

1. Introduction

When communicating ideas in writing it is important that pupils use a handwriting style which is neat and legible. It is vital that pupils can write quickly, comfortably and legibly as it is a skill needed in all curriculum areas. Pupils' self-esteem is also heightened when they are able to take pride in their handwriting.

2. Aims and objectives

This policy aims to achieve the following:

1. Have a consistent approach across the whole school to ensure high level of presentation for handwriting.
2. Adopt a consistent approach towards handwriting by all adults when teaching pupils or writing in pupils' books, on the whiteboard or on displays.
3. Pupils to learn to write in a neat, legible style with fluency and speed through
 - a. having the correct pencil grip
 - b. forming all letters correctly
 - c. knowing the size and orientation of all letters and numbers¹
 - d. knowing the entry and exit point of all letters
 - e. joined-up handwriting
4. Pupils to write using correct formation to develop fluency and speed whilst writing.
5. Instil in pupils the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.
6. Present work in a neat and orderly fashion, appropriate to the task.

3. Principles

In order to achieve the above aims, the following principles are followed at Bigland Green:

- Pupils experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line and are given support in finding a correct grip.
- Encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- Pupils are supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting.
- Pupils are shown how to be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- Encouraged to use their skills with confidence and pride in real life situations.
- Teachers take care to use the correct script when writing on the board when marking and when writing for display purposes.

4. Provision

Handwriting and expected standards of presentation are taught as a whole class activity. Some additional lessons at the beginning of a term may be necessary. Intensive teaching or blocking of a week or two is recommended at the start of each school year to clarify expectations, with further reinforcement in weekly lessons.

¹ Wherever letters are referred to it means 'letters and numbers'

5. Teaching Time

There should be a minimum of one 15 minute handwriting lesson each week as well as time to practise. The lesson structure should be:

- 3 minutes: Brief warm-up exercises led by teacher or the TA
- 4 minutes: Staff members model letter formation of letters in isolation, joins or words
- 8 minutes: Staff members circulate and intervene to secure understanding and progress

In addition, teachers should act as a model when writing on the board or marking work, using a fluent joined style where appropriate. A model of the agreed handwriting style should be displayed in all classrooms. In addition, posters around the school environment should also model expectations for handwriting and presentation.

6. The Handwriting Scheme

Bigland Green uses the *Nelson Thornes Handwriting Scheme* to help pupils develop their handwriting, based on the clear, upright style of Nelson.

Letter formation as per the scheme is as follows:

Please note the formation of the letter 'k' is 'k' in EYFS and KS1 and 'k' in KS2 to avoid confusion.

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		

Numbers:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Break Letters:

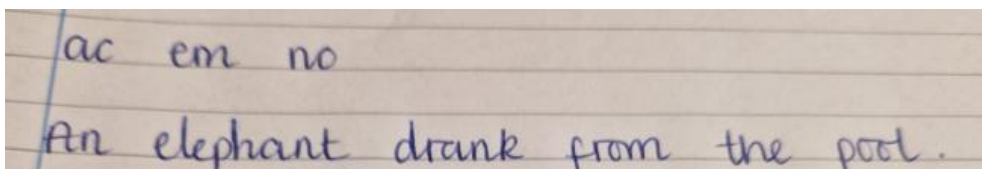
Once pupils are taught the formation of letters. Pupils need to be shown the letters that do not join. A small space should be left after each break letter. No join is made to and from the letter 'z'.

Entry and Exit points of letter joins:

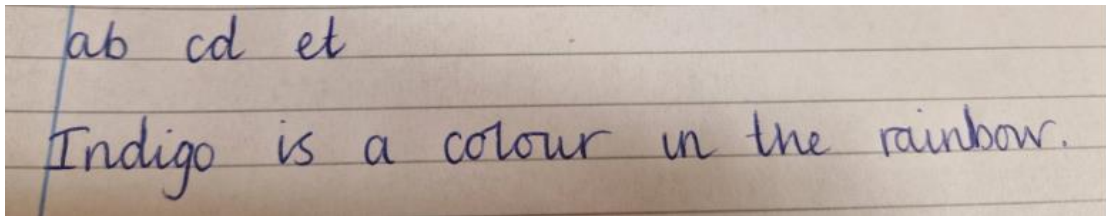
Once pupils learn the break letters. Pupils should be taught the entry and exit points of each letter. This should be done in isolation so that pupils can develop fluency of joins. This will enable all pupils to make correct joins in the later stages.

The Four Joins

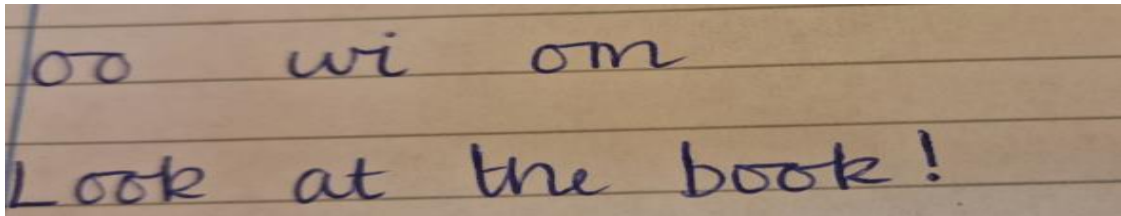
1. Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. in, am, co



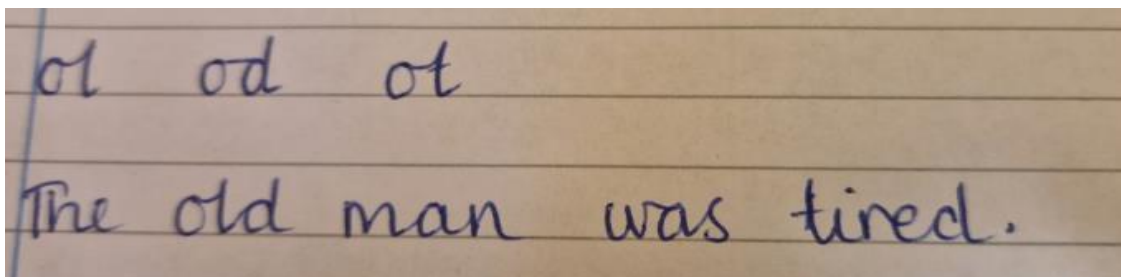
2. Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ab, ch, il



3. Horizontal joins e.g. o a, wo, og, wi



4. Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. wh, ob, al



Pupils must be taught how to correctly form individual letters first so that they see them as individual units before learning to join. These unit of letters should be taught in groups. The letters in each group all start in the same way.

Curly caterpillar letters: **c a d, e, f, g, o, q, s**

One-armed robots: **r, m, n, p**

Long-armed robots: **b, h, k, l, t**

Long Ladder: **i, j, u, y**

Zig-Zag: **v, w, x, z**

Teachers should teach this style drawing from the Nelson scheme using objectives for English where possible and addressing issues from assessment and observation.

The knowledge, skills and understanding to be taught to each key phases are included in appendix 2. Appendix 3 contains the expected teaching sequences for each of the Year groups.

7. Pen licences

Children in Year 1 can attain pen license for handwriting. Pen license should not extend to other subject areas.

8. Assessment and monitoring

All teachers have high expectations of pupils in regards to handwriting and presentation of work in books, and will encourage pupils to take pride in their work. Pupils' writing and presentation in books will be monitored by class teachers and teaching assistants on a daily basis. Pupils will be

observed as they write during handwriting lessons and provided with the necessary support and guidance.

Subject leaders will monitor pupils' writing across the school at least once every term. Team leaders will monitor pupils' writing in their team on an on-going basis. When monitoring pupils' writing the following will be taken into consideration:

- Is the writing generally legible?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with their age group?
- Is the writing consistent in all learning books?

Date approved	Signature	Review
July 2023		July 2025

Addressing Barriers to handwriting

- Identify if the pupil has fine/gross motor skill barriers.
- Addressing barriers to gross motor skills can take time and pupil needs to remain patient and resilient. Listed below are some activities to aid gross motor skill issues.
 - Pattern tracing, letter tracing
 - Drawing patterns, mazes
 - Sorting beads using tweezers
 - Moulding using playdough
 - Beading using a pipe cleaner

HANDWRITING WARM-UPS

Handwriting warm ups are beneficial to increase endurance and strength in the small intrinsic muscles of your hand, and enable you to regulate the pressure you put through your hand and arm when writing. Choose 4 or 5 activities, repeat each activity 5 –10 times prior to handwriting.

1 Star jumps and scissor jumps while standing on the mat to increase energy and concentration.

2 Chair-push ups. Whilst still sitting, put your hands onto the sides of the chair, next to your hips –try to lift your bottom off the chair, and in that position for 5 seconds. (Feet should not be on the floor to assist)

3 Wall pushups. Face a wall with hands on wall at shoulder height. Try to touch your nose to the wall while keeping your body straight

4 Desk push ups. Place your forearms on the desk, (feet on the floor), and push your weight through your arms.

5 Push your hands together in a prayer position with your elbows out to the side, while sitting or standing, and holds for 5 to 10 seconds. Alternatively facing a wall and you can do several wall push ups, keeping your body straight.

6 Birdcages. Put your fingertips on the table, with your hands arched up. Your hands should look like birdcages. Press down onto the table with your fingers, without allowing the birdcages to collapse. Hold for 5 to 10 seconds.

7 Tripod stretch and bend – hold a pen or pencil in a proper tripod grasp i.e. between the tip of the thumb and forefinger resting against the third finger. Do it in the air and practice straightening and bending the fingers.

8 Climb the pole – Hold pencil vertically in the air. Using finger only (not the palm), climb the hand up and down the pencil.

9 Paper tug of war -with another person. Hold the paper between your thumb and index finger -and pull!

10 Shake the hands out before starting to write.

11 Finger taps on the desk – one finger only at a time. Try to create sequences or tap from thumb to little finger then back again.

12 Hunch your shoulders up to your ears, hold it for 1,2,3, then drop them back and feel how they are in the relaxed position.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children take part in activities to develop their fine and gross motor-skills and recognition of patterns, for example, to form letters correctly using their index finger in sand or using paint following the spoken instructions in appendix 5 and repeating as they write. Children learn how to correctly hold a pencil. Then how to use a pencil, and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters with the focus on forming letters correctly, with a final flick to ensure ease of transition to a joined style later on. They are given the opportunities to develop their handwriting to their full potential at that age.

Children are introduced to the language of handwriting, for example, ascenders, descenders and orientation. Handwriting is linked to the phonics sessions as appropriate. Children are helped to identify and effectively use their dominant hand.

Key Stage 1

Pupils continue to develop fine and gross motor-skills with a range of multi-sensory activities. Teachers and support staff continue to insist that pupils form letters correctly, using the correct pencil grip. Pupils are taught to leave spaces between words accurately. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are able to write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and using correct spacing between words. Pupils are taught handwriting in short bursts each day linked to Letters and Sounds and the wider curriculum where possible.

Key Stage 2

During this stage pupils continue to have direct teaching and regular practice of handwriting as required. They are able to adapt their handwriting for different purposes, for example, finished work; note taking, labelling or doing diagrams. In upper KS2, pupils understand the language of handwriting, for example, descenders, ascenders, and orientation.

Provision for left-handed and other pupils

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- paper should be positioned to the left for right handed pupils and to the right for left handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case;
- pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision;
- left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed pupil so that they are not competing for space;
- extra practice with left-to-right exercises before pupils write left-to right automatically, and;
- Pupils are encouraged to have the correct sitting posture for good handwriting.
- Left-handed pupils to be sitting on the edge of the table to give enough arm space for writing.
- Pupils who display specific difficulties with handwriting will have these addressed through such interventions as slanted writing boards, rubber pencil grips, and using alternative writing media. Individual cases may be referred to the SENCO where necessary.

Appendix 3: Teaching sequence and whole school expectations

Nursery

Experiences

- Opportunities to watch adults writing and for children to write for themselves both inside and outside.
- Attempt writing for various purposes using features of different forms such as lists, stories and instructions. When supported by an adult attention could be drawn to forming correctly.

Teaching

- Use a pencil, or other writing tool, and hold it correctly.
- Pattern making.
- Children to be taught to write their own names by forming the letters correctly using the spoken instructions, as an adult focus activity i.e. "Under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail." This will be supported by making the letters in the air, in sand, with paint etc.
- Staff must insist on this and, as soon as a child appears to be starting at the incorrect position they should be reminded about where to start by saying, "Under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail."
- Once children are able to form all the letters in their name correctly they will then be taught how to form the other letters in the alphabet beginning with all the lower case letters.

Reception

- All pupils to demonstrate that they are able to form all the letters of the alphabet (upper and lower case) correctly by the end of the autumn term. Letters must start at the right point and end at the right point.
- All pupils to demonstrate that they are able to form all numbers correctly the right way round.
- By the end of Reception, all pupils should be holding their pencil correctly using the tripod grip.

Year 1

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To form all lower case and capital letters correctly including numbers. <p>Curly Caterpillar: c a d, e, f, g, o, q, s</p> <p>One-armed Robots: r, b, h, k, m, n, p</p> <p>Long Ladder: l, i, j, t, u, y</p> <p>Zig-Zag: v, w, x, z</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Before moving forward, children to write letters relative in size to one another and on the line. ▪ Once children meet above criteria, write words of the week learnt in phonics, or HFW that they need to learn to spell. Children can even write 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teach horizontal joins : oo ww, vv, rr ▪ Ensuring correct letter proportion so upper and lower case letters are not mixed up. ▪ Continue teaching the 4 joins <p>Begin to teach letters that don't join (letters that end on the left don't join): b,g,j,p,s,x,y</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To practise handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing. ▪ Ensuring correct letter proportion so upper and lower case letters are not mixed up. ▪ By term 3 chn should either know or be aware of the 4 joins. Most of the class should be able to join up.

Year 2

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
To practise handwriting patterns from Year 1.		
<p>To continue using and practising the four basic handwriting joins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ diagonal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ai, ar, un ▪ horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ou, vi, wi ▪ diagonal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ab, ul, it ▪ horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ol, wh, ot <p>Children to ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and the spacing between letters and words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To build up handwriting speed, fluency and legibility through practice. ▪ Children can engage in spelling practice, writing of their own story etc. Teacher to consistently give verbal feedback and model writing skills. 	<p>To use and practise the four basic handwriting joins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ diagonal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ai, ar, un ▪ horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ou, vi, wi ▪ diagonal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ab, ul, it ▪ horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ol, wh, ot <p>Children to ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and the spacing between letters and words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To build up handwriting speed, fluency and legibility through practice. ▪ Children can engage in spelling practice, writing of their own story etc. Teacher to consistently give verbal feedback and model writing skills. 	<p>To use the four basic handwriting joins with confidence and use these in independent writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ diagonal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ai, ar, un ▪ horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ou, vi, wi ▪ diagonal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ab, ul, it ▪ horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ol, wh, ot <p>Children to ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and the spacing between letters and words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To build up handwriting speed, fluency and legibility through practice. ▪ Children can engage in spelling practice, writing of their own story etc. Teacher to consistently give verbal feedback and model writing skills.

Year 3

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
<p>To practise correct formation of basic joins from Year 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ diagonal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ai, ar, un ▪ horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ou, vi, wi ▪ diagonal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ab, ul, it ▪ horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ol, wh, ot <p>To ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and the spacing between letters and words.</p>	<p>To practise correct formation of basic joins from the use of the four basic handwriting joins from Year 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ diagonal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ai, ar, un ▪ horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ou, vi, wi ▪ diagonal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ab, ul, it ▪ horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ol, wh, ot <p>To ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and the spacing between letters and words.</p>	<p>To practise correct formation of basic joins from the use of the four basic handwriting joins from Year 2 and use these in independent writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ diagonal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ai, ar, un ▪ horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ou, vi, wi ▪ diagonal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ab, ul, it ▪ horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ol, wh, ot <p>To ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and the spacing between letters</p>

	To build up handwriting speed, fluency and legibility through practice.	and words. To build up handwriting speed, fluency and legibility through practice.
--	---	---

Year 4

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
<p>To use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required.</p> <p>To know when to use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a clear neat hand for finished, presented work; ▪ informal writing for rough drafting etc. <p>To ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and spacing between letters and words.</p>	<p>To use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required.</p> <p>To build up speed, particularly for notes, drafts, lists etc.</p> <p>To know when to use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a clear neat hand for finished, presented work; ▪ informal writing for rough drafting etc. <p>To ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and spacing between letters and words.</p>	<p>To build up speed and ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and spacing between letters and words.</p> <p>To use a range of presentational skills, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ print script for captions, sub-headings and labels; ▪ capital letters for posters, title plates, headings; ▪ a range of computer-generated fonts and point sizes.

Year 5 and 6

To use fluent joined up handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required.
--

Appendix 4: Pen licence

Children in Nursery make marks using different tools which include pencils, crayons, felt tip pens and chalk. They are taught correct letter formation. In Reception, children continue this and are taught writing during phonic sessions. By the end of Reception they are able to write and form letters correctly using a pencil.

1. Pencil stage	2. Biro Pen
Pupils start off with a pencil in Reception / Year 1. Pupils who have a physical disability are provided with specially designed pencils.	When pupils write forming the letters correctly and join most of the letters they are eligible for the biro Pen. They must be consistent with neat presentation to retain the pen licence.

Appendix 5: letter formation





Teaching letter formation

Please carefully read the instruction on the other side before practising.



Bigland
Green
Primary
School

 <p>Around the astronaut's helmet and down into space.</p>	 <p>Down bear's back, up and round his big tummy.</p>	 <p>Curl around the cat.</p>
 <p>Round the duck's body, up to its head and down to its feet.</p>	 <p>Around the elephant's eye and down its trunk.</p>	 <p>Down the flamingo's neck, all the way to its foot, then across its wings.</p>
 <p>Round the goat's face, up to his ear; down and curl under his chin.</p>	 <p>Down, up and over the helicopter.</p>	 <p>Down the iguana's body, then draw a dot [on the leaf] at the top.</p>
 <p>All the way down the jellyfish. Dot on its head.</p>	 <p>Down the kite, up and across, back and down to the corner.</p>	 <p>All the way down the lollipop.</p>
 <p>Down, up and over the mouse's ears, then add a flick on the nose.</p>	 <p>Down the stick, up and over the net.</p>	 <p>All around the octopus.</p>

 <p>Down the penguin's back, up and around its head.</p>	 <p>Round the queen's face, up to her crown, down her robe with a flick at the end.</p>	 <p>From the cloud to the ground, up the arch and over the rainbow.</p>
 <p>Under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail.</p>	 <p>From the tiger's nose to its tail, then follow the stripe across the tiger.</p>	 <p>Down and around the umbrella, stop at the top and down to the bottom and flick.</p>
 <p>Down to the bottom of the volcano and back up to the top.</p>	 <p>From the top of the wave to the bottom, up the wave, down the wave, then up again.</p>	 <p>Start at the top, then across to the bottom of the box. Start at the top, then across to the bottom of the box.</p>
 <p>Down and round the yo-yo, then follow the string round.</p>	 <p>Zip across, zag down and across the zebra.</p>	

Instruction for practising the letter formation

- Make sure your child is holding the pencil in the proper manner – correct pencil grip.
- Start at the dot.
- Carefully watch while your child is forming the letter to make sure that they start from and finish in the correct place.
- Use the 'formation phrases' while your child is forming the letters.
- Model the letter formation so that your child can see how you are forming the letters.

© Bigland Green Primary School 2022, adapted from Little Wandle

Bigland Green ~ a great place to learn & grow

Appendix 6: Numbers with rhymes



As with the teaching the letters of the alphabet, a child must be taught by an adult how to correctly form the numbers.

The rhyme for each of the number must be repeated as the child learns to write.

0	Around and round and round we go When we get home we have a zero
1	Start at the top and down we run That's the way to make a one
2	Around and back on a railway track Two, two, two
3	Around the tree and around the tree That's the way we make a tree
4	Down and over, down some more That's the way we make a four
5	Down and around then a flag on high That's the way to make a five
6	Down we go and make a loop Number six makes a hoop
7	Across the sky and down from heaven That's the way we make a seven
8	Make an 's' and do not wait When it's joined up you have an eight
9	Make a loop and then a line That's the way to make a nine