



The Orchards Primary Academy

Where learning has no limits and personal growth is endless...

GREEN
HEART

Handwriting

At the Orchards Primary Academy, we follow a journey to continuous cursive handwriting.

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

Our handwriting programme follows six key development stages:

- Warm up activities: Developed to build hand and wrist strength, upper body strength and improve co-ordination.
- Let's get ready to write: Aimed at developing gross and fine motor skills to build strength and stability, and visual perception skills to discriminate between different letter shapes.(All lower case letters are shown using a printed style.)
- Forming letter families: Created to teach children sets of 'letter families' with the aim of securing the correct letter formation.
- Positioning and pre-cursive: Targeted on the beginnings of joining with a focus on forming letters of the correct relative size, positioning and spacing. (Continuous Cursive style with the horizontal and diagonal strokes needed to join letters.)
- Joining letters: Designed to develop pupils' understanding of different types of letter joins (and the letters best left unjoined) in an aim to increase legibility, quality and consistency. (Lower case letters are shown consistently joined in a Continuous Cursive style.)
- Increasing fluency, speed and style: Designed to develop pupils' understanding of different types of letter joins (and the letters best left unjoined) in an aim to increase legibility, quality and consistency. (Lower case letters are shown consistently joined in a Continuous Cursive style.)

These steps aren't designed to be taught to a specific age group. Each step provides ideas to develop a specific area of handwriting that would work well with all primary age children.

The journey to continuous cursive:

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <p>Diagonal joins</p> <p>(the most common letter join - formed from the baseline)</p> | <p>used to join:</p> <p>a, b, c, d, e, h, i, k, l, m, n, p, q, s, t, u, x, z</p> | <p>to these letters:</p> <p>b, e, f, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, t, u, v, w, x, y, z</p> | <p>and to these tricky letters (where the letter is formed in an anticlockwise movement):</p> <p>a, c, d, g, o, q, s</p> |
| <p>Horizontal joins</p> <p>(formed from the top of the letter)</p> | <p>used to join:</p> <p>o, r, v, w</p> | <p>to these letters:</p> <p>b, e, f, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, t, u, v, w, x, y, z</p> | <p>and to these tricky letters (where the letter is formed in an anticlockwise movement):</p> <p>a, c, d, g, o, q, s</p> |
| <p>Descender joins</p> <p>(formed from the loop of a descender)</p> | <p>used to join:</p> <p>f, g, j, y</p> | <p>to these letters:</p> <p>b, e, f, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, t, u, v, w, x, y, z</p> | <p>and to these tricky letters (where the letter is formed in an anticlockwise movement):</p> <p>a, c, d, g, o, q, s</p> |

Letter families:

The ladder family (l, i, u, t, y, j)



- l** down from the top
- i** down, lift and dot
- u** down, round, up and down
- t** down from the top, curve, lift and across
- y** down, round, up, down and round
- j** down to the bottom, around, lift and dot

The one-armed robot family (n, m, h, k, b, p, r)



- n** down and up, around, down and stop
- m** down and up, around, down and up around, down
- h** down from the top, up, around and down
- k** down from the top, up and right round, kick
- b** down from the top, and around
- p** down from the top, up and around
- r** down, up, around and stop

The curly caterpillar family (c, a, d, e, s, g, f, q, o)



- c** curve around and stop
- a** curve around, up and down
- d** curve around, up to the top and down
- e** up and diagonal across, curve round and stop
- s** curve around, curve around
- g** curve around, up, down to the bottom and around
- q** curve, down and cross
- o** curve around, up, down to the bottom and flick
- f** curve around and up around

The zigzag monster family (z, v, w, x)



- z** across, diagonal down, across
- v** diagonal down, diagonal up
- w** diagonal down, diagonal up, diagonal down and diagonal up
- x** diagonal down, lift, diagonal down

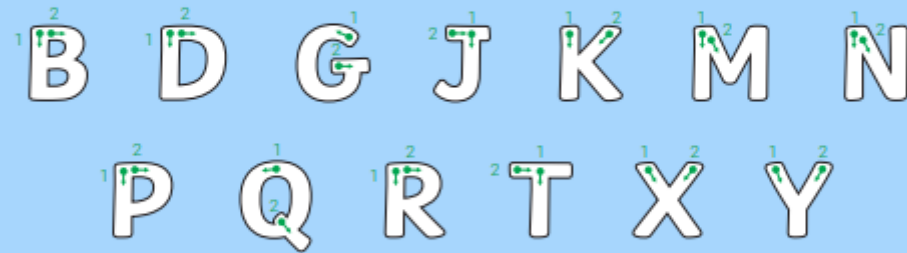
Capital letter families:

Capital letters are all formed at the same height and they're not joined to other letters. Although this means the order of the strokes is not as important as when lower case letters are formed, we've still provided some handy formation suggestions.

Capitals without lifting (C, L, O, S, U, V, M, W, Z)



Capitals with one lift (B, D, G, J, K, M, N, P, Q, R, T, X, Y)



Capitals with two or more lifts (A, E, F, H, I)



KS1 National Curriculum links:

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided. Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs. Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Statutory requirements

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 practise to these.

Statutory requirements

Pupils should be taught to:

- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another.
- start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters.
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

KS2 National Curriculum links:

Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling. Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.

Statutory requirements

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; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

Statutory requirements

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.

Intent

Our handwriting programme offers a school-wide consistent approach with a planned sequence of lessons to help teachers ensure they have progressively covered the skills required to meet the aims of the National Curriculum for writing transcription and the related Early Learning Goals. Step 1 (Let's get ready to write) aims to help children to develop their fine and gross motor skills and pencil control as a precursor to effective handwriting; to show good control and coordination in large and small movements, to move confidently in a range of ways while safely negotiating space, to handle equipment and tools effectively and to safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques.

Step 2 and 3 (Forming letter families and Positioning and pre-cursive) aim to teach the children the statutory objectives from the year 1 and year 2 curriculum: to sit correctly at a table, to hold a pencil comfortably and correctly, to begin to form letters in the correct direction and of the correct relative size to one another, to start and finish letters in the right place, to form capital letters and the digits 0-9 of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters, to understand which letters belong to handwriting 'families', to start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and to use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Step 4 and 5 (joining letters and fluency, speed and style) teach the statutory skills from the year 3 – year 6 curriculum: to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters; to increase the legibility, fluency, consistency and quality of their handwriting; to ensure that their lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch; to write with increasing speed by choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters and to choose the writing implement that is best suited to a task.

Our handwriting programme intends to take all pupils on a journey to using fluent, speedy and joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. This in turn, will help to support their composition and spelling.

Implementation

Following the programme promotes confidence in approach across our setting; this is detailed in our handwriting progression map.

Our detailed planning and progressive sequence assures subject quality, sufficient depth of coverage and skills and equips our teachers with the curriculum expertise to deliver effective writing transcription lessons. Our supporting resources enable effective curriculum implementation and can be differentiated to meet individual pupil needs. Where gaps in pupils' skills are identified, our handwriting materials are used in intervention sessions to enhance pupils' capacity to access the full curriculum. Our handwriting lessons have built in assessment opportunities, which give reliable snapshots of pupil progress. Our pupils practise handwriting daily at the start of each day, irrespective of age.

Impact

The impact of our handwriting programme is seen across the whole school with an increase in the profile of handwriting. We have a consistent approach where handwriting expectations are clear and the same technical vocabulary is used with, and spoken by, all teaching staff and learners. Whole school and parental engagement is also improved through our home learning tasks.

Our handwriting programme encourages a sense of pride in pupils' written work. The impact of our approach is noticeable within written work in all areas of the curriculum.

| Level expected at the end of EYFS. | Key Stage 1 National Curriculum Expectations | Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Expectations |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show good control and coordination in large and small movements. • move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. • handle equipment and tools effectively. • safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques. | <p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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. | <p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. |

Progression Map

| | EYFS | Key Stage One | | Key Stage Two | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| | 3 and 4 year olds Reception Early learning goals | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 |
| Letter Formation, Placement and Positioning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use large-muscle movements to wave flags and streamers, paint and make marks. Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors. Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils Shows a preference for a dominant hand. Use some of their print and letter knowledge in their early writing. For example: writing a pretend shopping list that starts at the top of the page; write 'm' for mummy. Write some letters accurately. Develop their small motor skills so that they can use a range of tools competently, safely and confidently. Suggested tools: pencils for drawing and writing, paintbrushes, scissors, knives, forks and spoons. Use their core muscle strength to achieve a good posture when sitting at a table or sitting on the floor. Develop the foundations of a handwriting style which is fast, accurate and efficient. Form lower case and capital letters correctly. Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases. Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To write lower case and capital letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place with a good level of consistency. To sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly. To form the digits 0-9. To understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters. To form lower case letters of the correct size, relative to one another. To use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To use a neat, joined handwriting style with increasing accuracy and speed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant and by ensuring that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase the speed of their handwriting so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of writing down what they want to say. To be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, e.g. quick notes or a final handwritten version. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 and by choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task. |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--|---|---|--|--|--|---|
| Joining Letters | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To begin to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To continue to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and to understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To confidently use diagonal and horizontal joining strokes throughout their independent writing to increase fluency. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To confidently use diagonal and horizontal joining strokes throughout their independent writing in a legible, fluent and speedy way. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To recognise when to use an unjoined style (e.g. for labelling a diagram, for writing an email address or for algebra) and capital letters (e.g. for filling in a form). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To begin to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters. |
|-----------------|--|---|---|--|--|--|---|

Year 1

| | Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 | Week 5 | Week 6 | Week 7 | Week 8 | Week 9 | Week 10 | Week 11 | Week 12 |
|--------|---|--------|--------|-------------------|-------------------|--|---|--------|--|-------------------|---------|-----------------------------|
| Autumn | The Ladder Family (l, i, u, t, y and j) | | | | | | Assess and Review | | The One-Armed Robot Family (n, m and h) | | | Themed Handwriting Practice |
| Spring | The One-Armed Robot Family (k, b, p and r) | | | | Assess and Review | | The Curly Caterpillar Family (c, a, d, e, s and g) | | | | | |
| Summer | The Curly Caterpillar Family (f, q and o) | | | Assess and Review | | The Zigzag Monster Family (z, v, w and x) | | | | Assess and Review | | Themed Handwriting Practice |

Year 2

| | Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 | Week 5 | Week 6 | Week 7 | Week 8 | Week 9 | Week 10 | Week 11 | Week 12 |
|--------|---|--------|--------|-------------------|-------------------|--|---|--------|--|-------------------|---------|-----------------------------|
| Autumn | The Ladder Family (l, i, u, t, y and j) | | | | | | Assess and Review | | The One-Armed Robot Family (n, m and h) | | | Themed Handwriting Practice |
| Spring | The One-Armed Robot Family (k, b, p and r) | | | | Assess and Review | | The Curly Caterpillar Family (c, a, d, e, s and g) | | | | | |
| Summer | The Curly Caterpillar Family (f, q and o) | | | Assess and Review | | The Zigzag Monster Family (z, v, w and x) | | | | Assess and Review | | Themed Handwriting Practice |

Year 3 and Year 4

| | Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 | Week 5 | Week 6 | Week 7 | Week 8 | Week 9 | Week 10 | Week 11 | Week 12 |
|--------|---|--------|--------|-------------------|-------------------|--|---|--------|--|-------------------|---------|----------------------|
| Autumn | The Ladder Family (l, i, u, t, y and j) | | | | | | Assess and Review | | The One-Armed Robot Family (n, m and h) | | | Handwriting Practice |
| Spring | The One-Armed Robot Family (k, b, p and r) | | | | Assess and Review | | The Curly Caterpillar Family (c, a, d, e, s and g) | | | | | |
| Summer | The Curly Caterpillar Family (f, q and o) | | | Assess and Review | | The Zigzag Monster Family (z, v, w and x) | | | | Assess and Review | | Handwriting Practice |

Year 5 and Year 6

| | Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 | Week 5 | Week 6 | Week 7 | Week 8 | Week 9 | Week 10 | Week 11 | Week 12 |
|--------|---|--------|--------|-------------------|-------------------|--|---|--------|--|---------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Autumn | The Ladder Family (l, i, u, t, y and j) | | | | | | Assess and Review | | The One-Armed Robot Family (n, m and h) | | | Handwriting Practice |
| Spring | The One-Armed Robot Family (k, b, p and r) | | | | Assess and Review | | The Curly Caterpillar Family (c, a, d, e, s and g) | | | | | |
| Summer | The Curly Caterpillar Family (f, q and o) | | | Assess and Review | | The Zigzag Monster Family (z, v, w and x) | | | Assess and Review | | Handwriting Practice | |

How to Write Continuous Cursive Letters

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

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