



Southwark Diocesan
Board of Education
Multi-Academy Trust
Developing Church of England Education

HANDWRITING POLICY

The Minster Nursery and Infant School

Approved By: Head Teacher :

Last reviewed on: 05.09.2023

Next review due by: end of September 2026

Handwriting policy

At The Minster Nursery and Infant School, we aim for all children to be confident and comfortable when handwriting so that they can achieve their best when using writing to communicate their ideas. We recognise that handwriting is a complex process requiring the development of many different skills and we give children the support they need to match their rate of development in handwriting.

Aims

- To develop the correct posture and pencil grip for writing
- To form all letters correctly
- To use appropriate spacing
- To enable as many children as possible to achieve a neat and legible style of joined handwriting by the end of KS1
- To enable as many children as possible to develop a fluent handwriting style

Teaching Structure

At The Minster Nursery and Infant School, we follow the expectations set out in the EYFS and KS1 National Curriculum.

In Nursery, developing children's gross and fine motor skills is priority. To support this, children are given lots of opportunity for outdoor play and access to wide range of gross and fine motor activities. We also provide as many opportunities as possible for the development of early mark making using different tools such as paint brushes and chalk.

In Reception, the development of mark making, and gross and fine motor skills remains a priority, alongside the teaching of letter formation. Children are introduced to the letter families at the beginning of the year so that as they learn letter formation as part of the RWI phonics lessons, teachers can remind them which family each letter belongs to. Additional time is allocated each day for discrete handwriting practise. In autumn 1, children practise drawing patterns, then shapes, then letters. From the start of the spring term, there is a whole class focus on 1 letter a week, teaching through the letter formation families. Children practise writing the letter at the beginning of each day. Learning support assistants work with focus groups to support children who need extra practise.

In KS1, children are taught handwriting in discrete sessions, focusing on the correct formation within each letter family. When they are ready, children are introduced to making diagonal and horizontal joins in their writing. Depending on the class and individual needs, additional practise can take place during early morning work or in targeted groups. In Year 1, teachers will model the formation of 'k' with a loop to support children's recognition of this letter in their reading. Children will be allowed to use either formation of the letter 'k'. Children will practise on standard lines rather than guidelines as we have found this to be more effective in developing accurate sizing of handwriting.

We use the 'P' checks and 'S' factors to support the development of good practise in children's handwriting. An overview is outlined below, however detailed guidance can be found in the National Handwriting Association document 'Good Practise for Handwriting: 'P' Checks and 'S' Factors.

'P' Checks

Posture - children sit with the correct posture, at a fist sized distance away from the table.

Pencil - teachers model the dynamic pencil grip for both left and right handers encouraging a 2cm gap between the fingertip and pencil point (slightly greater for left handers). From reception, children are taught the 'nip, flip, grip' strategy to aid the development of the correct grip.

Paper - children are taught to tilt and offset the paper according to their writing hand, and to move the paper up or down as they write.

Pressure - teachers discuss the need for correct pressure during handwriting lessons. Gross and fine motor warm ups can be used to develop body awareness and resources such as different types of pencil or pen can be used to aid the development of appropriate pressure.

'S' Factors

Shape - Children are taught letter formation using a simple modern style. Letter formation should focus on the starting point and movement pattern, using a range of activities using their fingers and air writing before using pencil and paper. Letter formation families should always be referred to when teaching, in addition to RWI strategy. Letters ending on the base line, such as 'd', should have an exit flick. Numbers are included within the letter formation families, whilst capital letters can be taught in different families with similar formation.

Space - Children are taught about appropriate spacing - the size of one or two letter 'o's. Lolly sticks/coffee stirrers can be used to aid spacing as these are more accurate than using their fingers.

Sitting - Children are taught how to position letters on the base line, referring to letters with tails which descend below the line.

Size - Children are taught about the relative size of letters in relation to each other. These are small letters, such as 'o', tall letters which ascend, such as 'h' and letters with tails which descend, such as 'y'.

Stringing - When children are ready, they are taught diagonal and horizontal joins. They are also taught that some letters are better left unjoined.

Additional provision

For children with SEND and/or handwriting difficulties, a range of strategies and resources can be used, such as different types of pen, pencil, pencil grip, different sized lines, wobble cushions and wedges. If a child is using a pencil grip that is uncomfortable or affecting the speed or fluency of their writing, an alternative pencil grip can be introduced. Teachers should be mindful that it will take time to learn the new motor plan if this grip is introduced and that the root cause of any problems should be addressed e.g., children with a poor pencil grip will need to have extra fine motor practise, not just use a pencil grip. As well as in school support, parents and carers are given strategies to support their child at home.

Appendix

Posture and pencil grip



1 2 3 4

Are my feet flat on the floor?

5 6 7 8

My chair is in, my back is straight.

9 10 11 12

This is how my pencil is held.

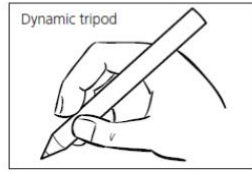
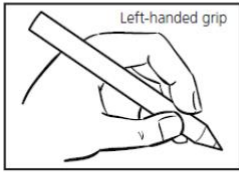
13 14 15 16

Now I'm ready for my very best writing!

Alternative pencil grip



'P' Checks Some Efficient Dynamic Pencil Grips



writing As
Promoting



National Curriculum

EYFS Personal Development ELG:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing- using the tripod grip in almost all cases

EYFS Writing ELG:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed

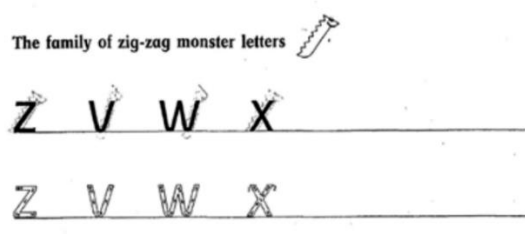
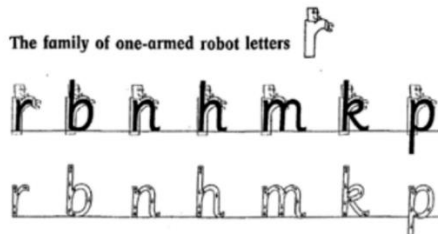
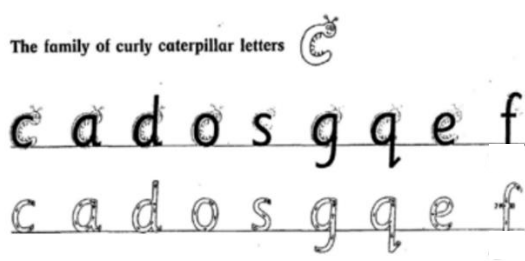
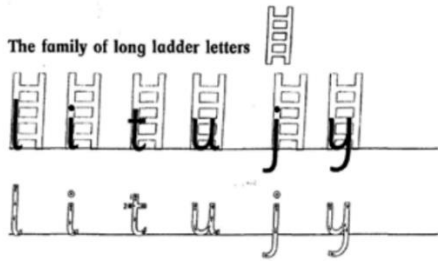
KS1 (year 1) Pupils should be taught to:

- 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' and to practise these

KS1 (year 2) 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

Letter families



Capital letter families

E F H I L T

C G O Q S

B D P R U

A V W X Y

K M N Z

Handwriting joins

These are examples of handwriting joins that will be taught in Year 2, following a principle of the exit from a letter determines how to join to the next one. For example, exiting from an 'a' is low so the join needs to go high to the next letter whereas exiting from a 'w' is high so the join will stay high and go straight over to the next letter. Therefore children will be taught: 'If you exit low, go high, if you exit high, stay high'. Break letters will be taught and alternative formation of 'j' and 'f' that enables joining will also be taught.

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, sk, st, sb, sl
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

sk, st, sb, sl