



# Handwriting Policy

At Christ Church CE Academy, our aim in teaching handwriting is to enable pupils to develop correct letter formation, fluent joins, and good handwriting habits so that they can write legibly, confidently, and with increasing fluency. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils should begin to develop a clear and distinctive personal style.

**Each of the following aims is considered equally important:**

- To teach pupils to write with a flowing, legible, and fluent hand that is both efficient and aesthetically pleasing, and of which they can be proud.
- Pupils are provided with enough teaching and practise to become fluent and automatic in their handwriting.
- To ensure that pupils of all abilities are set appropriate, achievable, and challenging goals.
- To teach correct letter formation and consistent joining techniques.
- To maintain a high profile for handwriting and presentation across the school by celebrating and displaying work that meets the school's expectations.
- To ensure all pupils understand that clear and neat presentation helps communicate meaning effectively.
- To provide coherence and continuity in the teaching and learning of handwriting throughout the school.

**Statutory Documentation**

**EYFS Statutory Framework**

Within the EYFS statutory framework, the level of development pupils are expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the *Early Learning Goals (ELGs)*.

**ELG: Fine Motor Skills**

Pupils at the expected level of development will:

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

**ELG: Writing**

Pupils at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed

**The National Curriculum**

**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' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

**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

## **Years 3 and 4**

Pupils should be taught to:

- 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, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders do not touch)

## **Years 5 and 6**

Pupils should be taught to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:

- Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
- Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task

### ***Non-statutory* End of Key Stage 1 Teacher Assessment Framework (TAF)**

- **Working Towards the Expected Standard (WTS):**
  - Form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
  - Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another in some of their writing
- **Working at the Expected Standard (EXS):**
  - Form capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters
- **Working at Greater Depth (GDS):**
  - Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join some letters

### **Statutory End of Key Stage 2 Teacher Assessment Framework (TAF)**

- **Working Towards the Expected Standard (WTS):**
  - Write legibly
- **Working at the Expected Standard (EXS):**
  - Maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed
- **Working at Greater Depth (GDS):**
  - *There are no additional statements for spelling or handwriting*

## **Implementation**

### **Handwriting Model used at Christ Church CE Academy**

At Christ Church CE Academy, letter formation is taught using the Little Wandle Formation Phrases in EYFS and Year 1. From Year 2 onwards, pupils continue to build upon this foundation, with additional adaptations introduced to support fluent joining.

As pupils secure accurate letter formation, they begin their journey towards joined handwriting. When modelling joins, teachers use a continuous cursive style, demonstrating how words can be formed in one smooth, flowing movement.

## **Teaching Sequence**

### **Reception**

In Reception, pupils follow the Little Wandle teaching sequence for letter formation, beginning in Term 1. During this term, pupils are taught the basic letter formations in the order set out by the Little Wandle phonics progression. This ensures that handwriting and phonics teaching are closely aligned.

In Terms 2 and 3, pupils continue to practise and refine their letter formations. As they become more confident, they are given opportunities to apply their skills in writing simple CVC words and tricky words.

To support the delivery of handwriting, staff use the pronunciation and formation guidance provided by Little Wandle. These resources can be accessed under 'Teaching Handwriting outside the Phonics Lesson' at:

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/my-letters-and-sounds/weekly-reading-and-phonics/>

Phase 2 grapheme information sheet

Autumn 1

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
s s	 snake	Show your teeth and let the s hiss out: ssssss ssssss	Down the snake from head to tail.
a a	 astronaut	Open your mouth wide and make the a sound at the back of your mouth: a a a	Around the astronaut's helmet and down into space.
t t	 tiger	Open your lips, put the tip of your tongue behind your teeth and press: t t t	Down the tiger and across its neck.
p p	 penguin	Bring your lips together, push them open and say: p p p	Down the penguin's back, up and around its head.
i i	 iguana	Pull your lips back and make the i sound at the back of your mouth: i i i	Down the iguana and dot the leaf.
n n	 net	Open your lips a bit, put your tongue behind your teeth and make the nnnnn sound: nnnnn	Down, up and over the net.
m m	 mouse	Put your lips together and make the mmmmm sound: mmmmm	Down, up and over the mouse's ears.

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
d d	 duck	Put your tongue to the top and front of your mouth and make a quick d sound: d d d	Round the duck's body, up to its head and down to its feet.
g g	 goat	Give me a big smile that shows your teeth; press the middle of your tongue to the top and back of your mouth; push your tongue down and forward to make the g sound: g g g	Round the goat's face and curl under its chin.
o o	 octopus	Make your mouth into round shape and say: o o o	All around the octopus.
c c	 cat	Open your mouth into a little smile; make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say: c c c	Curl around the cat.
k k	 kite	Open your mouth into a little smile; make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say: k k k	Down the kite, up to the top corner and down to the bottom corner.
ck ck	 sock	Open your mouth into a little smile; make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say: c c c	c Curl around the heel of the sock. k Down the sock, up and back down to the toe. <b>Catchphrase:</b> Rock that sock!
e e	 elephant	Open your mouth wide and say: e e e	Around the elephant's eye and curl down its trunk.

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
 u	 umbrella	Open your mouth wide and say <b>u u u</b>	Down and around the umbrella, and back to the ground.
 r	 rainbow	Show me your teeth to make a <b>rrrrr</b> sound <b>rrrrr rrrrr</b>	From the cloud to the ground and over the rainbow.
 h	 helicopter	Open your mouth and breathe out sharply <b>h h h</b>	Down, up and over the helicopter.
 b	 bear	Put your lips together and say <b>b b</b> as you open them <b>b b b</b>	Down the bear's back, up and round its tummy.
 f	 flamingo	Open your lips a little, put your teeth on your bottom lip and push the air out to make the sound <b>ffff</b>	Down the flamingo to its foot and across its wings.
 l	 lollipop	Open your mouth a little, put your tongue up to the top of your mouth, behind your teeth, and press <b>llll</b>	Down the lollipop stick.

Phase 2 grapheme information sheet

Autumn 2

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
 j	 jellyfish	Pucker your lips and show your teeth use your tongue as you say <b>j j j</b>	Down the jellyfish and dot its head.
 v	 volcano	Put your teeth against your bottom lip and make a buzzing <b>vvvvv vvvvv</b>	Down to the bottom of the volcano and back up to the top.
 w	 wave	Pucker your lips and keep them small as you say <b>w w w</b>	Down and up and down and up the waves.
 x	 box	Mouth open, then push the <b>cs</b> sound through as you close your mouth <b>cs cs cs</b> ( <b>x x x</b> )	From the top, across the box to the bottom. From the top again across the box to the bottom.
 y	 yo-yo	Smile, tongue to the top of your mouth, say <b>y</b> without opening your mouth <b>yyy</b>	Down, around the yo-yo and curl round the string.
 z	 zebra	Show me your teeth and buzz the <b>z</b> sound <b>zzzzz</b>	Across the top of the zebra's head, zig-zag down its neck and along.

## Year 1

In Year 1, pupils consolidate their understanding of individual letter formation by continuing to focus and refine their handwriting through the letter families that are formed in similar ways. Teachers follow the agreed sequence for each family, ensuring that pupils receive feedback and opportunities to practise before moving on to the next group. Once all letters are formed accurately, pupils are introducing to “snuggling” letters together, to prepare them for writing words.

Pupils must demonstrate secure and consistent letter formation across all families and maintain the correct formation and spacing.

By the end of Year 1, most pupils should be secure in forming all individual lower-case letters. Some pupils may continue to need targeted small group support to achieve this.

The correct formation of all capital letters should also be explicitly taught and practised during Year 1. These are also taught in families, according to formation. See below.

### Letter formation: Capital letters

Use this document to ensure correct letter formation when you are teaching children to form capital letters.

Letter	Capital letter formation phrase
A	From the top, diagonally down to the left, up to the top, diagonally down to the right. Lift up and across.
B	From the top, down, back to the top. Round to the middle, round to the bottom.
C	From the top, curl around to the left to sit on the line.
D	From the top, down, back to the top. Curve right, down to the bottom.
E	From the top, down, back to the top. Across, back. Lift up and across the middle. Lift up and across the bottom line.
F	From the top, down, back to the top. Across, back. Lift up and across the middle.
G	From the top, curl around to the line, carry on up, then straight down. Lift up and across.
H	From the top and down. Space. From the top and down. Lift up and join the lines across the middle.
I	From the top to the bottom and stop.
J	From the top, all the way down, then short curl to the left.
K	From the top, down, up to the middle. Diagonally up, back and diagonally down to the line.
L	From the top, down and across the line.
M	From the top, down, back to the top. Diagonally down, diagonally up. Straight down to the line.
N	From the top, down, back to the top. Diagonally down, then straight up to the top.
O	From the top – all around the o.
P	From the top, down then back up. Curve right to halfway down.
Q	From the top – all around the o. Lift off. Short line diagonally down.
R	From the top, down, then back up. Curve right to halfway down. Diagonally down to the line.
S	From the top, under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail.
T	From the top, down and stop. Lift up and from the left, make a line across the top.
U	From the top, down and curve right, then straight up to the top.
V	From the top diagonally right to the bottom, then diagonally up to the top.
W	From the top diagonally right to the bottom, diagonally up to the top, diagonally down to the line, then diagonally up again.
X	From the top, diagonally right to the bottom. Space. Start at the top, then diagonally left to the bottom.
Y	From the top diagonally right to the middle. Space. From the top diagonally left to the middle. Straight down to the bottom.
Z	From the top go across, diagonally down to the left and across the bottom.

## Capital letter families

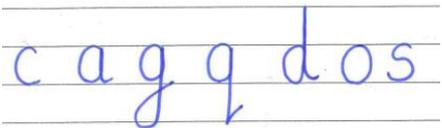
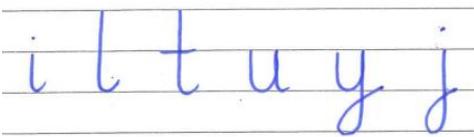
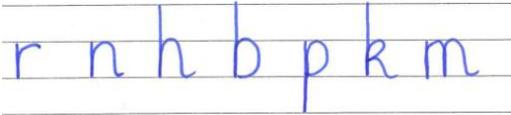
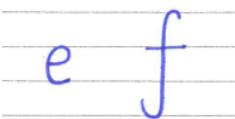
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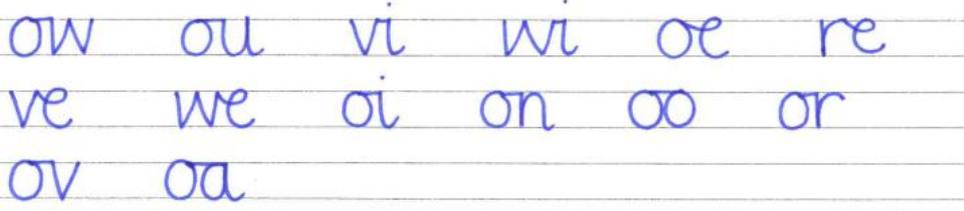
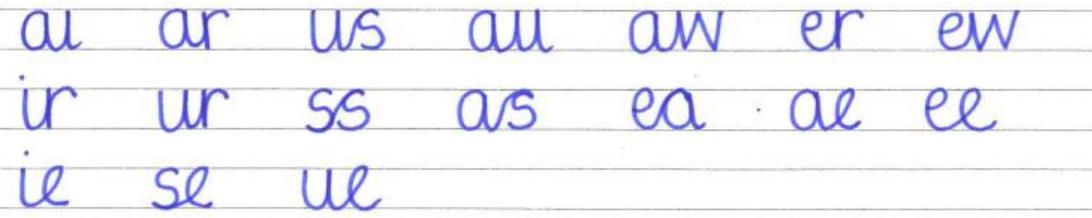
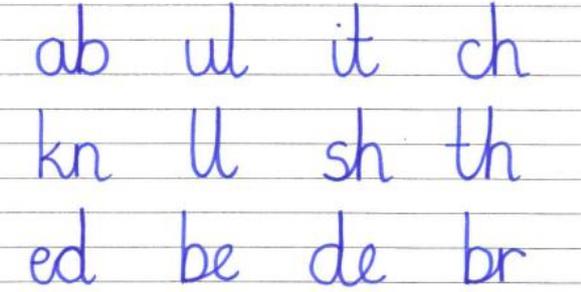
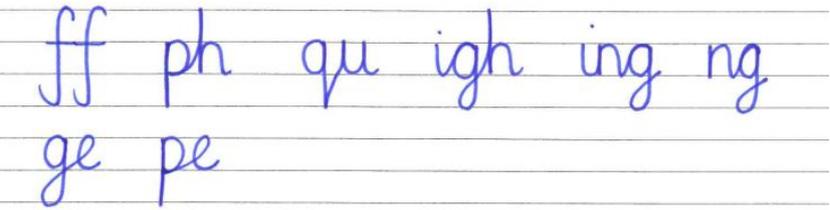
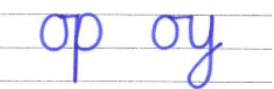
A V W X Y K M N Z

## Letter Families

Round letters	 <p>Initial c – starting from the line, curl around and down to the line c – make a c a – make a c, up to the top, down to the line g – make a c, up to the top, down with a loop q – make a c, up to the top, down with a flick d – make a c, up to the very top, down to the line o – make a c, and all the way around s – forwards c, slide down to the line</p>
Climb and slide letters	 <p>i – down to the line, dot on the top l – down from the top and flick t – down from the top and flick, cross it u – down to the line, curve it up to the top and down to the line y – down to the line, curve it up to the down and down with a loop j – down and flick, dot on the top</p>
Tunnel letters	 <p>r – down to the line, trace it back up and curve at the top n – down to the line, trace it back up, curve it down to the line h – down from the top, trace it back up, curve it down to the line b – down from the top, trace it back up, curve it around p – down to the bottom line, trace it back up, curve it around k – down from the top, trace it back up, curve around and slide down m – down to the line, trace back up, curve, down to the line, trace back up, curve, down to the line</p>
Loop and hook letters	 <p>e – straight across the middle and all the way around f – curve and down from the very top to the very bottom and flick under – cross it</p>

Square letters	 <p>x – diagonal down, diagonal down z – straight across, diagonal down, straight across</p>
Zig zag letters	 <p>v – diagonal down, diagonal up w – down, bump, up, bump, down, bump, up</p>

## Teaching Joining Letters

Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders	
Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders	
Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders	
Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders	
Diagonal joins to letters with descenders	
Horizontal joins to letters with descenders	

Joining from the letter "r"	
Joining to and from the letter "a"	
Joining to and from the letter "e"	
Joining to the letter "y"	
Joining from the letter "o"	

## **Year 2**

At the beginning of Year 2, pupils revisit and consolidate letter formation previously introduced and review the grapheme phoneme correspondences (GPCs) taught in Year 1. Pupils then revisit and master their letter formation approach, building on from "snuggling" letters in Y1, to writing words with their focus letters.

## **Year 3**

Pupils in Y3 are introduced to joining letters, using the formations and target joins in the table above.

## **Key Stage Two**

Pupils entering Y4, should have a secure understanding of all letter families, their correct formation and how to join them.

Any pupils who have not yet mastered correct letter formation should be promptly identified for targeted intervention. This support should follow the guidance and progression outlined in earlier stages of the policy. Where handwriting is still explicitly taught, the teaching sequence above should be followed, depending on gaps/needs of the pupils.

## **Handwriting Lessons – Key Points**

Ensure that pupils are sitting correctly at the table, with both feet flat on the floor.

Reinforce the correct pencil grip; provide additional support if needed (e.g. pencil grips or alternative writing tools).

Ensure pencils are sharp and suitable for writing.

Emphasise correct starting points, letter direction, continuous motion, and writing speed.

Model letter formation and joins clearly, ensuring pupils watch before attempting to write.

Circulate the classroom to check pupils' handwriting in real time, offering immediate feedback and correction where necessary.

**Lesson Sequence/Structure**

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
<p><b><i>Fine motor skills</i></b></p> <p>Pick up pencil (using the rhyme/visual) Repeat to ensure correct pencil grip.</p>	<p><b><i>Preparing our work station</i></b></p> <p>Engage correct seating position (BBC/TTT)</p> <p>Pick up pencil</p> <p>Move book in correct position</p> <p>Rest helper hand on the corner of book</p>	<p><b><i>Revisit</i></b></p> <p>Yesterday we learned 'c'</p> <p>Model 'c'</p> <p>Show me</p> <p>Pupils practise</p>	<p><b><i>Teacher modelling</i></b></p> <p>Identify focus letter family <b><i>round letters</i></b></p> <p>Model new letter 'c'</p> <p>Children practise/T give feedback</p>	<p><b><i>Children practise and assess</i></b></p> <p>Children practise what has been modelled.</p> <p>Peer-feedback: <i>Correction formation?</i> <i>Correct letter height?</i></p>