



Handwriting, Spelling and Pen Policy

Rationale

Handwriting and Spelling are key aspects of the writing curriculum and make a significant contribution to the development of children as writers.

Aims

By adopting a consistent approach to handwriting and spelling we aim for the children to develop confidence and accuracy across the curriculum. In doing so we aim to:

- Develop and teach the children to use a range of effective spelling strategies.
- Encourage creativity and the use of more ambitious vocabulary in their writing.
- Enable children to write independently.
- Encourage children to identify patterns in words and spellings.
- Promote a positive and confident attitude towards spelling and handwriting.
- Help children to use a dictionary and thesauri to spell more ambitious vocabulary.
- Help children recognise that spelling is a lifelong skill.
- Provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in spelling and handwriting.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught through discrete lessons using the programme Letter-Join from EYFS to Year 6. By the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils should have the ability to produce fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy joined-up handwriting, and to understand the different forms of handwriting used for different purposes.

Aims:

- To develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style which leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing.
- To establish and maintain high expectations for the presentation of written work.
- 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.

Expectations

All teaching staff will model the printed or cursive 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 learning and teaching of handwriting across all school years and be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work. Our objective is to help pupils enjoy learning and developing their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride.





Key Stage Teaching

EYFS

Pupils are taught short handwriting lessons on a daily basis which will include the following:

- enhancing gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern-making and physical activities
- exercises to develop fine motor skills such as mark-making on paper, whiteboards, sensory trays, etc.
- becoming familiar with letter shapes, their sounds, formation and vocabulary
- correct sitting position and pencil grip for handwriting

All lessons begin with fine and gross motor skills warm-up exercises, correct sitting position and tripod pencil grip. The 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 the printed, lowercase letters of the alphabet.

Key Stage 1: Years 1 and 2

In Key Stage 1, children are taught how to correctly write printed lower case letters, capital letters, numbers, punctuation, maths symbols and other symbols. In Year 1, the module is divided into three sections covering: warm-ups, letter families and capital letters, uses of printed letters and numbers and symbols. In Year 2, the module is divided into the following sections: letter families, high frequency words, sequencing sentences, dictation exercises and times table facts.

Lower Key Stage 2: Years 3 and 4

In Year 3 the handwriting module covers the following: dictation, double letters, number vocabulary, palindromes, tongue twisters, MFL (Spanish) onomatopoeia, simile and statutory spellings. Completion of this module should ensure improvement in the legibility, consistency and quality of the children's handwriting through a variety of resources which link handwriting to other areas of the curriculum. In Year 4, the handwriting module focuses on using handwriting practice to support other subjects in the curriculum and, at the same time, builds on fluency and consistency. 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

In UKS2, more advanced handwriting techniques will be taught. These modules will include: 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 and KS2 SATs SPaG practice. In Year 5 children will develop the stamina and skills 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 cursive writing automatically, enabling them to focus on the content of their work rather than the process of writing. In Year 6, the handwriting module involves tasks that promote speedy, fluent writing. The challenging dictation exercises will refine pupils' revising and checking skills as well as boosting their handwriting speed, stamina and fluency. 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. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes, a final handwritten version, an un-joined style or capital letters. All of these writing styles are covered in this module.

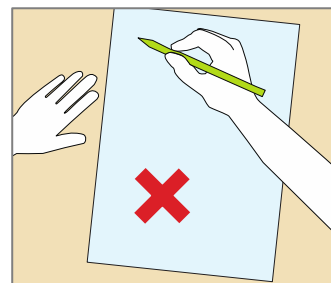
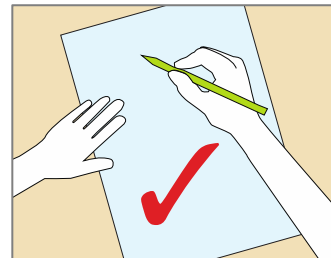
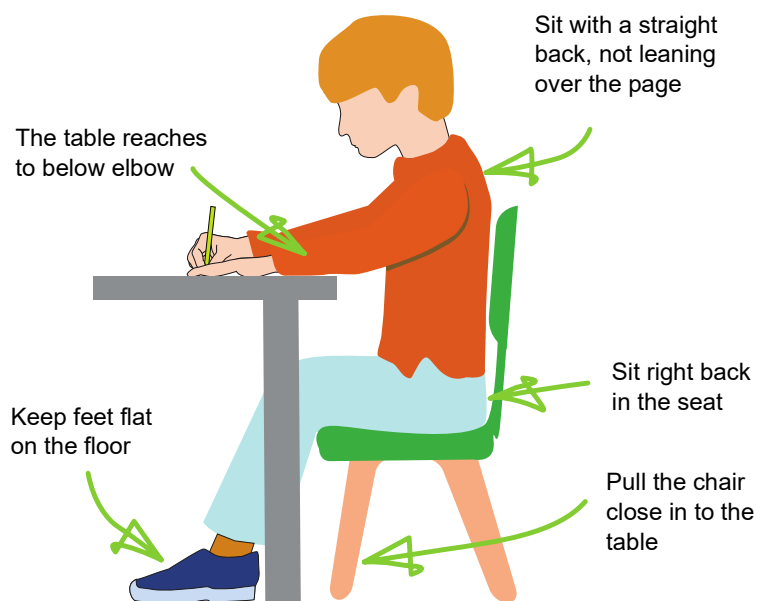
Writing Implements for handwriting

Children in EYFS and years 1-4 will practice their handwriting in pencil. Children in years 5 – 6 will practice their handwriting in pen.

Correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting

Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

Sitting position



Paper position for right-handed children.

Left-handed children

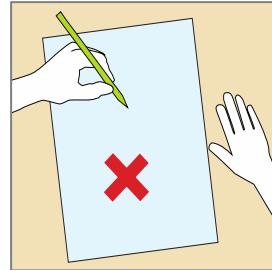
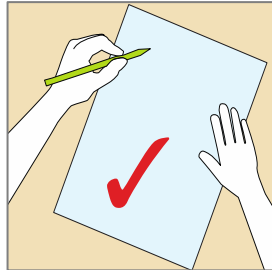
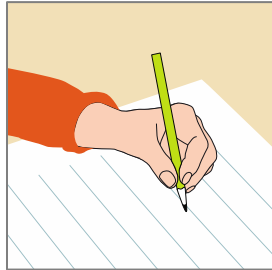
Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow the movements of right-handed teachers as they model letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.

- 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.

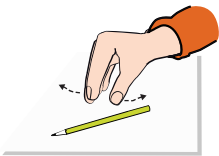


Paper position for left-handed children.

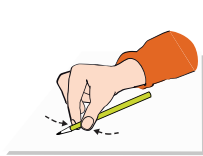
The Tripod Pencil Grip

Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows 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...

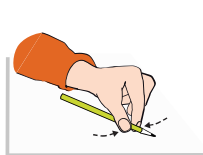


and grip.

Left-handed pencil grip



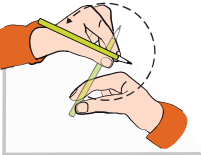
Point away the pencil,



Pinch it near the tip,



Lift it off the table,



Spin it round...



and grip.





Spelling

In EYFS and KS1 spelling is taught through Read Write Inc phonics lessons. In each year group, children will be taught specific spelling rules which they will build on and use throughout the scheme. Children learn sounds and then learn how to use these sounds to spell words. Children use the strategy 'Fred Fingers' to support their spelling.

Children's spelling is developed in KS1 when children learn digraphs and trigraphs (special friends). Children then go on to learn how to choose the appropriate sound spelling for each word. Children use the complex speed sound chart to choose the correct sound.

Spelling is taught from Year 2 to Year 6 through the RWI spelling scheme. Children in Year 2 will progress onto the RWI spelling scheme in Spring 1 after completing The Read Write Inc phonics scheme. The RWI spelling programme is a systematic, cumulative approach for children in Years 2 to 6, focusing on teaching spelling rules and patterns rather than isolated words. It progresses from foundational phonics in early years to dedicated spelling instruction, covering rules, suffixes, prefixes, and exceptions to rules. The program is interactive, featuring videos and activities designed to build confidence and independence in spelling, leading to better application in writing.

The programme's core activities teach:

- alternative spellings of vowels
- alternative spellings of consonants
- homophones
- the impact of adding prefixes and suffixes to root words
- spelling plural nouns
- 'silent' letters
- unusual letter strings
- word families.

The activities taught also include all the spelling requirements of the English National Curriculum.

Each week introduces a new spelling pattern or rule, with children completing various activities based on that rule. In Years 2 -6, Spelling is taught through a range of strategies including fun activities and games to embed the spelling rules for that year group. These strategies include 'Four-in-a-row', 'Team Teach', 'Dictation', 'Dots and Dashes' and 'Word Changers'.

Children in KS2 also have access to the complex speed sound chart to support spelling.

Key Stage Spelling Lists

The 2014 National Curriculum identifies spelling lists that every child in each Key Stage of primary school needs to know by the end of that Key Stage. It is expected that by the end of Key Stage 1 children know the example words for year 1 and 2, as well as including almost all exception words which are used frequently in pupils' writing.

The word lists for Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 are statutory. These lists include a mixture of those words children use in their writing as well as those that are often misspelt. Some of these





words are quite challenging but the 100 words in each list can easily be taught over the four years of Key Stage 2 alongside other words teachers find appropriate, particularly those relating to humanities and sciences.

In Read Write Inc. (RWI) phonics, "Red Words" are phonetically irregular words that children must learn by sight because they cannot be sounded out phonetically. "Orange Words" in the RWI Spelling program are words from the National Curriculum's statutory word lists, which are taught cumulatively and systematically from Years 3 to 6.

Writing Implements

At Abbey Hey, we want our children to present their written work that suits the quality of the words it contains. As part of this we will introduce pens as a writing tool in Key Stage 2. Not only will this allow them to present their work neatly but will prepare them for moving onto high school.

In years 3 and 4, children will use pens to publish their writing.

In year 5, children will be given the choice to use a pen in all subjects except mathematics.

In year 6, pens will be used by all pupils in all subjects except mathematics.

School will provide a range of different types of pens to allow pupils to find the type that suits them, allowing them to present their work in the best possible way.

Reviewed by: M O'Donnell, S Buckley, E Westerman September 2025

Next Review: September 2026

