

Handwriting

At St Michael's Primary School, handwriting is closely linked to the Read Write Inc. phonics scheme. Handwriting is taught progressively and in-line with the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Aims

We aim for our children to:

- Understand the importance of neat presentation in order to communicate their ideas clearly.
- Take pride in the presentation of their work and gain a sense of achievement.
- Present work in a neat and orderly fashion appropriate to the task.
- Use the correct letter formation.
- Develop fluency and speed whilst writing, so that they are able to write in a neat cursive style by the end of KS2.

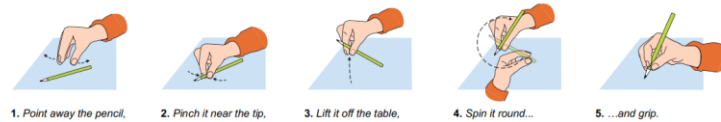
Knowledge, skills and understanding In the early stages children are taught:

- How to hold a pen/pencil correctly and form letters and numbers of regular size and shape.
- Write from left to right and top to bottom of a page.
- Start and finish upper and lower case letters correctly.
- Put regular spaces between letters and words.
- The importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.

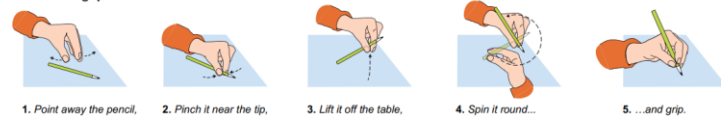
Tripod Pencil Grip

How to hold a pencil correctly for handwriting.

Right handed grip



Left handed grip



In the later stages children are taught to:

- Write legibly in a joined style with increased fluency and speed.
- Use different forms of handwriting for different purposes, e.g. understand that making quick written notes in English or jottings in maths does not require the same level of neatness as other writing or maths work.

Teachers use a variety of strategies for the teaching of handwriting including:

- Direction
- Demonstration
- Modelling
- Scaffolding
- Explanation

Basic structure of a handwriting session

- Posture check and book positioning
- Warm-up consisting of finger, hand and pencil activities
- Teacher modelling on the visualiser / board / flip chart
- Children practising with teacher model, then from memory

We teach letter and number formation as detailed below using the teaching sequence described.

In EYFS and KS1, children use a pencil in their handwriting lessons. In KS2, they will begin using a pen and will work towards a pen license, which will be at the discretion of the teacher. At this point, the

children will begin to use black handwriting pens. If the standard of handwriting slips, then the children will return to using pencil until they re-earn their pen license. The use of worksheets is discouraged for the majority of children who should be able to form their handwriting by observing and copying teacher modelling.

Finger and Hand Exercises

Here are some fun warm up exercises to wake up your fingers and hand muscles before you start to write.

Action	Description
Finger Stretches	Put the tips of your fingers together and straighten your fingers by pushing your fingertips against each other. Repeat 5 times.
Play the Piano	Touch the table with one finger at a time from each hand like you are playing the piano. Start slowly and get faster.
Fishing Hooks	Put your elbows on the table, keep your hands apart, squeeze your fingers together and point them to the sky. Keep your knuckles straight and make a hook with your fingers. Hold, then straighten five times.
Fireworks	Make a fist with both hands and hold them tight. Then let your fingers go like exploding fireworks! Repeat five times.
Take a Bow	Put your elbows on the table, keep your hands apart, squeeze your fingers together and point them to the sky. Bend your knuckles but keep your fingers straight so your fingers bow to each other. Repeat 5 times.

Pencil Activities

Practise holding your pencil correctly by using our tripod grip rhyme (see page 8).

*Point away the pencil,
Pinch it near the tip,
Lift it off the table,
Spin it round and grip.*

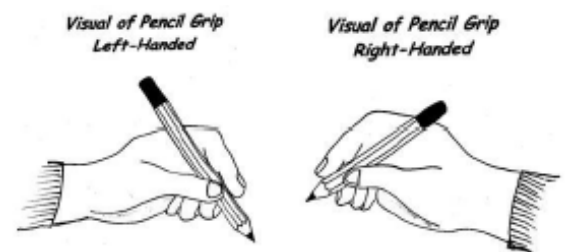


Action	Description
Quack, Quack Fingers	Start your warm up by making a beak with your thumb and first finger on both hands. Make them quack twice, then do the same with your other fingers.
Roly-poly Pencil	Lay your pencil flat across your fingers. Use your thumb to roll it backwards and forwards. Now try it with your other hand.
Crawling Caterpillar	Hold your pencil ready to write. Move the pencil through your three fingers to the top like a crawling caterpillar. When you get to the top, make your caterpillar crawl back down again!
Helicopter Twirls	Hold your pencil in the middle with your three correct fingers. Make a twirling helicopter by moving your fingers one at a time from one side of the pencil to the other.
<i>Now you are ready for handwriting!</i>	

Expectations of staff

All adults in the classroom are expected to:

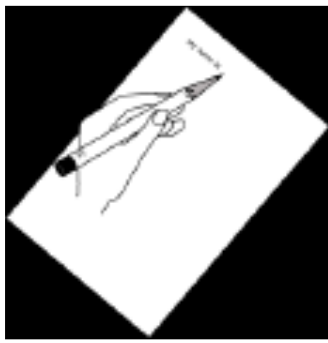
- Model the school handwriting style in their own handwriting.
- Teach the correct grip



- Ensure correct formation of letters and numbers.
- Ensure correct posture with children sitting comfortably and upright, with feet flat on the floor.
- Ensure good lighting.
- Ensure each child has a suitable writing implement before they begin, pencils are adequately sharpened and pens are appropriate and suitable for fluent writing.
- Where possible link handwriting to spelling patterns.

Consideration for left handers

- Seating: sit to the left of another child, at the edge of a table.
- Grip: hold the pencil/pen at least 2cm from the point so the children can see what they are writing.
- Position of paper: to left of the body at an angle, with right hand corner nearer to the body than the left.



Inclusion

The vast majority of children will be able to write fluently and legibly. However, some children may need additional support to develop a fluent, legible style of handwriting. Provision will be made through additional sessions that are focused on the child's identified specific difficulty with handwriting. Teachers who are concerned about a child's progress in handwriting should seek advice from the Sendco.

Presentation

It is important to ensure consistency towards presentation of work across the school so that the children are clear about what is expected of them as they move through the school. The Sendco can provide pencil grips and coloured workbooks or paper to aid presentation for identified children. All staff should use the following guidelines to ensure consistency, taking into account the age and ability of the children.

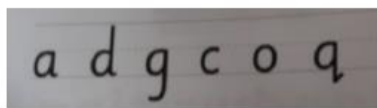
Writing at EYFS and KS1

- Children will write in pencil and edit in purple pen.
- All work will have a date and a learning objective. The date will be written on the left hand side of the page and the title will be written on the line beneath it. Children will be encouraged to write these themselves, though it may be necessary for an adult to do this or for printed stickers to be used

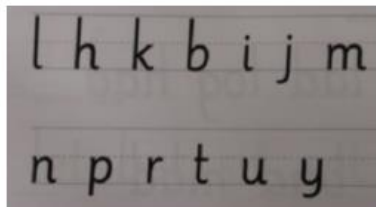
Letter formation

We teach the Read Write Inc letter formation. There are four types of letters: 'around', 'down', 'curly' and 'zigzag'.

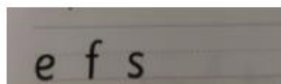
'Around' letters:



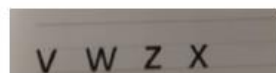
'Down' letters:



'Curly' letters:



'Zigzag' letters:



Upper case letters are formed as follows:

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

'Around' letters



Checklist: caterpillar

- start at the caterpillar's head
- curl around the body



Checklist: apple

- start at the stalk
- draw a nice round apple
- go back up to the stalk, then down
- curl the leaf at the bottom



Checklist: orange

- start at the stalk
- draw a nice round orange



Checklist: dinosaur

- draw a big round bottom
- up the tall neck
- down the straight line to the feet
- draw a curl for the feet



Checklist: girl

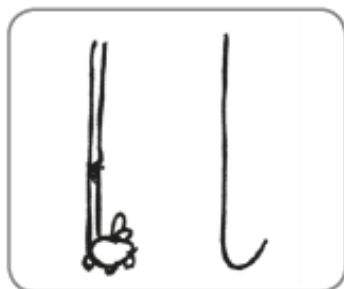
- start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- draw a nice round face
- go back up to her bobble
- down her very straight hair
- draw a round curl to finish



Checklist: queen

- start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- draw a nice round face
- go back up to her bobble
- down her very straight hair
- add a sharp flick to finish

'Down' letters



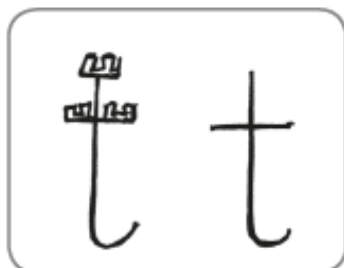
Checklist: Liam's leg

- start at the top of his leg
- go down his long leg
- add a curl for the shoe to kick the ball



Checklist: Polly Pirate

- start at the top of her plait
- draw down her long straight plait
- go round over her face
- finish under her chin



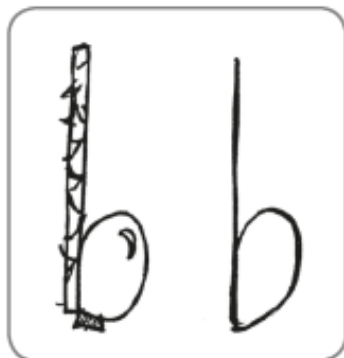
Checklist: tower

- start at the top of the tower
- draw a straight line down the tower
- add a curl at the bottom – then lift the pencil off the page
- draw a straight line across the tower



Checklist: kangaroo

- start at the kangaroo's head
- draw down the long straight body – then lift the pencil off the page
- draw a straight tail to the body – two-thirds of the way down
- draw a straight back leg from the body



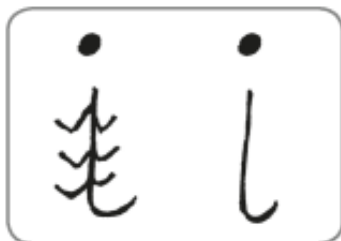
Checklist: boot

- start at the top of the boot
- draw a straight line down the boot
- go round over the toe ✓ go back to the heel



Checklist: horse

- start at the horse's head
- draw down her long straight neck
- continue down to her feet
- go round her back
- draw a straight back leg
- add a little curl of dust as the horse runs away



Checklist: insect

- start at the top of the insect's neck
- draw down the short straight body
- draw a curl for a small round tail ✓ add a little dot for the head



Checklist: jack-in-a-box

- start at the top of the jack-in-a-box's neck
- draw down the long straight body
- draw a smooth curl for the legs
- add a dot for the head



Checklist: Maisie and the mountains

- start at Maisie's head
- draw a straight body for Maisie
- go over the mountains – from Maisie's waist
- check the mountains are the same height as Maisie
- add a small curl for the grass



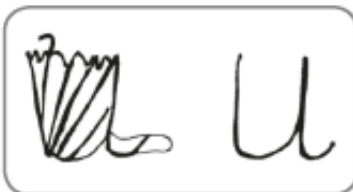
Checklist: Nobby and his net

- start at Nobby's head
- go straight down Nobby
- go over the net – from Nobby's waist
- check the net is the same height as Nobby
- add a small curl for the grass



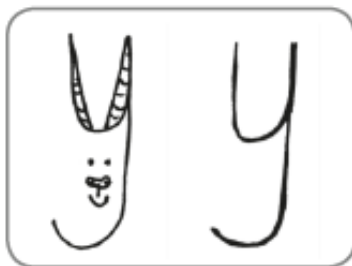
Checklist: robot

- start at the robot's head
- go straight down its body
- go over the robot's arm – from its waist



Checklist: umbrella

- start at the top of the handle
- draw down the straight line for the handle
- go round underneath the umbrella and back up the other side
- go down the umbrella
- add a little curl for the puddle



Checklist: yak

- start at the top of the first horn
- draw down the straight line for the first horn
- go round underneath the horns
- draw a straight line up for the second horn
- go down and curl under its head

'Curly' letters



Checklist: egg

- draw up around the shell that needs to be cut off the boiled egg
- go round underneath the egg



Checklist: flower

- start at the top of the flower
- draw around and down the flower stem – then lift the pencil off the page
- draw a straight line across the leaves



Checklist: snake

- start at the snake's head
- curl one way
- curl the other

Zigzag' letters



Checklist: vulture

- draw two straight lines for the wings – down, up



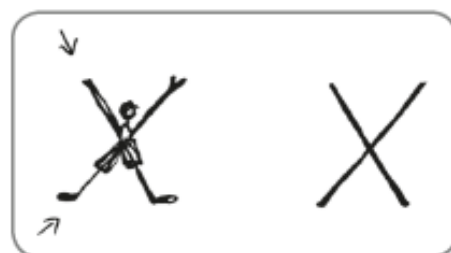
Checklist: worm

- draw four straight lines, all the same length – down, up, down, up



Checklist: zigzag

- draw three straight lines – across, diagonally back, across



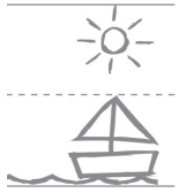
Checklist: exercise

- start at the top left
- draw one straight line diagonally down – lift the pencil off the page
- start at the bottom left
- go diagonally up

Placement of letters

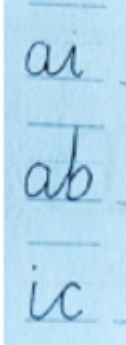
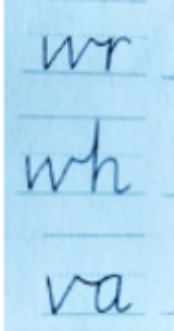
Once children can form the letters correctly, they learn how to place the letters on the line. Picture mnemonics help children to visualise the size and placement.

- Some small letters are called 'boat letters': **a c e i m n o r s u v w x z**.
- Letters that are written below the line are called 'water letters': **g j p q y**.
- Tall letters are called 'sun letters': **b d h k l t f**.

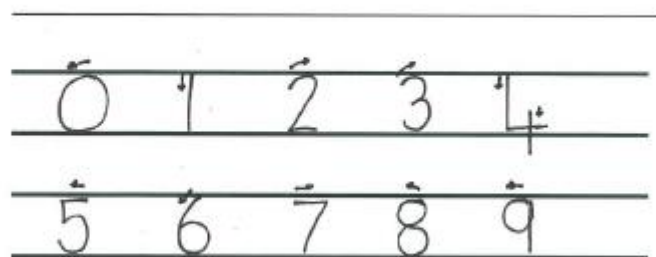


Joining Letter

We teach the RWI letter joints There are two basic joins:

The arm join (diagonal)	The washing line join (horizontal)
	

Number formation



Reception

We aim for the children to:

- use a comfortable and efficient pencil grip
- write their first name correctly, beginning with a capital letter
- form lower case letters using the correct sequence of movements, aided by the Read Write Inc. formation speak
- form capital letters in the correct direction
- form digits 0-9

Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage the children will be provided with a range of activities to develop their fine and gross motor skills needed for handwriting.

Children in reception will have the opportunity to practise letter formation in a range of contexts. They are taught how to form letters in line with the phonics programme. They are not taught to join at this stage. When teaching children digraphs, emphasis should not be placed on joining letters but this can be modelled and discussed with the children.

Strategies

Children progress best when provided with a variety of different strategies to practise their handwriting, e.g.

- tracing
- copying under the teacher's writing
- sky writing
- writing in the sand
- talking through the letter formation as it is being modelled
- practice on individual white boards

Autumn 1	Spring 1	Summer 1
The children will be taught: • the 26 letters	The children will revisit: • c a o d g q (around letters) • e f s (curly letters) • v w x z (zigzag letters) • 0 6 8 9 • 5 • capital letters for the letters stated above (Note: letters and numbers with similar movements are grouped together. The similarities should be discussed with the children.)	The children will revisit: • c a o d g q (around letters) • e f s (curly letters) • v w x z (zigzag letters) • 0 6 8 9 • 5 • capital letters for the letters stated above (Note: letters and numbers with similar movements are grouped together. The similarities should be discussed with the children.)
Autumn 2	Spring 2	Summer 2
The children will be taught: • the 26 letters • numbers 0 – 9 (Note: letters and numbers with similar movements are grouped together. The similarities should be discussed with the children.)	The children will revisit: • l t b p k h l j m n r u k (down letters) • 2 3 • 1 4 7 • capital letters for the letters stated above (Note: letters and numbers with similar movements are grouped together. The similarities should be discussed with the children.)	The children will revisit: • l t b p k h l j m n r u k (down letters) • 2 3 • 1 4 7 • capital letters for the letters stated above (Note: letters and numbers with similar movements are grouped together. The similarities should be discussed with the children.)

Year 1

We aim for the children 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 correctly
- form digits 0 to 9 correctly
- understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

In Year 1, the children have a minimum of 2 x 15 minutes discrete handwriting lessons per week

Autumn 1	Spring 1	Summer 1
The children will revisit: • c o a d g q (around letters) • l t b p k h (down letters) • 0 6 8 9 • 2 3 • 5 • capital letters for the letters stated above Handwriting may also be linked to spelling patterns. (Note: letters and numbers with similar movements are grouped together. The similarities should be discussed with the children.)	The children will revisit: • c o a d g q (around letters) • l t b p k h (down letters) • 0 6 8 9 • capital letters for the letters stated above Handwriting may also be linked to spelling patterns. (Note: letters and numbers with similar movements are grouped together. The similarities should be discussed with the children.)	The children will revisit: • c o a d g q (around letters) • l t b p k h (down letters) • 0 6 8 9 • capital letters for the letters stated above Handwriting may also be linked to spelling patterns. (Note: letters and numbers with similar movements are grouped together. The similarities should be discussed with the children.)
Autumn 2	Spring 2	Summer 2
The children will revisit: • i j m n r u y (down letters) • v w x z (zigzag letters) • e f s (curly letters) • 1 4 7 • capital letters for the letters stated above Handwriting may also be linked to spelling patterns. (Note: letters and numbers with similar movements are grouped together. The similarities should be discussed with the children.)	The children will revisit: • i j m n r u y (down letters) • v w x z (zigzag letters) • e f s (curly letters) • 1 4 7 • 2 3 • 5 • capital letters for the letters stated above Handwriting may also be linked to spelling patterns. (Note: letters and numbers with similar movements are grouped together. The similarities should be discussed with the children.)	The children will revisit: • i j m n r u y (down letters) • v w x z (zigzag letters) • e f s (curly letters) • 1 4 7 • 2 3 • 5 • capital letters for the letters stated above Handwriting may also be linked to spelling patterns. (Note: letters and numbers with similar movements are grouped together. The similarities should be discussed with the children.)

Year 2

We aim for the children to:

- sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- 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.

In Year 2, the children have a minimum of 2 x 15 minutes discrete handwriting lessons per week.

Autumn 1	Spring 1	Summer 1
The children will revisit: • c a o d g q (around letters) • l t b p k h l j m n r u k (down letters) • e f s (curly letters) • v w x z (zigzag letters) • capital letters • 0 - 9 Handwriting will also be linked to spelling patterns.	The children will be taught horizontal joins (washing line joins) • washing line to a, c, e, i, m • washing line to b, d • washing line to g, p • break letters: q, x, z • 0-9 • capital letters Handwriting will also be linked to spelling patterns.	The children will revise horizontal joins (washing line joins): • washing line to n, o, r, s • washing line to h, k • washing line to j, y • break letters: q, x, z • 0-9 • capital letters Handwriting will also to be linked to spelling patterns.
Autumn 2	Spring 2	Summer 2
The children will be taught to form diagonal joins (arm joins): • arm to a, c, e, i, m • arm to b, d • arm to g, p They will revisit the correct formation of numbers. Handwriting will also be linked to spelling patterns.	The children will revise diagonal joins (arm joins): • arm to n, o, r, s • arm to h, k • arm to j, y • break letters: q, x, z • 0-9 • capital letters Handwriting will also be linked to spelling patterns.	The children will revise diagonal joins (arm joins): • arm to u, v, w, • arm to l, t, f • arm to water g, p, y, j • break letters: q, x, z • 0-9 • capital letters Handwriting will also be linked to spelling patterns.

Years 3 and 4

We aim for the children to:

- sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting (for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch)
- increase the fluency with which they are able to write what they say

In Years 3 and 4, handwriting is taught in discrete sessions 2 x 15 mins weekly as a minimum.

Years 3 and 4 - See above for progression

Autumn 1	Spring 1	Summer 1
The children will revisit: • washing line to boat • washing line to sun • washing line to water • 0-9 • capital letters Handwriting will also be linked to spelling patterns	The children will revisit: • washing line to boat • washing line to sun • washing line to water • 0-9 • capital letters Handwriting will also be linked to spelling patterns	The children will revisit: • washing line to boat • washing line to sun • washing line to water • 0-9 • capital letters Handwriting will also be linked to spelling patterns
Autumn 2	Spring 2	Summer 2
The children will revisit: • arm to boat • arm to sun • arm to water • break letters: q, x, z * • capital letters Handwriting will also be linked to spelling patterns	The children will revisit: • arm to boat • arm to sun • arm to water • break letters: q, x, z • capital letters Handwriting will also be linked to spelling patterns	The children will revisit: • arm to boat • arm to sun • arm to water • break letters: q, x, z • capital letters Handwriting will also be linked to spelling patterns

Years 5 and 6

We aim for the children to:

- write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
 - using the basic joins confidently when writing
 - making choices about their own personal writing style
 - making decisions about when it is best to leave writing un-joined, e.g. when labelling a diagram or filling in a form
 - choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters (as long as they are consistent in their choices)
 - choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task
- be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, e.g. quick notes or a final handwritten version

In Year 5, handwriting is taught in discrete sessions 2 x 15 mins weekly as a minimum using the teaching sequences for previous year groups according to the needs to the children in the class. The teaching of handwriting is also linked to the spellings being taught.

In Year 6, this can be reduced to 1 session per week, depending upon the needs of the children.

EYFS and Year 1 Printed Script

Aa Bb Cc Dd

Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii

Jj Kk Ll Mm

Nn Oo Pp Qq

Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv

Ww Xx Yy Zz

Y2 and Lower KS2 Script

Aa Bb Cc Dd

Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii

Jj Kk Ll Mm

Nn Oo Pp Qq

Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv

Ww Xx Yy Zz

Aa Bb Cc Dd

Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii

Jj Kk Ll Mm

Nn Oo Pp Qq

Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv

Ww Xx Yy Zz