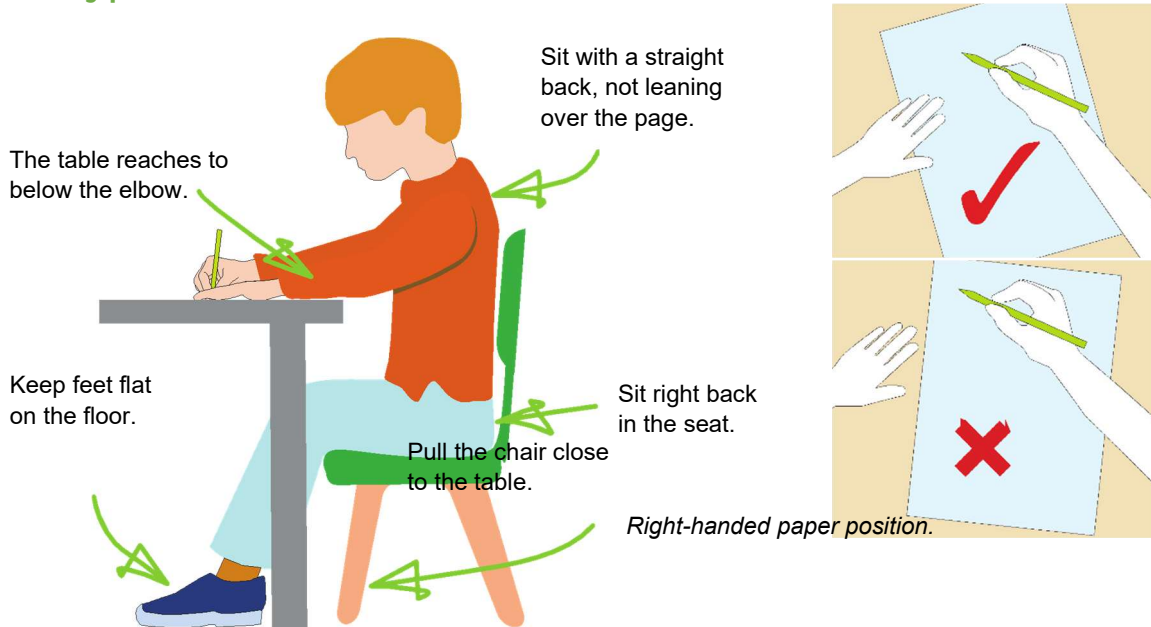
By the end of this module, children should be able to adapt their handwriting for a range of tasks and purposes and to create different effects and styles. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes, a final handwritten version, capital letters or an unjoined style.



Correct posture, pencil grip and paper position for handwriting

Pupils are taught to sit correctly at a table and hold a pencil comfortably and correctly.

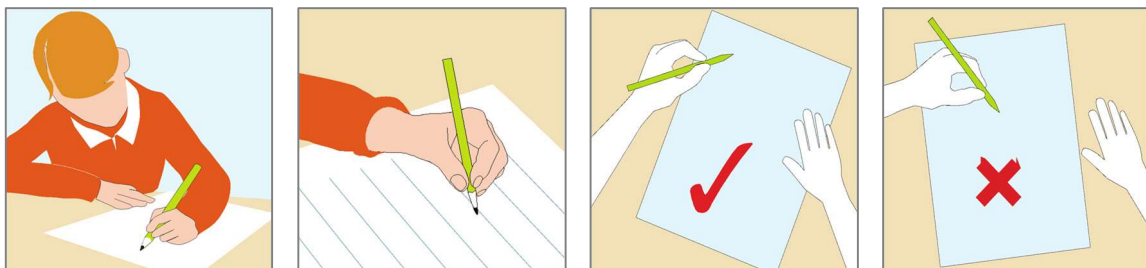
Sitting position



Left-handed writer

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow the movements of right-handed teachers as they model letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers will demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.

- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.



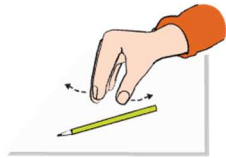
Left-handed paper position.

The Tripod Pencil Grip

Both right and left-handed children should use the tripod grip which enables the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib.

We use the Tripod Grip rhyme:

Right-handed pencil grip



Point away the pencil,



Pinch it near the tip,



Lift it off the table,

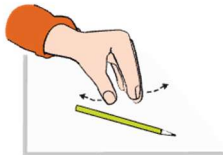


Spin it round...



and grip.

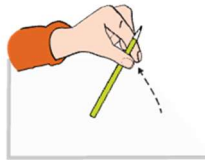
Left-handed pencil grip



Point away the pencil,



Pinch it near the tip,



Lift it off the table,



Spin it round...



and grip.