



Theale Church of England Primary School

Handwriting Policy

“In all the ways we express ourselves nonverbally, none is quite as personal as our own handwriting.” Betty Edwards, Author

The Importance of Handwriting

- The ability to write fluently and legibly gives children a means to communicate their thoughts and ideas efficiently.
- Handwriting helps children to learn and remember spelling patterns.
- Children’s self-esteem and confidence is increased when they are able to produce well-presented work of which they can be proud.

Aims

Our chief aims in teaching handwriting are that children will:

Understand the importance of clear presentation to communicate meaning.

Establish a correct pencil grip.

To form all letters correctly, so that writing is fluent and clear.

Take pride in the presentation of work, developing handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.

Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multisensory approach to handwriting.

Can write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.

Develop a fluent, comfortable, legible, joined handwriting style.

Know when a joined or printed style is most appropriate.

General

Handwriting will be taught a minimum of 3 times a week.

Teachers should follow the Nelson handwriting scheme for the majority of children in class, differentiating as appropriate (see differentiation section).

Display writing throughout the school includes block letters, joined handwriting and computer generated writing of the highest standard, which follows the Nelson handwriting scheme.

When marking or writing comments, members of staff use joined handwriting or printed, according to the age group, mimicking that taught in the Nelson handwriting scheme.

In Early Years, children are given experience of a variety of writing tools.

Handwriting pens are used from Year 4 when the teacher feel it is appropriate.

Teachers will model and use the correct handwriting both in children's books and when doing any modelled handwriting.

Weekly joins will be in handwriting books so that children can trace them before writing them independently.

Foundation Stage Two
To use a comfortable and efficient pencil grip. To write from left to right. To discriminate between letters. To produce a controlled line which supports letter formation. To write letters a – z, ch, sh and th. To write letters using the correct sequence of movements.
Year One
To develop a comfortable and efficient pencil grip. Sit correctly at a table. To form lower case letters correctly in line with Nelson (supplemented by RWI) and in a script that will be easy to join later. Begin to write into handwriting books. To practise handwriting in conjunction with spelling, RWI and independent writing, ensuring correct letter orientation, formation and proportion, in a style that makes the letters easy to join later. Form digits 0-9. Form capital letters. Practise writing on lines with descenders and ascenders correctly placed. To understand that letters belong to handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways). Leave spaces between words.
Year 2
To practise handwriting patterns from Year 1. To form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to each other. To begin using and practising the four basic handwriting joins starting with: joins to letters without ascenders-joining from bottom, e.g. ai, ar, To write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another. To continue practising the handwriting joins: joining letters without ascenders, joining from the top, e.g. ou, vi, To start to understand which letters are best left un-joined. Use spaces between words that reflect the size of letters. To practise the handwriting joins continuing with: Letters with ascenders-from the bottom, e.g. ab, ul, it Letters with ascenders-from the top, e.g. ol, wh, ot.

Year 3
<p>To practise correct formation of basic joins from Year 2:</p> <p>Joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ai, ar, un</p> <p>Joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ou, vi, wi</p> <p>Joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ab, ul, it</p> <p>Joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ol, wh, ot.</p> <p>To ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and the spacing between letters and words.</p> <p>To write on 8mm lines with half lines to aid size of letters if needed.</p> <p>To build up handwriting speed, fluency and legibility through practice.</p> <p>To practise correct formation of basic joins from the use of the four basic handwriting joins from Year 2, and use these for independent writing.</p>
Year 4
<p>To use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required.</p> <p>To know when to use:</p> <p>A clear neat hand for finished, presented work</p> <p>Informal writing for everyday informal work and rough drafting, etc.</p> <p>To ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and spacing between letters and words.</p>
Year 5 and Year 6
<p>To use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required.</p> <p>To build up speed and ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and spacing between letters and words.</p> <p>To use a range of presentational skills:</p> <p>Print scripts for captions, sub-headings and labels.</p> <p>Capital letters for posters, title pages and headings.</p> <p>A range of computer-generated fonts and point sizes</p>

Differentiation

All children, within the same year group, should be working on the identified handwriting for that week. However, some children will require extending if they can already join the letters fluently, using the correct size and orientation. The Nelson Handwriting Teachers Books provide extensions for every lesson. These extensions will be a useful place to start, however your children may require more/different challenge to those listed. In special cases, there may be some children who need more practise at forming particular letters or joins. These children should be given the opportunity to have extra practise.

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils will be able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils may need more support and provision should be made for this. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with the SENCo to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc.

Ready Reference Guide

The letter forms

The lower-case alphabet for Starter Level:

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

The lower-case alphabet for Books 1 to 6:

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

A letter slant of 8° from the vertical to the right is introduced in Pupil Book 3:

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

The lower-case print alphabet:

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

The capital letters and numerals:

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

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

These are the same throughout the scheme.

The letter groups

Letter families

In year one, *Nelson Handwriting* groups the letters into sets based on handwriting families. These are letters that are formed in similar ways.

Set 1

c a o d g q s f e

Set 2

i l t u j y

Set 3

r n m h k b p

Set 4

v w x z

Joining groups

The joining groups divide the letters according to how they will join to other letters.

Group 1

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

Thirteen letters with exit flicks plus s.

Group 2

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

Nineteen letters which start at the top of the x-height.

Group 3

b f h k l t

Six letters which start at the top of the ascender.

Group 4

f o r v w

Five letters which finish at the top of the x-height.

The break letters

b g j p q x y z

Eight letters after which no join is made. Joins are not made to or from the letter z.

The joins

	Group	→	Group	
The first join	1	→	2	in am
The second join	1	→	3	ab ch
The third join	4	→	2	oa wo
The fourth join	4	→	3	wh ob
The break letters				bigger

The joined style

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Technique for teaching letter formation

- Provide demonstrations when introducing and teaching letter shapes. The *Nelson Handwriting* online teaching software is useful for this; you can also use whiteboards or flipcharts.
- Observe individuals as much as possible while they practise. This enables the teacher to recognise and correct bad habits as they arise.
- Talk the children through the process using appropriate language.
- Encourage children to verbalise what they are doing from time to time. This gives a window into the thought processes they are using as they write.
- Writing involves visual and motor skills. Use the following ideas to reinforce the teaching of letter shapes:
 - Encourage children to form letters by drawing them in the air.
 - Finger trace over tactile letters, on desk or table tops.
 - Write over dotted or 'shadow' writing.
 - Draw round templates.
 - Write in sand with a finger or stick.
 - Write with chalk on a chalkboard.
 - Write letters boldly with a wax candle and then apply a colour wash.
 - Form letters with pegs on a pegboard or with beads in Plasticine.
 - Finger trace the outline of a letter on the back of the person in front of you.
 - Form letters with fingers and/or bodies, individually and in groups.
- Draw attention to the connection between letters and the related writing patterns. Encouraging children to use the basic handwriting patterns both for practice and for decorative purposes is a valuable technique for fostering fluency and rhythmic movement.

Correct Letter Formation

Letter/number	Audio
0	Start at the top and go round.
1	Start at the top and go down.
2	Start at the top, curve round and down, and across.
3	Start at the top. Go round, and round.
4	Start at the top. Go down, across, lift your pencil and go down.
5	Start at the top. Go down, and round. Lift your pencil up to the top, and across.
6	Start at the top right. Curve down, up, and in till you touch.
7	Start at the top, across, and diagonally down.
8	Start at the top, go round, and curve back the other way, and up, cross, and up till you touch.
9	Start near the top. Go round, up and down.
a	Start at the top. Go all the way round, up to the top, down and flick.
A	Down, lift, down, lift and across.
b	Start at the top. Go straight down, back up, and all the way round.
B	Down, lift, and round till you stop, and round till you stop.
c	Start at the top, and go round.
C	Round.
d	Start at the middle. Go all the way round, all the way up to the top, straight down, and flick.
D	Down, lift, and round.
e	Start near the bottom. Go up, around, and down.
E	Down, and across, lift, across at the top, lift, across in the middle.
f (print)	Start at the top. Go round, and straight down. Lift your pencil, and cross the 'f' in the middle.
F	Down, lift, across at the top, lift, across in the middle.
f (cursive)	Start at the top. Go round, straight down, and round. Lift your pencil, and cross the 'f' in the middle.
g	Start at the top. Go all the way round, up to the top, straight down, and round.
G	Round, up, and down.
h	Start at the top. Go straight down, up and over, down, and flick.
H	Down, lift, down, lift and across in the middle.
i	Start at the top. Go straight down, and flick. Lift your pencil and put a dot at the top.
I	Down.
j	Start at the top. Go straight down, and round. Lift your pencil and put a dot at the top.
J	Down, and round.
k (print)	Start at the top, and go straight down. Lift your pencil and place it next to the middle. Go into the middle, out from the middle, and flick.
K	Down, lift, out from the middle up, lift, out from the middle down.
k (cursive)	Start at the top. Go straight down, back up, over and round, down and flick.
l	Start at the top. Go straight down, and flick.
L	Down, and across.
m	Start at the top. Go down, up and over, down, up and over, down, and flick.
M	Down, lift, down and across, up and across, and down.

n	Start at the top. Go down, up and over, down and flick.
N	Down, lift, down and across, and up.
o	Start at the top, and go all the way round.
O	Round.
p	Start at the top. Go straight down, up to the top, and all the way round.
P	Down, lift, and round till you stop.
q	Start at the top. Go all the way round, up to the top, straight down, and flick.
Q	All the way round, lift, and down.
r	Start at the top. Go straight down, back up and over, and flick.
R	Down, lift, and round till you stop, out from the middle, and down.
s	Start at the top. Go round, down, and back round.
S	Round, and back round.
t	Start at the top. Go straight down, and round. Lift your pencil, and cross the 't'.
T	Down, lift, and across.
u	Start at the top. Go down, round, back up to the top, down, and flick.
U	Down, round, and up.
v	Start at the top. Go down, and back up to the top.
V	Down, and up.
w	Start at the top. Go down, back up to the top, down, and back up to the top.
W	Down, up, down, and up.
x	Start at the top. Go down to the bottom. Lift your pencil to the top, and down across the other way.
X	Down and across, lift, down and across.
y	Start at the top. Go down and round, back up to the top, then straight down, and round.
Y	Down and across, lift, and all the way down and across.
z	Start at the top. Go straight across, diagonally to the bottom, and across.
Z	Straight across, down and across, and straight across.

For FS2/Y1, letter formation is also taught using the RWI rhymes during phonics. These are largely similar to the Nelson, but supplemented with pictures to help retention. F and K are divergent, and while FS2/Y1 teachers can still use the RWI rhymes, these letters must also be formed according to Nelson.