



HANDWRITING POLICY

SANDON PRIMARY ACADEMY

Mrs R Beckett & Mrs L Kiddle (Co-Principals)
Review date: September 2026

Aim:

We aim for our children to leave in Year 6 with the ability to write using their own style of fast, fluent, legible and sustainable handwriting as well as other styles of writing for specific purposes. In addition to teaching handwriting during our regular handwriting lessons, we have high expectations that what is taught and practised in handwriting lessons will be used in all writing activities. We believe that handwriting is integral to a child's personal development and know that children's engagement and self-esteem can be empowered by their satisfaction and pride in good quality handwriting.

Handwriting is a taught skill that develops at different rates for different children. All teachers in the academy put a priority on teaching handwriting and have high expectations for handwriting across the curriculum prioritising this transcriptional skill at the start of and throughout each academic year. Our academy uses Penpals for handwriting to ensure that:

- The importance of handwriting is recognised and given appropriate time.
- The progression of handwriting is consistent across school.
- Handwriting is acknowledged as a whole-body activity and emphasis is placed on the correct body posture and pencil grip.
- Expectations for left-handed children are equal to right handed children and appropriate advice and resources are available to support these children.
- Children learn to self assess their own writing and develop responsibility for improving it.
- Children learn to write in different styles for different purposes.
- Children with gaps in handwriting can be identified and targeted to close the gap.

Progression of skills:

Penpals enables us to teach and secure the development of handwriting throughout the academy. The scheme allows children to establish the right skills at the right developmental time.

First children experience the foundation of handwriting through multi-sensory activities (EYFS F1 and F2).

Correct letter formation is taught, practised, applied and consolidated (EYFS F2/YR1)

Joining is introduced once the correct letter formation is used automatically (Y1/Y2/Y3)

Joins are systematically and cumulatively introduced (Y1-Y6)

As children practise joining they pay attention to the size, proportion and spacing of their letters and words (Y3-Y6)

Once joining is secure a slop is introduced to increase speed and fluency (Y5).

Children are introduced to different ways of joining so that they can develop a preferred personal style.

Each handwriting skill is taught discretely and then time is given to practise this skill in isolation using practise sheets and handwriting lines with no additional cognitive demand.

Sequence of Teaching EYFS Nursery Autumn/Spring:

1 Unit= 2 weeks

Daily CP: Ongoing handwriting activities inside and outside.

Daily Interactive: -Unit focus, Penpals gym, Talk About, Try

Adult led activity weekly: Physical ideas for developing handwriting-large movements, hand and finger rhymes, messy play, tools, music,patterns.

Sequence of Teaching EYFS Reception/ Nursery Summer 1:

1 Unit= 1 week

Daily CP: Ongoing handwriting activities inside and outside.

Daily Interactive: -Unit focus, Penpals gym, Talk About, Try

Daily adult led workbook activity: The child practises the unit focus through a short activity where there is no cognitive demand.

Sequence of Teaching in a Discrete Session YR1-YR6:

1 Unit= 1 week

Session 1:

Teach: Unit focus introduced using Penpals interactive.



Practise: The child practises the unit focus through a short activity where there is no cognitive demand.



Assess: Children self and peer assess their handwriting.

Session 2:

Teach: The focus is recapped using Penpals interactive.



Practise: The child practises the unit focus through a short activity where there is no cognitive demand.



Apply: Children apply their handwriting in literacy and curriculum lessons.



Assess: Children self and peer assess their handwriting in handwriting sessions and beyond.

Handwriting and phonics:

Penpals supports children's systematic synthetic phonics knowledge for segmenting and spelling. Penpals gives children the opportunity to revisit and consolidate their growing phonic knowledge whilst securing kinaesthetic movement to secure good spelling in a legible, fast and fluent handwriting style. E.g. thing will be taught t-h-i-n-g then th-i-ng then th-ing then thing.

We will apply the Penpals letter patterns into our RWI sessions.

Handwriting Tools:

Throughout their time at Sandon children use a range of tools for different purposes and styles of handwriting.

- Wide range of tools and media for mark making in EYFS.
- Whiteboard pens in EYFS and YR1
- Fingers when writing in the air and on interactive whiteboards.
- Art supplies-coloured pens and pencils when creating posters, displays and art work.
- Writing aids available if needed identified-thick pencils, pencil grips, writing slopes.
- Handwriting lines on worksheets
- IPADS and stylus-although an IPAD curriculum is being embedded all writing activities are expected to be completed on paper to ensure high expectations of handwriting remain. When using IPADS children are encouraged to have them flat on the table, to zoom in and to use a consistent pen thickness to support presentation.
- Sharp pencil for most writing until a pen licence is awarded.

Handwriting is introduced and practised in the air, in Penpals Workbooks, on blank sheets and on handwriting line guides so that children learn about letter orientation including ascenders and descenders. Handwriting line guides are used across the curriculum to support consistency and high expectations beyond discrete handwriting sessions. As the children's fine motor skills improve and their letter formation and joining becomes increasingly accurate handwriting line guides are slowly removed, the width between the lines they write on gradually decreases, and writing implements expand to include a pen.

Equality of Opportunity:

All of our children have equal access to handwriting lessons and to the resources available. We recognise that some children take longer to develop the necessary skills and we cater for those children by providing additional opportunities for skills development. All lesson plans outline extra support ideas in the form of small group work and homework.

Frequent assessment is also used three times throughout the year (observational checklist in EYFS and assessment units YR1-6) to identify progress and indicate areas that require consolidation before children move on. Our literacy scheme Grammarsaurus ensures that staff check secure transcriptional skills at the start of each year before progressing onto compositional aspects of writing. Children who show need for consolidation, will be given targeted support.

Children who need specific fine motor or handwriting interventions are identified and the impact of interventions is carefully monitored. Children with a physical disability are catered for often with the support and advice of an OT and their progress is monitored according to their pupil passports.

Higher achieving children are also challenged through challenge activities and more demanding targets for control and evenness of letters.

Staff Training:

All teaching staff at Sandon Primary Academy receive training to deliver high-quality handwriting instruction using the Penpals programme. Staff have access to online resource and teacher guides to aid the delivery of sessions. Staff are expected to model correct handwriting consistently across all subjects, ensuring that pupils see high standards in every area of the curriculum. The literacy leads regularly monitor handwriting through lesson observations and book looks with regular CPD sessions and refresher training then provided based on findings. Training has included consistency of session delivery, supporting high expectations beyond discrete writing lessons, effective feedback and handwriting aids.

Pupil Voice and Motivation:

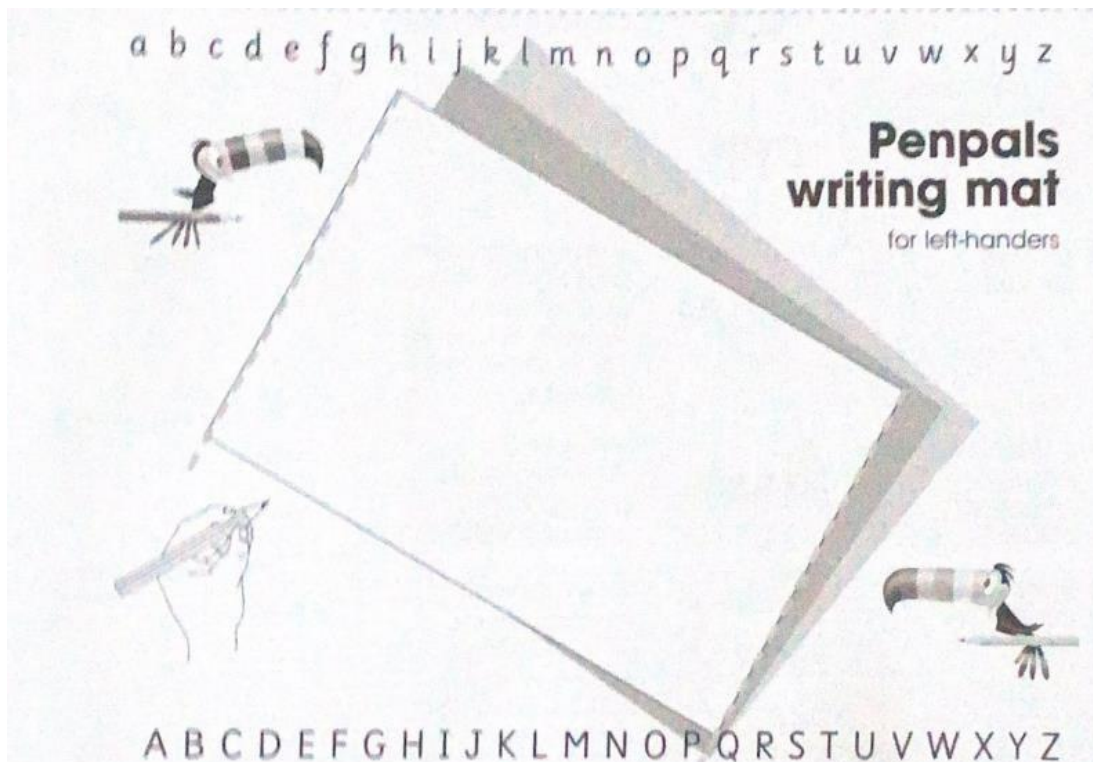
At Sandon Primary Academy, we actively celebrate pupils' handwriting achievements to promote motivation, pride, and ownership of progress. Pupil voice is used to shape how handwriting is recognised across the school, including through initiatives such as pen licences, classroom displays and dojo awards and photos home. These celebrations encourage pupils to take pride in their presentation and support the development of a personal handwriting style.

Appendix A: Rules for Handwriting

- Sit looking at the board or book.
- Sit with both feet and all four-chair leg on the ground.
- Place your paper or whiteboard at a comfortable angle.
- Always use a sharp pencil.
- All letters should sit on the line (except those which have a descender).
- Lower case letters should all be the same height unless they have an ascender.
- Capital letters should be the same height as ascenders.

Appendix B: Recommendations to support left handed Children

- Seat the child so that their left elbow is free to move without colliding into a right-handed child.
- Teach the child to hold the pencil between 2cm and 5cm from the point. This enables them to see their writing and lifts their hand away from the page.
- Encourage the child to place their paper or whiteboard at a greater angle. The lower arm should be at a right angle to the bottom edge of the paper. A writing slope may help to reinforce this angle.
- Establish the expectation that the hand is below the writing line and the wrist is straight-discourage children hooking their hand around the writing.



Appendix C: Scope and Sequence

Scope and sequence

Units introducing new letters or joins are flagged with coloured dots.

Foundation 1/3-5 years

Developing gross motor skills

- 1 Whole-body responses to the language of movement
- 2 Large movements with equipment
- 3 Large movements with malleable materials
- 4 Body responses to music

Developing fine motor skills

- 5 Hand and finger play
- 6 Making and modelling
- 7 Messy play
- 8 Links to art
- 9 Using one-handed tools and equipment
- 10 Hand responses to music

Developing patterns

- 11 Pattern-making
- 12 Investigating dots
- 13 Investigating straight lines and crosses
- 14 Investigating circles
- 15 Investigating curves, loops and waves
- 16 Investigating joined straight lines and angled patterns
- 17 Investigating eights and spirals

Foundation 2/Primary 1

Term 1

- 1 Dots
- 2 Straight lines and crosses
- 3 Circles
- 4 Waves
- 5 Loops and bridges
- 6 Joined straight lines
- 7 Angled patterns
- 8 Eights
- 9 Spirals
- 10 Left-to-right orientation
- 11 Mix of patterns
- 12 Review of patterns

Term 2

- 13 Introducing long-legged giraffe letters: l
- 14 Practising long-legged giraffe letters: L, l
- 15 Practising long-legged giraffe letters: u, l
- 16 Practising long-legged giraffe letters: j, y
- 17 Practising all the long-legged giraffe letters: l, L, u, U, j, J, y, Y
- 18 Introducing one-armed robot letters: r
- 19 Practising one-armed robot letters: h, n
- 20 Practising one-armed robot letters: h, n
- 21 Practising one-armed robot letters: k, p
- 22 Practising all the one-armed robot letters: r, h, n, h, n, k, p

- 23 Practising all the long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters
- 24 Reviewing all the long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters

Term 3

- 25 Introducing curly caterpillar letters: c
- 26 Practising curly caterpillar letters: a, d
- 27 Practising curly caterpillar letters: o, s
- 28 Practising curly caterpillar letters: g, q
- 29 Practising curly caterpillar letters: e, f
- 30 Practising all the curly caterpillar letters: c, a, d, o, s, g, q, e, f
- 31 Practising all the curly caterpillar, long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters
- 32 Introducing zig-zag monster letters: z
- 33 Practising zig-zag monster letters: v, w, x
- 34 Practising all the zig-zag monster letters: z, v, w, x
- 35 Practising all the curly caterpillar and zig-zag monster letters
- 36 Reviewing all the curly caterpillar and zig-zag monster letters

Year 1/Primary 2

Term 1

- 1 Practising long-legged giraffe letters
- 2 Writing words with ll
- 3 Introducing capitals for long-legged giraffe letters
- 4 Practising one-armed robot letters
- 5 Practising long-legged giraffe letters and one-armed robot letters
- 6 Introducing capitals for one-armed robot letters
- 7 Practising curly caterpillar letters
- 8 Writing words with double ll
- 9 Writing words with double ll
- 10 Introducing capitals for curly caterpillar letters

Term 2

- 11 Practising long-legged giraffe letters, one-armed robot letters and curly caterpillar letters
- 12 Practising zig-zag monster letters
- 13 Writing words with double zz
- 14 Mixing all the letter families
- 15 Practising all the capital letters
- 16 Practising all the numbers 0-9
- 17 Writing words with ck and qu
- 18 Practising long vowel phonemes: ai, igh, oo
- 19 Practising vowels with adjacent consonants: ea, oa, oo
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Numbers 10-20: spacing
- 22 Practising ih unjoined
- 23 Introducing diagonal join to ascender: ch
- 24 Practising ai unjoined
- 25 Introducing diagonal join, no ascender: ai
- 26 Practising wh unjoined
- 27 Introducing horizontal join to ascender: wh
- 28 Practising ow unjoined
- 29 Introducing horizontal join, no ascender: the
- 30 Assessment

Year 2/Primary 3

Term 1

- 1 Practising diagonal join to ascender: ch, ch
- 2 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: ai, ai
- 3 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: v, v
- 4 Practising horizontal join to ascender: wh, wh
- 5 Practising horizontal join, no ascender: the, the
- 6 Introducing diagonal join to e: er, er
- 7 Introducing horizontal join to e: ea, ea
- 8 Introducing ee
- 9 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: ie
- 10 Writing numbers 1-100

Term 2

- 11 Introducing diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: oo
- 12 Practising diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: igh
- 13 Practising diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: dig, ng
- 14 Introducing horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: oo, oo
- 15 Practising horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: ars, ars
- 16 Introducing mixed joins for three letters: our, our
- 17 Practising mixed joins for three letters: our, our
- 18 Practising mixed joins for three letters: ough
- 19 Size and spacing
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Building on diagonal join to ascender: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 22 Building on diagonal join, no ascender: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 23 Building on horizontal join to ascender: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 24 Building on horizontal join, no ascender: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 25 Building on diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 26 Building on horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 27 Introducing joins to s: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 28 Practising joining inf and ing
- 29 Assessment
- 30 Capitals

Year 3/Primary 4

Term 1

- 1 Practising joining through a word in stages: no ascenders or ascenders
- 2 Practising joining through a word in stages: parallel ascenders
- 3 Introducing joining from s to ascender: sh, sh, sh, sh
- 4 Introducing joining from s, no ascender: sk, sk, sk, sk, sk, sk
- 5 Introducing joining from s to an anticlockwise letter: sd, sd, sd, sd, sd, sd
- 6 Introducing joining from t to an ascender: th, th, th, th, th, th
- 7 Introducing joining from t, no ascender: n, n, n, n, n, n
- 8 Introducing joining from t to an anticlockwise letter: rd, rd, rd, rd, rd, rd
- 9 Introducing joining from t to e: se, se, se, se, se, se
- 10 Introducing break letters: g, y, j, b, p, x, z

Term 2

- 11 Introducing joining to f: ff, ff, ff, ff
- 12 Introducing joining from f to an ascender: ff, ff
- 13 Introducing joining from f to an ascender: ff, ff, ff, ff
- 14 Introducing joining from f to an anticlockwise letter: ff, ff
- 15 Introducing ff
- 16 Introducing ff
- 17 Introducing qu
- 18 Introducing qu
- 19 Revising parallel ascenders and descenders
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Revising joins: letter spacing
- 22 Revising joins: spacing between words
- 23 Revising joins: consistency of size
- 24 Revising joins: fluency
- 25 Revising joins: parallel ascenders
- 26 Revising joins: parallel ascenders and descenders
- 27 Revising horizontal join from t to an anticlockwise letter: n
- 28 Revising break letters
- 29 Assessment
- 30 Revising capital letters

Year 4/Primary 5

Term 1

- 1 Introducing diagonal join from p and b to ascender: ph, ph
- 2 Introducing diagonal join from p and b, no ascender: ph, ph
- 3 Introducing diagonal join from p and b to an anticlockwise letter: ph, ph, ph, ph, ph, ph
- 4 Revising parallel ascenders and descenders: sh, sh
- 5 Break letters: x, z
- 6 Spacing in common exception words
- 7 Consistent size of letters
- 8 Relative size of capitals
- 9 Speed and fluency
- 10 End-of-term check

Term 2

- 11 Revising parallel ascenders
- 12 Revising parallel ascenders and break letters
- 13 Relative sizes of letters
- 14 Proportion of letters
- 15 Spacing between letters
- 16 Spacing between words
- 17 Writing of speed
- 18 Improving fluency
- 19 Speed and fluency
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Consistency of size
- 22 Proportion
- 23 Spacing between letters and words
- 24 Size, proportion and spacing
- 25 Fluency: writing longer words
- 26 Speed and fluency
- 27 Revising break letters
- 28 Print alphabet presentation
- 29 Assessment
- 30 Capital letters: presentation

Year 5/Primary 6

Term 1

- 1 Introducing sloped writing in letter families
- 2 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join to ascender: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 3 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join, no ascender: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 4 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join to an anticlockwise letter: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 5 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join to ascender: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 6 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join, no ascender: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 7 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join to an anticlockwise letter: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 8 Practising sloped writing: joining from f: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 9 Practising sloped writing: joining from s: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 10 End-of-term check

Term 2

- 11 Practising sloped writing: proportion - joining from f to ascender: ff, ff
- 12 Practising sloped writing: size - joining from t, no ascender: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 13 Different styles for different purposes: writing a paragraph
- 14 Practising sloped writing: speed: ff
- 15 Practising sloped writing: speed and legibility: ck
- 16 Practising sloped writing: size, proportion and spacing: ck
- 17 Practising sloped writing: building speed: ck
- 18 Different styles for different purposes: decorative alphabets
- 19 Different styles for different purposes
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Sloped writing: proportion, joining p and b to ascenders: ph, ph
- 22 Handwriting for different purposes: joining from p and b, no ascender: ph, ph, ph, ph, ph, ph
- 23 Practising sloped writing: parallel downstrokes: ph, ph
- 24 Practising sloped writing: all double letters
- 25 Practising sloped writing for speed: ck, ck, ck, ck
- 26 Practising sloped writing for fluency
- 27 Personal style
- 28 Handwriting for different purposes: print alphabet
- 29 Assessment
- 30 Capitals

Year 6/Primary 7

Term 1

- 1 Style for speed: crossbar join from f: ck, ck, ck, ck
- 2 Style for speed: looping from g: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 3 Style for speed: looping from j and y: ck, ck, ck, ck, ck, ck
- 4 Style for speed: looping from t
- 5 Style for speed: different joins to s
- 6 Style for speed: looping from b
- 7 Style for speed: joining from x, w, k and z
- 8 Handwriting for different purposes: abbreviations
- 9 Spacing between words
- 10 End-of-term check

Term 2

- 11 Improving handwriting: the importance of consistent slant
- 12 Improving handwriting: the importance of proportion
- 13 Improving handwriting: the importance of spacing
- 14 Improving handwriting: the importance of consistent slant of parallel ascenders and descenders
- 15 Improving handwriting: the importance of closed and open letters
- 16 Improving handwriting: pen breaks in longer words
- 17 Handwriting for different purposes: annotations
- 18 Handwriting for different purposes
- 19 Choice of handwriting tools
- 20 End-of-term check


Term 3

- 21 Handwriting for different purposes: fast-joined and print letters
- 22 Handwriting for different purposes: note-making
- 23 Handwriting for different purposes: neat writing
- 24 Handwriting for different purposes: print letters for personal details
- 25 Different styles of writing
- 26 Handwriting for different purposes: presentation
- 27 Handwriting for different purposes: decorated capitals
- 28 Handwriting for different purposes: layout
- 29 Assessment
- 30 Handwriting for different purposes: handwriting patterns

Appendix D: Progression of Pencil Grip Development:


1. Whole-hand grasp: using a fist

- Around 1-2 years.
- Use of upper body muscles.
- Movement comes mainly from the shoulder with the arm moving as a unit.




2. Beginning to use the fingers: no longer using whole-hand grasp.

- Around 2-3 years.
- Use of forearm.
- Movement is still quite stiff but there may be some wrist movement.




3. Holds pencil between thumb and two fingers: no longer using whole-hand grasp.



- Around 3-4 years.
- Both of these grips are the true beginnings of the tripod grip. The hand tends to move as a unit with limited wrist movement.
- Children at this stage need more experiences that will strengthen their muscles (cutting, working with dough, etc.) to increase readiness for a precision pen hold.

4. Moving towards the tripod grip.

- Around 4-6 years.
- Holds pencil near point between first two fingers and thumb and uses it with good control.
- Finger movements and wrist now in play.
- Moving to a comfortable and efficient tripod grip: a precise three-way or tripod use of thumb, index and middle fingers.



Appendix E: Letter Patters

Letter patters

Since young children are often multi-sensory learners, it is helpful to describe the pencil movements at the same time as children see and do them. These descriptions are called 'letter patters'. All adults in the setting are encouraged to use the same patters so that the children learn through repetition. You can

even send them home to support parents as they practise the letter formation at home. It is very important that we instill correct letter formation from the beginning; it takes around 200 repetitions of a movement for it to become a learned movement and about 4,000 repetitions to correct a

letter formation that has been learned incorrectly. Letter patters, when they are used consistently, are one way of supporting correct letter formation from the beginning.

Long-legged giraffe family			
i	Start at the top, come all the way down and flick.	L	Start at the top, come down and go across.
l	Start at the top, come down and flick. Lift and dot.	I	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Across at the top. Lift. Across at the bottom.
t	Start at the top, come all the way down and curve. Lift and cross.	T	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Across at the top.
u	Start at the top, come down and curve. Go back up, come back down and flick.	U	Start at the top, come down. Curve back up.
j	Start at the top, come all the way down and curve to the left. Lift and dot.	J	Start at the top, come down. Curve to the left. Lift. Across at the top.
y	Start at the top, come all the way down and curve. Go back up, come all the way down and curve to the left.	Y	Slope down, slope back up. Lift. Come down from the point.
One-armed robot family			
r	Start at the top, come down, bounce back up and over.	R	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Back to the top. Go all the way round and slope.
b	Start at the top, come all the way down, bounce half-way back up and go all the way round.	B	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Back to the top. Go all the way round and all the way round again.
n	Start at the top, come down, bounce back up, go over, down and flick.	N	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Back to the top. Slope and straight up.
h	Start at the top, come all the way down, bounce half-way back up, go over, down and flick.	H	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Start at the top come down, Lift and across in the middle.
m	Start at the top, come down, bounce back up and over. Down, bounce back up and over. Down and flick.	M	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Back to the top. Slope down, slope up and straight down.
k or k	Start at the top, come all the way down, bounce half-way back up. Loop. Slope and flick. or Start at the top, come all the way down. Lift. Slope. Slope and flick.	K	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Slope in, slope out.
p	Start at the top, come all the way down, bounce back up and go all the way round.	P	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Back to the top. Go all the way round.
Curly caterpillar family			
c	Make a curve.	C	Make a curve.
a	Make a curve, go up to the top, come back down and flick.	A	Slope to the left. Lift back to the top. Slope. Lift. Across in the middle.
d	Make a curve, go all the way up, come back down and flick.	D	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Back to the top. Go all the way round to the bottom.
o	Make a curve, go all the way round.	O	Make a curve, go all the way round.
s	Make a curve, slope, make a curve back again.	S	Make a curve, slope, make a curve back again.
g	Make a curve, go up to the top, come all the way down and curve to the left.	G	Make a curve. Lift and go across.
q	Make a curve, go up to the top, come all the way down and flick.	Q	Make a curve, go all the way round. Lift and slope across.
e	Start with a loop then make a curve.	E	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Back to the top. Across at the top. Lift. Across in the middle. Lift. Across at the bottom.
f	Make a curve, come all the way down, curve to the left. Lift and cross.	F	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Back to the top. Across at the top. Lift. Across in the middle.
Zig-zag monster family			
#	Go across, slope, go back across.	Z	Go across, slope, go back across.
v	Slope down, slope back up.	V	Slope down, slope back up.
w	Slope down, slope back up. Slope down again and slope back up.	W	Slope down, slope back up. Slope down again and slope back up.
x	Slope. Lift and slope across.	X	Slope. Lift and slope across.

Appendix F: Letter Families

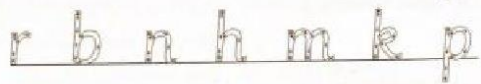
Letter families

Lower-case letters are introduced in the following order in four family types:

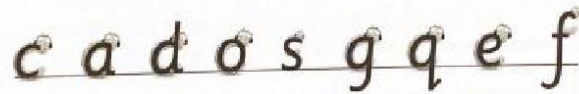
The family of long-legged giraffe letters



The family of one-armed robot letters











The family of curly caterpillar letters



The family of zig-zag monster letters



Appendix G: Variations in Font throughout Penpals

FIVE DEVELOPMENTAL PHASES	FONT USED	Penpals Progression	Penpals typesizes
<p>1 GROSS AND FINE MOTOR SKILLS, PATTERN-MAKING AND LETTER FORMATION</p>		<p>Each letter family is introduced with finger tracing letters incorporating the letter family artwork and a starting dot.</p> <p>Hollow letters with starting dots and arrows to show correct letter formation are also used for finger tracing.</p> <p>Solid letters with starting dots support letter formation.</p> <p>Independent writing with exit flicks is encouraged in preparation for joining.</p>	 <p>Foundation 2/Primary 1 21mm/11mm</p>  <p>Year 1/Primary 2 8mm/5mm</p>  <p>Year 2/Primary 3 7mm/4mm</p>
<p>2 SECURING CORRECT LETTER FORMATION</p>	<p>pen</p>	<p>Joins are introduced from year 1.</p>	 <p>Year 3/Primary 4 5mm/4mm</p>
<p>3 SECURING THE JOINS</p>	<p>secure</p>	<p>Once all joins have been taught, all words are shown as joined for practice and consolidation (with the exception of the break letters).</p>	 <p>Year 4/Primary 5 5mm/4mm</p>
<p>4 SECURING THE JOINS; LEGIBILITY, CONSISTENCY, QUALITY</p>	<p>faster</p>	<p>Children are encouraged to develop an individual style for speed and legibility.</p>	 <p>Year 5/Primary 6 4mm</p>
<p>5 SPEED, FLUENCY AND PERSONAL STYLE</p>	<p>individual print joke</p>	<p>Further development of an individual style as well as presentation skills and techniques. At this stage break letters may be joined.</p>	 <p>Year 6/Primary 7 4mm/3mm</p>

Appendix H: Assessments

The hoop test

Left to their own devices, a group of Foundation-aged children who are invited to play with hoops will probably resort to three modes of behaviour. Let children play freely with hoops and observe their play. You may notice:

1. Propelling the hoop a distance, which involves a forward and then backward movement of the arm plus a release in order to push the hoop across the floor. Children who have this level of control are displaying a mature level of manual dexterity and are likely to also have fairly well-developed fine motor skills.
2. Spinning the hoop between the fingers in order to make it twirl round and round. This movement demands a high degree of finger manipulation but little force. These children may need support to develop arm strength in order to develop their fine motor skills.
3. Throwing the hoop around madly in any fashion! These children need more experience of gross motor skills before they move to the demands of fine motor skills.



Watch what the child does with her hands to start the hoop moving. Is she able to pull back, push and release on the horizontal plane?

Child's name:		Date and tick observed behaviours		
Prime area: Physical development Early Learning Goal 4: Moving and handling		Emerging	Expected	Exceeding
30-50 months				
Penpals: Gross motor skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moves freely and with pleasure and confidence in a range of ways, such as slithering, shuffling, rolling, crawling, walking, running, jumping, skipping, sliding and hopping. Draws lines and circles using gross motor movements. Mounts stairs, steps or climbing equipment using alternate feet. Walks downstairs, two feet to each step while carrying a small object. Runs skilfully and negotiates space successfully, adjusting speed or direction to avoid obstacles. Can stand momentarily on one foot when shown. Can catch a large ball. 			
Penpals: Fine motor skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses one-handed tools and equipment, e.g. makes snips in paper with child scissors. Holds pencil between thumb and two fingers, no longer using whole-hand grasp. Holds pencil near point between first two fingers and thumb and uses it with good control. Can copy some letters, e.g. letters from their name. 			
40-60+ months				
Penpals: Gross motor skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiments with different ways of moving. Jumps off an object and lands appropriately. Negotiates space successfully when playing racing and chasing games with other children, adjusting speed or changing direction to avoid obstacles. Travels with confidence and skill around, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment. Shows increasing control over an object in pushing, pulling, throwing, catching or kicking it. 			
Penpals: Fine motor skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses simple tools to effect changes to materials. Handles tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control. Shows a preference for a dominant hand. 			
Penpals F1: Pattern development working towards letter formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to use anticlockwise movement and retrace vertical lines. Begins to form recognisable letters. 			
Penpals F2: Letter formation and practice in simple words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses a pencil and holds it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. 			
Exceeding statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hop confidently Skip in time to music Hold paper in position Use preferred hand for writing Use correct pencil grip Beginning to write on lines Beginning to control letter size 			

Child's name:		Date and tick observed behaviours		
Specific area: Literacy Early Learning Goal 10: Writing		Emerging	Expected	Exceeding
30-50 months				
Penpals F1: Gross and fine motor skills and investigating patterns units Important to build up fine motor strength BEFORE attempting to write letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes gives meaning to marks as they draw and paint. Ascribes meanings to marks that they see in different places. 			
40-60+ months				
Penpals F1 and F2 resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives meaning to marks they make as they draw, write and paint. Begins to break the flow of speech into words. Continues a rhyming string. Hears and says the initial sound in words. Can segment the sounds in simple words and blend them together. Links sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet. Uses some clearly identifiable letters to communicate meaning, representing some sounds correctly and in sequence. Writes own name and other things such as labels, captions. Attempts to write short sentences in meaningful contexts. 			
Specific area: Expressive Arts and Design Early Learning Goal 16: Exploring and using media and materials		Emerging	Expected	Exceeding
30-50 months				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoys joining in with dancing and ring games. Sings a few familiar songs. Beginning to move rhythmically. Imitates movement in response to music. Taps out simple repeated rhythms. Explores and learns how sounds can be changed. Explores colour and how colours can be changed. Understands that they can use lines to enclose a space, and then begin to use these shapes to represent objects. Beginning to be interested in and describe the texture of things. Uses various construction materials. Beginning to construct, stacking blocks vertically and horizontally, making enclosures and creating spaces. Joins construction pieces together to build and balance. Realises tools can be used for a purpose. 			
40-60+ months				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to build a repertoire of songs and dances. Explores the different sounds of instruments. Explores what happens when they mix colours. Experiments to create different textures. Understands that different media can be combined to create new effects. Manipulates materials to achieve a planned effect. Constructs with a purpose in mind, using a variety of resources. Uses simple tools and techniques competently and appropriately. Selects appropriate resources and adapts work where necessary. Selects tools and techniques needed to shape, assemble and join materials they are using. 			

Beginning of year assessment

Name _____

Date _____

Trace and write the letter families.

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

Trace and write these words. Remember to join.

chick

rain

whale

chick

rain

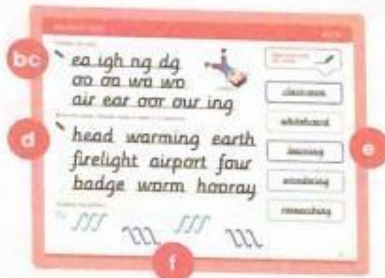
whale

Key learning

- Check the joins.
- Check correct letter and word spacing.
- Check use of the baseline.

1 Using the Practice Book (p21)

- Talk about the joins which should now be becoming familiar to children.
- Children finger trace the joins on the top lines using some key handwriting vocabulary, e.g. 'diagonal', 'horizontal', 'anticlockwise', 'ascender', 'descender'.
- Ask children to write the joins. Check the key learning points.
- Together, read the words. Ask children to write them using any joins they can remember. Check the key learning points.



- Children read and write the words, identifying the new joins. Check the key learning points.
- Self- or peer-assess: ask children to again tick the best join and one to improve.
- Encourage children to finger trace the pattern and to use coloured pencils to practise it.

2 Using the Workbook (p21)

Handwriting practice with a punctuation focus: punctuating sentences

- Children read the words. Check the key learning points.
- Ask children to write the words in the correct sequence. Prompt them to focus on a capital letter, full stop or question mark and joins where known.
- Challenge activity: rewrite one statement as a question and count the punctuation in the boxes given.
- Self- or peer-assess: ask children to tick the best capital, punctuation mark and join and to find one of each to improve.



3 Extra support

Small group work: Practice Book

- Ask children to finger trace each join.
- Read the words together, spotting the known joins, before children write each on a baseline in their books.

Small group work: Workbook

- Revisit capital letters and end-of-sentence punctuation.
- Children sequence the words using word cards before working in the Workbook.

Homework

- PCM 20 on page 57.

4 Common errors

- Inconsistent letter size or spacing.
- Forgetting capital letter.
- Letters not on the baseline.

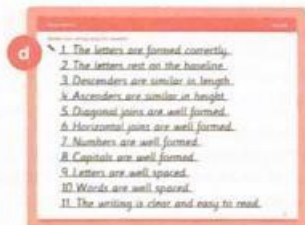
Unit 29 Assessment

Key learning

- Check the joins
- Check correct letter and word spacing.
- Check use of the baseline.

1 Using the Practice Book (pp30-31)

- Talk about and read the menu together. Ask children to copy out the menu in their best handwriting, using all the joins they know.
- Check the key learning points above plus any issues children can remember to add to their checklist for excellent handwriting. Do not penalise children who are now managing to transfer their knowledge of the key joins to new letters. However, we do not expect or show this transference until *Penpals for Handwriting Year 3*.
- Children read and write the words.
- Self- or peer-assess: ask children to read each statement on page 31. They should write the statement number and add a ✓ or ✗ to show whether they think they have achieved it.
- Children finger trace and write the pattern.



2 Using the Workbook (p30)

Handwriting practice with a spelling focus: contractions

- Read the words together.
- Now ask children to write the words. Focus on the joins. Check the key learning points.
- Ask children to trace the words, then fill in the gaps in the chart. Remind them to take care with spacing when writing the contracted form.
- Challenge activity: write a sentence using pronouns and a contraction.
- Self- or peer-assess: ask children to tick the best join and a word with an apostrophe, finding one of each to improve.



3 Extra support

Small group work: Practice Book

- Read the menu together, spotting the known joins.
- Support children to copy out each line with care, providing baselines if this helps.

Small group work: Workbook

- Revisit contracted forms, e.g. 'I've' for 'I have'.
- Children work with word cards to match full and contracted words before working in the Workbook.

Homework

- PCM 29 on page 62.

4 Common errors

- Inconsistent letter size or spacing
- Forgetting capital letter.
- Letters not on the baseline.

Appendix I: Key Notes

Formation of Specific Letters and Joins

The use of a curly form of k will be used not a straight k. This is because its flow allows it to be more easily joined and it looks different to the capital letter.

There is no exit stroke from the lower case o when it is not joined.

Two different forms of e are used to show how it alters when other letters are joined to it.

g,j and y are letters that do not join (only considered in year 6 for personal style).

x and z are never joined to or from other letters as the join is uncomfortable and creates malformation of letters. Handwriting is also faster and more legible if not continuously joined. (only considered in year 6 for personal style).

Capital Letters

Taught in Year 1 and revisited when appropriate in other years. Capital letters should be written from top to bottom and left to right.

Y- Use a central stalk as opposed to a slanting one. This distinguishes the capital letter from the lower case and retains its shape when written at speed.

H- Form H using two downward strokes followed by a horizontal line left to right. The alternative one stroke followed by a horizontal line and further downstroke may represent a letter M when written at speed.

K-Form this with two pencil strokes rather than three as it is more fluently formed when writing at speed.

Spacing Between Words

The spacing between words should be no wider than one or two of the children's own letter O.

Move away from the use of finger spaces for leaving space between words after the children are 5 or 6 years old or when they understand the principle. Fingers can become a hinderance when a child is trying to write more fluently and fingers get bigger. Left handed children should never be asked to use their own fingers as this is impractical and impedes their writing.

Appendix J:

Glossary Key Terms

This glossary includes key vocabulary for mark-making and the development of handwriting in the early years.

Wherever possible we believe it is important to use correct terminology to describe patterns with children, but, in all cases, it is assumed that practitioners will use language that is most appropriate for the child with whom they are working.

In *Penpals for Handwriting Foundation* provision there is an emphasis on becoming familiar with vocabulary to describe parts of the hand, wrist and arm, the language of movement (shoulder, upper body, etc.), as well as the language necessary for talking about patterns and the formation of letters. We emphasise the importance of balance as children develop skills in controlling their movements within any given space (referred to as 'proprioception').

Active learning: Tells us about a child's motivation in terms of their involvement, their determination to keep trying and their enjoyment of learning and achievement.

Angled movements or zig-zags: Patterns that feature two or more connecting horizontal, vertical or diagonal lines.



Ascender: The parts of a letter which extend above the x-height. See Figure 1.

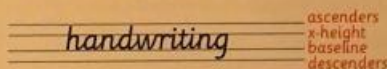


Figure 1: Baseline, x-height, ascenders and descenders.

Balance: The successful co-ordination of gross and fine motor skills, often linked to space.

Baseline: The line on which letters sit. In *Penpals* we advocate using a single baseline. See Figure 1.

Bi-lateral movement: The ability to use both sides of the body at the same time, e.g. to do the same thing such as pushing a rolling pin, to use alternating movements such as when walking, or using different movements on each side such as when cutting with scissors while holding and controlling the paper with the other hand.

Break letters: Letters which are not usually joined.

Circles: Patterns that feature circles, either clockwise or anticlockwise.



Pattern: A description of the movement needed for correct letter formation.

Patterns: Mark-making that complements children's development of strokes that can be linked to the goal of letter formation.

Playing and exploring: Tells us about a child's engagement in terms of their ability to find out and explore, using what they know in their play and being willing to have a go.

Proprioception: The co-ordination of motor skills within a specific space.

Shoulder movement: Used when children are making full use of their arm movements for mark-making.

Spirals: Patterns that feature one curved line, growing out from the centre, inwards from the outside and move in clockwise or anticlockwise directions.

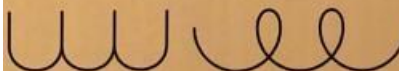


Straight lines and crosses: Patterns that feature straight lines in any direction.



Upper body muscles: Used when children are learning to support their head and to reach, grasp and walk as well as developing the strength in the body to balance.

Upward loops or garlands: Patterns that feature looped movements, starting with an upwards pencil line.

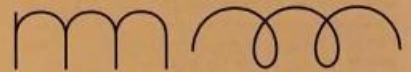


x-height: The height of a lowercase x, and by extension the height of all lowercase letters excluding ascenders. See Figure 1.

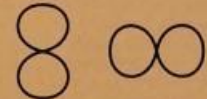
Crossing the midline: the ability to reach across the middle (of an imaginary line down the middle) of the body with the arms and legs crossing over to the opposite side, e.g. being able to draw a horizontal line across a page without having to change hands in the middle.

Descender: The parts of a letter which descend below the baseline. See Figure 1.

Downward loops, bridges or arcades: Patterns that feature looped movements, starting with a downwards pencil line.



Eights: Patterns that feature figures of eight in vertical or horizontal planes. The horizontal plane is very tricky.



Fine motor skills: The development of smaller controlled movements of the hand and fingers.

Gross motor skills: The development of controlled movements of the whole body or limbs such as the arms and legs.

Handedness: The preference for using either the left or right hand in gross and fine motor skills.

Hand-eye co-ordination: The ability to control hand movement by using vision.

Letter families: These include the following families:

Long-legged giraffe letters:

l, i, t, u, j, y

One-armed robot letters:

r, b, n, h, m, k, p

Cutty caterpillar letters:

c, a, d, o, s, g, q, e, f

Zig-zag monster letters:

z, x, v, w

Mark-making: Mark-making that complements children's development of writing from scribbles to strokes to shapes to letters.

Links to national guidelines

Penpals F1 and *F2* activities support many national guidelines including:

- The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS, 2014) and Development Matters with the embedded characteristics of effective learning (non-statutory guidance)
- EYFS Profile Handbook 2014 Standards & Testing Agency
- Curriculum for Excellence (3-18)
- Framework for Children's Learning for 3 to 7-year-olds in Wales: Foundation Phase, Yr Adran Plant, Addysg, Dysgu Gydaol Oes a Sgiliau Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills
- Northern Ireland Curriculum, Foundation Stage

Penpals complements children's growing knowledge of phonics and it is envisaged that *Penpals F1* and *F2* will be used throughout the Foundation stage and alongside the chosen resource for delivering the discrete daily phonics session. *Penpals F1* is ideally suited to children working within Phases 1 and 2 of *Letters and Sounds*, while *Penpals F2* goes on to support Phases 3 and 4 where possible. Beyond Foundation, *Penpals Y1-6* provides phonics and spelling (as well as punctuation and grammar) contexts in the write-in workbooks.