

South Avenue Primary School



Handwriting Policy

Approved by:

Miss Smith
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Last reviewed on: September 2025

Next review due by: September 2026

Handwriting at South Avenue Primary School:

At South Avenue Primary School, we are very proud of our children's handwriting and the pride they take in their presentation. Our children embark on 'their journey to cursive handwriting' once they are secure with printed letter formation and orientation and will cover all of the requirements of the National Curriculum.

South Avenue follow the Twinkl Handwriting scheme where the letters are taught in 'letter families'.

From Year 1, children write in A4 lined books for all curriculum areas, starting with wider lines then gradually narrower as they acquire the skills needed to adapt to the size. We focus on developing autonomous, consistent and neat handwriting across all subject areas. Our curriculum encourages children to take pride in their presentation and to always produce work to their highest standard. We recognise that neat, legible handwriting and presentation are important life skills.

Children at South Avenue work towards achieving a 'handwriting pen licence' in Year 3 onwards.

Aims:

- To have a consistent approach across the whole school to ensure high levels of presentation.
- To create a sense of pride in producing work to a high standard.
- To achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed (and joined) cursive handwriting.
- To develop fluency and speed; writing with confidence and correct orientation.
- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books and whiteboards, and when modelling writing.
- To aid spelling through visual and kinaesthetic memory of spelling patterns.
- To value, encourage and reward good handwriting.
- **To adopt an ethos of 'All Writing is Best Writing'.**

Handwriting Overview for South Avenue Primary School.

At South Avenue, children embark on 'the journey to cursive handwriting'. The word cursive comes from the Latin "cursivus" which means flowing. Cursive handwriting helps children to gain the flow that writing requires.

In EYFS:

- Children start mark making on plain paper but are soon introduced to lines to encourage and support the appropriate position on the baseline
- Children regularly explore line and pattern making
- Movements are regularly incorporated to enhance gross motor skills such as: air writing, pattern making and dancing
- Children are supported in developing balance and upper body strength to help with the core strength and posture for writing through PE activities and daily Write Dance activities
- Children engage with daily hand strengthening
- As part of our continuous provision and targeted support, children develop fine motor skills: fastening, buttons, pulling up zips, threading, tweezers, cutting, sticking, pinching, making collages with wool or string etc
- As part of daily Phonics lessons, printed letter formation is focused on, modelled and practised.
- Children have opportunities to learn letter formations through a sensory approach and then apply to handwriting
- Children are taught using a tripod grip
- In EFYS, our children learn the different shaped letter families (**Appendix 4**)

- Great emphasis is also placed on the correct formation of numeral digits, with a focus on appropriate and consistent size and orientation
- Children are taught to recognise and use capital letters
- Children are taught that we write from left to right and left-handed children are given support in finding a comfortable writing position.

In KS1, children are exposed to printed and cursive script on displays and around the school. Appropriate script to the age group should be modelled by adults during teaching and feedback.

As letter blends and high frequency words are taught, they will be done so in a printed script and modelled printed by the teacher.

Learning pre-handwriting patterns is the important first step in handwriting, with children learning the shapes and strokes needed to correctly form letters.

There are no requirements to teach cursive handwriting either in EYFS or at this stage in the National Curriculum for English therefore we place an emphasis on the acquisition of letter shape, space and size before joins are taught and an awareness that some letters are best left un-joined.

In EYFS, we aim to make writing fun and give our children the firm foundations on which to begin their 'journey to cursive'.

By the end of EYFS children will be:

- using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip
- printing letters using the correct sequence of movements, starting and ending in the correct place
- pattern making and letter forming in various media
- attempting to write words/short sentences using a printed script

In KS1

- Handwriting is taught as a discrete subject daily
- The correct position for writing and the tripod grip is reinforced and built upon from EYFS (**Appendix 2 and 3**)
- Gross and fine motor skills continue to be a priority in KS1 with daily Write Dance lessons in year R and 1 and 3 x weekly in year 2 to support gross motor skills development
- Children practise patterns and free flowing motions daily and continue to build on hand strength from EYFS

Children should:

- be consolidating their understanding and use of printed script letter formations and recognise the beginning and end points for each letter
- 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
- understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these
- All children write with a pencil
- There is continual emphasis on consistency in size (Inc. capitals relative to lower case) and orientation. In addition, there is continued emphasis placed on appropriate spacing (in relation to letter size) and position on the base line
- Teaching and encouragement of appropriate posture and pencil grip continue to be core
- Unless the task dictates differently, children write on lined paper with the width decreasing appropriately according to the child's stage of development

KS1 teachers put particular focus on:

- Continuing to develop their fine and gross motor skills through a multi-sensory range of activities
- Learning letter families and applying and using knowledge from Phonics lessons
- Writing both lower case and upper-case letters consistently in the correct orientation
- Writing from left to write with all letters sitting on the line
- Finding a convenient position for their page and having the correct posture and position for writing
(Appendix 2)

Children are taught:

- Early cursive joins – (without lead-ins)
- The diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters
- Ascenders and descenders (ensuring that ascenders reach the appropriate height and that descenders sit below the line)
- Break letters (**letters which are not joined from b g j p q x y z s**)
- To confidently use the lines in their A4 writing books, working towards forming letters of consistent size, shape and orientation
- Children who are not making expected progress with their handwriting are given extra support and support materials
- Spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

The teaching of letter formation should be consistent throughout the school and therefore using the same language - referring to the 4 letter families throughout the school and giving the same instructions for letter formation, starting and ending points. (see teacher script Appendix 1)

Loop Ladder Family			
1	Start at the top, come all the way down and flick	1	Start at the top, come down and go across
2	Start at the top, come down and flick, L2 and dot	2	Start at the top, come down, L2, Across at the bottom
3	Start at the top, come all the way down and curve, L2 and cross	3	Start at the top, come down, L2, Across at the top
4	Start at the top, come down and curve, Go back up, cross and down and flick	4	Start at the top, come down, Curve back up
5	Start at the top, come all the way down and curve to the left, L2 in dot	5	Start at the top, come down, Curve to the left, Across at the top
6	Start at the top, come all the way down and curve, Go back up, come all the way down and curve to the right	6	Slope down, slope back up, L2, Come down from the point
One-armed Bobble Family			
7	Start at the top, come down, bounce back up and over	7	Start at the top, come down, L2, Back to the top, Go all the way round and slope
8	Start at the top, come all the way down, bounce half way back up and go all the way around	8	Start at the top, come down, L2, Back to the top, Go all the way round and all the way round again
9	Start at the top, come down, bounce back up, go over, down and flick	9	Start at the top, come down, L2, Back to the top, Slope and straight up
10	Start at the top, come all the way down, bounce half way back up, go over, down and flick	10	Start at the top, come down, L2, Back to the top, Stop and straight up
11	Slope at the top, come down, bounce back up and over, Slope, bounce back up and over, Slope and flick	11	Start at the top, come down, L2, Back to the top, Slope down, slope up and straight down
12	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, L2, Stop, Slope and flick	12	Start at the top, come down, L2, Slope to, slope out
13	Start at the top, come all the way down, bounce back up and go all the way around	13	Start at the top, come down, L2, Back to the top, Go all the way round
Curly Caterpillar Family			
14	Make a curve	C	Make a curve
15	Make a curve, go up to the top, come back down and flick	A	Slope to the left, L2, Back to the top, Slope, L2, Across in the middle
16	Make a curve, go all the way up, come back down and flick	D	Start at the top, come down, L2, Back to the top, Go all the way round to the bottom
17	Make a curve, go all the way around	O	Make a curve, go all the way round
18	Make a curve, slope, make a curve back again	S	Make a curve, slope, make a curve back again
19	Make a curve, go up to the top, come all the way down and curve to the left	C	Make a curve, L2 and go across
20	Make a curve, go up to the top, come all the way down and flick	Q	Make a curve, go all the way round, L2 and slope across
21	Start with a loop then make a curve	E	Start at the top, come down, L2, Back to the top, Across at the top, L2, Across in the middle, L2, Across at the bottom
22	Make a curve, come all the way down, curve to the left, L2 and cross	F	Start at the top, come down, L2, Back to the top, Across at the top, L2, Across in the middle
Dot, Zed, Phoebe			
23	Go across, slope, go back across	Z	Go across, slope, go back across
24	Slope down, slope back up	V	Slope down, slope back up
25	Slope down, slope back up, Slope down again and slope back up	M	Slope down, slope back up, Slope down again and slope back up
26	Slope, L2 and slope across	X	Slope, L2 and slope across

By the end of KS1:

Children will be able to write legibly, using upper- and lower-case letters appropriately and with correct spacing between words. Some children who have secured letter formation and orientation will have started to be taught to write in a joined style.

Key Stage 2: Statutory guidance

Pupils should be taught to:

- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters
- understand which letters, which when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined

The majority of children entering Key Stage 2 should be starting to use a joined, cursive script which is correctly sized, positioned appropriately on the base line and produced with increasing fluency and speed.

Fine tuning takes place in Key Stage 2, through discrete and focussed sessions in addition to teaching and encouragement in written work in all subjects - **'All Writing is Best Writing'**.

This fine-tuning focusses on:

- **Quality:** Ensure letters are consistently sized with equal word spacing and that ascenders and descenders are parallel and sit on the line but do not touch words on the lines above or below.
- **Speed:** Improve speed of handwriting to allow content of writing to take precedence over the task of handwriting and be able to take 'quick notes' at a faster pace.
- **Stamina:** Have the strength and mobility to be able to write for longer periods of time without fatigue.

Where children are successful in the above, a pen licence is awarded and the use of a pen is allowed. This achievement is awarded by the Headteacher/Writing Lead and celebrated within the classroom setting/amongst peers. The expectation is that most children should be writing in pen by the end of Year 4.

Children are taught to select the appropriate type of handwriting (e.g. cursive joined, print, bold) for different purposes e.g. captions, headings, labels.

In KS2, children are exposed to cursive script on displays around school; this cursive script is modelled by adults during teaching and feedback.

Inclusion:

For pupils whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills, children with Special Educational Needs, or for children who are finding it difficult to achieve the expectation within their expected age range, intervention support is provided to enable a child to make progress in handwriting. This may take the form of 1:1, small group intervention or additional support within the classroom during writing activities. Appropriate resources and support are provided, according to need, e.g. pencil grip, adapted pencil, guide mats, and these are used during all written work. For most children, this intervention is short term, specifically targeted at the individual's need(s) e.g. certain letters being inaccurately joined, words floating above the baseline.

Assessment: Teachers will find these progression trackers on the shared area – Curriculum/Handwriting

To develop a consistent style, both formative and summative assessment of all written work takes place using the 'Handwriting Coverage Tracker' for each of the letter families:

South Avenue Handwriting Assessment Tracker		Zigzag Monsters				
	Early Learning Goals	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3 & Year 4	Year 5 & Year 6	
	Pupils can	Pupils can	Pupils can	Pupils can	Pupils can	
 <p>The Journey to Cursive Handwriting</p>	<p>bring good control and coordination in large and small movements</p> <p>move confidently in a range of ways, safely and purposefully</p> <p>handle equipment and use effectively</p> <p>safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques</p> <p>use confidently as a basic, holding a pencil</p>	<p>begin to form basic characters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place</p> <p>understand and copy letters, words, phrases and simple sentences</p> <p>handwriting 'troubles' (i.e. letters that are formed in unusual ways and to produce these)</p> <p>write using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to produce an unconfused copy of a word or sentence</p> <p>begin to copy and write simple words and phrases</p> <p>write capital letters and digits of the correct size, shape and position</p> <p>begin to copy and write simple words and phrases</p> <p>use spacing between words that reflects the size of the words</p>	<p>write using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to produce an unconfused copy of a word or sentence</p> <p>begin to copy and write simple words and phrases</p> <p>write capital letters and digits of the correct size, shape and position</p> <p>begin to copy and write simple words and phrases</p> <p>use spacing between words that reflects the size of the words</p>	<p>write using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to produce an unconfused copy of a word or sentence</p> <p>begin to copy and write simple words and phrases</p> <p>write capital letters and digits of the correct size, shape and position</p> <p>begin to copy and write simple words and phrases</p> <p>use spacing between words that reflects the size of the words</p>	<p>write using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to produce an unconfused copy of a word or sentence</p> <p>begin to copy and write simple words and phrases</p> <p>write capital letters and digits of the correct size, shape and position</p> <p>begin to copy and write simple words and phrases</p> <p>use spacing between words that reflects the size of the words</p>	<p>write using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to produce an unconfused copy of a word or sentence</p> <p>begin to copy and write simple words and phrases</p> <p>write capital letters and digits of the correct size, shape and position</p> <p>begin to copy and write simple words and phrases</p> <p>use spacing between words that reflects the size of the words</p>
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End of Key Stage 2 Assessment:

- Working towards the expected standard: - Producing legible joined handwriting
- Working at the expected standard: - Maintaining legibility, fluency and speed in handwriting through choosing whether or not to join specific letters
- Working at greater depth within the expected standard: - No additional requirements for handwriting

Monitoring

Writing Lead to monitor the teaching and learning of handwriting through:

- Lesson looks
- Book looks
- Learning walks
- Monitoring planning

Timetabling

EYFS : Daily Write Dance developing gross motor skills

Daily activities to develop fine motor skills

Year 1: Daily Write Dance

Daily activities to build on/consolidate fine motor skills

Daily discrete handwriting lessons when secure – printing letter,
learning letter families

Year 2: 3 x weekly Write Dance

Daily, discrete handwriting lessons – consolidating year 1 printed letter
formation with lead outs and recognising that some letters are best left
un-joined

Year 3 and 4: Daily, discrete handwriting lessons – teaching cursive joins –

Children should be leaving year 4 with a pen licence – interventions
where appropriate

Year 5 and 6: 3 x weekly handwriting practice and interventions put in place where

appropriate – children should be writing in a cursive, legible style all
of the time and be aware that other styles may be appropriate
dependent on the purpose for writing

APPENDIX 1 Teacher script for letter formation

Long Ladder Family	
l	Start at the top, come all the way down and flick
i	Start at the top, come down and flick. Lift and dot
t	Start at the top, come all the way down and curve. Lift and cross
u	Start at the top, come down and curve. Go back up, comeback down and flick
j	Start at the top, come all the way down and curve to the left. Lift an dot.
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.
One -armed Robot Family	
r	Start at the top, come down, bounce back up and over
b	Start at the top, come all the way down, bounce half way back up and go all the way around
n	Start at the top, come down, bounce back up, go over, down and flick
h	Start at the top, come al the way down, bounce half way back up, go over, down and flick
m	Start at the top, come down, bounce back up and over. Down and flick.
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
p	Start at the top, come all the way down. bounce back up and go all the way around
Curly Caterpillar Family	
c	Make a curve
a	Make a curve, go up to the top, come back down and flick
d	Make a curve, go all the way up, come back down and flick
o	Make a curve, go all the way around
s	Make a curve, slope, make a curve back again
g	Male a curve, go up to the top, come all the way down and cure to the left
q	Make a curve, go up to the top, come all the way down and flick
e	Start with a loop then make a curve
f	Make a curve, come all the way down, curve to the left. Lift and cross
Zig Zag Monster Family	
z	Go across, slope, go back across
v	Slope down, slope back up
w	Slope down, slope back up. Slope down again and slope back up
x	Slope. Lift and slope across

Long Ladder Family

L	Start at the top, come down and go across
I	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Across at the top. Lift. Across at the bottom
T	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Across at the top
U	Start at the top, come down. Curve back up
J	Start at the top, come down. Curve to the left. Across at the top
Y	Slope down, slope back up. Lift. Come down from the point

One -armed Robot Family

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 down. Lift. Back tot the top. Go all the way round and all the way round again
N	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Back to the top. Slope and straight up
H	Start a the top, come down. Lift. Back to the top. Slop and straight up.
M	Start a the top, come down. Lift. Back to the top. Slope down, slope up and straight down.
K	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Slope in, slope out.
P	Start at the top, come down. Lift. Back to the top. Go all the way round

Curly Caterpillar Family

C	Make a curve
A	Slope to the left. Lift back to the top. Slope. Lift. Across in the middle
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
S	Make a curve, slope, make a curve back again
G	Make a curve. Lift and go across
Q	Make a curve, go all the way round. Lift and slope across
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	Start at the top, come down. Lift, back t the top. Across at the top. Lift. Across in the middle

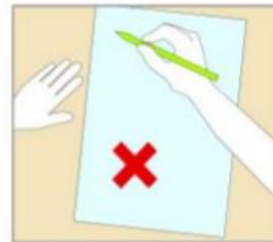
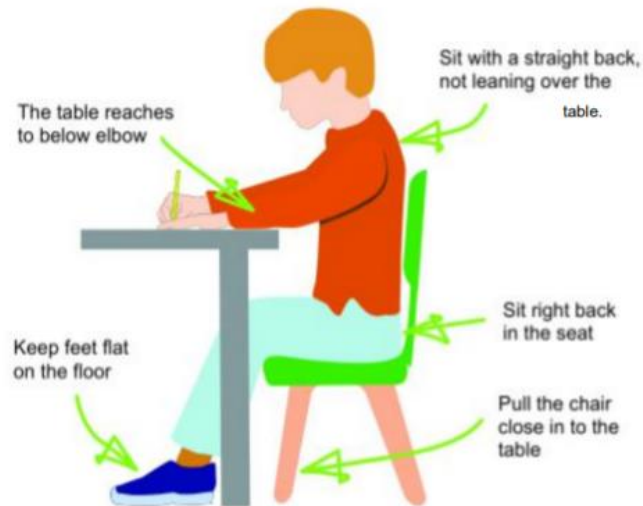
Zig Zag Monster Family

Z	Go across, slope, go back across
V	Slope down, slope back up
W	Slope down, slope back up. Slope down again and slope back up
X	Slope. Lift and slope across

Correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting

Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

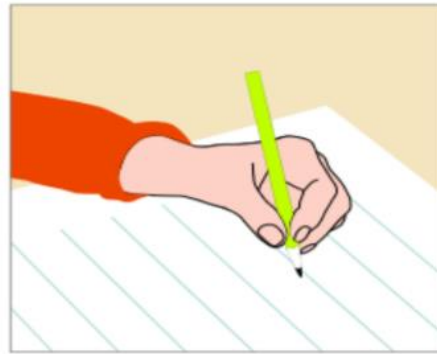
SITTING POSITION



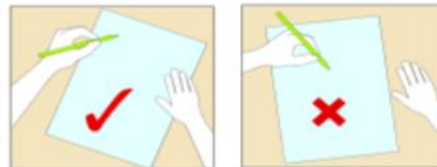
Paper position for right-handed children

LEFT-HANDED CHILDREN

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow right-handed teachers as they demonstrate letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.



- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.



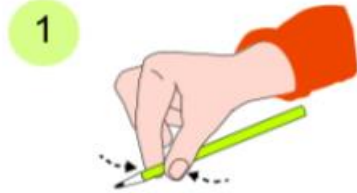
Paper position for left-handed children

Appendix 2

Appendix 3

THE TRIPOD PENCIL GRIP

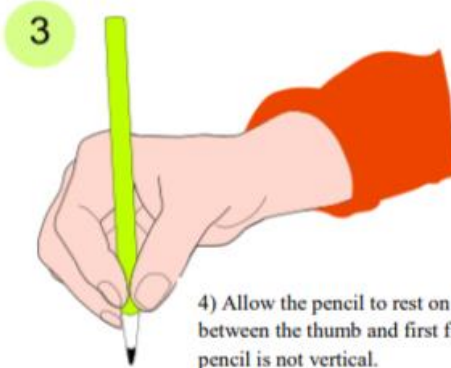
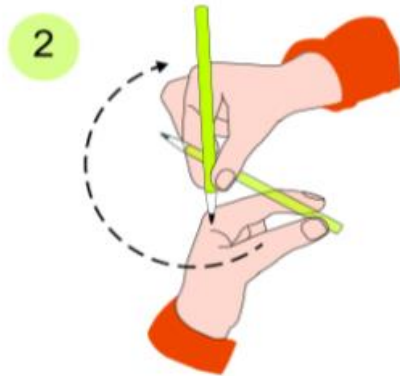
Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib.



1) Grip the pencil with your index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.

2) With your free hand, spin the pencil from underneath.

3) Use your middle finger to support the underside of the pencil.



4) Allow the pencil to rest on the web between the thumb and first finger so that the pencil is not vertical.

Appendix 4 - letter families

