

Handwriting at Education South West

Automaticity in the basics of writing enables pupils to rise to the challenges of an ambitious curriculum. Effective communication through writing depends on younger pupils developing foundational transcription skills (spelling and handwriting), regular and repeated practice in handwriting is key to gaining proficiency.

Formal teaching of handwriting begins in Reception, children at the end of the EYFS will be able to hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases. Correct letter formation and handwriting forms an important part of our Reception teaching. We put a high importance on accurate and automatic letter formation at this early stage, not least because it is known to stimulate the areas of the brain known to underpin successful reading. In the early stages of phonics instruction, practising letter formation or writing simple sentences dictated by the teacher can support recall of GPCs for spelling.

In line with the national curriculum, we learn to join in Year Two. This ensures children learn, and are automatic in their writing of, letter formation before they start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters. Allowing children time to become automatic in forming letters correctly allows them time to focus on other aspects of the writing process, such as composition and spelling.

We continue to teach and refine handwriting skills through to year 6 as repeated practice in handwriting, going beyond accuracy to fluency, leads to greater success in higher-level writing tasks. Skilful handwriting has an impact on composition. As in the younger groups, teaching handwriting, until the point of automaticity improves writing, because the pupil can spend more time planning, thinking about content and constructing sentences.

Correct pencil grip	Incorrect pencil grip
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduces hand fatigue improves legibility increases speed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leads to slow handwriting speed can cause pain during handwriting

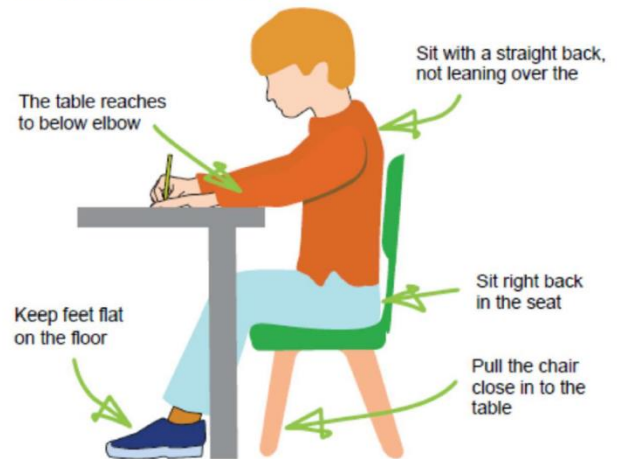
Handwriting at Wynstream

What does handwriting look like?

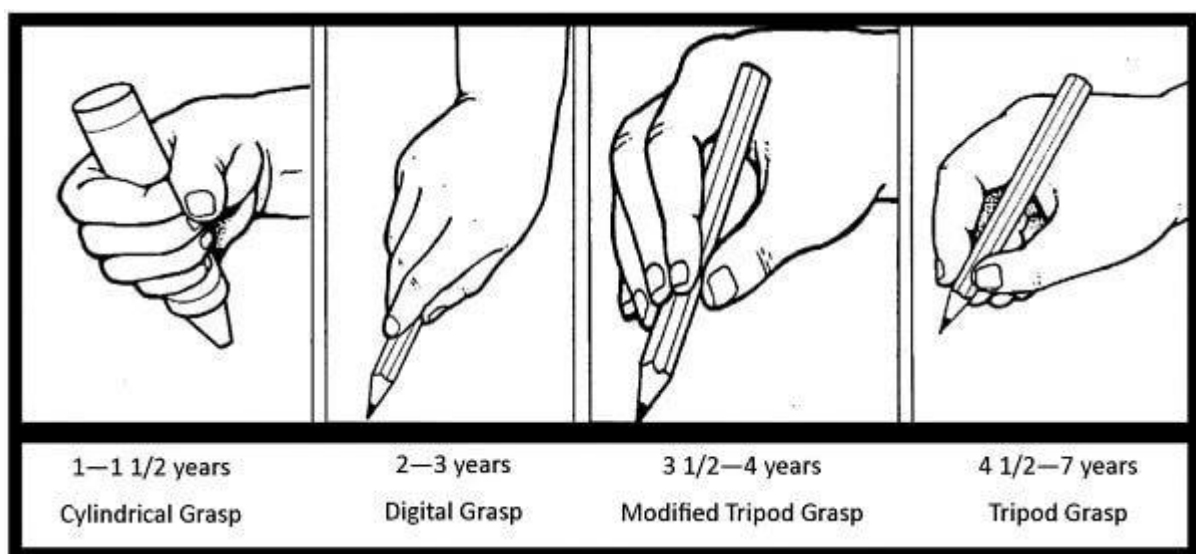
Handwriting position

- Feet flat on the floor
- Bottom at the back of the chair
- Body one fist from the table
- Shoulders down and relaxed
- Back leaning forward slightly
- Left/right hand holding the page
- Left/right hand ready in a tripod grip.

SITTING POSITION



Most children will write with a tripod grip



This video shows is an example of how to teach the tripod grip to children:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DP5htYZ5jjQ>

How is handwriting implemented at Wynstream?

	Expectation	How we will achieve these expectations?
Pre starting school 0-3 year olds	<p>Use large and small motor skills to do things independently, for example manage buttons and zips, and pour drinks.</p> <p>Show an increasing desire to be independent, such as wanting to feed themselves and dress or undress.</p>	<p>Provide babies and toddlers with lots of opportunities to feed themselves.</p> <p>Encourage babies and toddlers to dress and undress independently.</p> <p>Encourage children to help with carrying, pouring drinks, cleaning and sorting.</p> <p>Provide lots of different things for young children to grasp, hold and explore, like clay, finger paint, spoons, brushes, shells.</p>
Pre starting school 3-4 year olds	<p>Start eating independently and learning how to use a knife and forks</p> <p>Use large-muscle movements to wave flags and streamers, paint and make marks.</p> <p>Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors.</p> <p>Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils.</p> <p>Notice a preference for a dominant hand.</p> <p>Develop fine motor skills</p>	<p>Encourage children to transfer physical skills learnt in one context to another one.</p> <p>Encourage children to paint, chalk or make marks with water on large vertical surfaces. Suggestion: use walls as well as easels to stimulate large shoulder and arm movements. These experiences help children to 'cross the mid-line' of their bodies.</p> <p>When they draw a single line from left to right, say, they do not need to pass the paintbrush from one hand to another or have to move their whole body along.</p> <p>You can begin by showing children how to use onehanded tools (scissors and hammers, for example) and then guide them with hand-over-hand help.</p> <p>The tripod grip is a comfortable way to hold a pencil or pen. It gives the child good control. The pen is pinched between the ball of the thumb and the forefinger, supported by the middle finger with the other fingers tucked into the hand. If support is needed encourage children to develop this grip with specially designed pens and pencils, or grippers.</p> <p>Be increasingly independent as they get dressed and undressed, for example, putting coats on and doing up zips.</p> <p>Encourage children by helping them, but leaving them to do the last steps, such as pulling up their zip after you have started it off. Gradually reduce your help until the child can do each step on their own</p> <p>Gradually reduce the help you are giving and allow the child to use tools and utensils independently.</p>

	Expectation	How we will achieve these expectations?
Reception	<p>Develop the foundations of a handwriting style which is fast, accurate and efficient.</p> <p>Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;</p> <p>Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases</p> <p>Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery;</p> <p>Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.</p>	<p>Teaching and modelling the RWI letter formation rhymes and using this formation consistently to ensure children have the correct directionality.</p> <p>In addition to handwriting being taught in phonics lessons, it should also be taught discretely for 10 minutes at least twice a week to ensure correct letter formation becomes automatic, efficient and fluent over time.</p> <p>Fine and gross motor skill enhancements will form part of the continuous provision opportunities.</p> <p>Children will use utensils independently including cutting food, scraping plates etc.</p> <p>Core strength and stability will be built to support their small motor skills. Tummy-crawling, crawling on all fours, climbing, pulling themselves up on a rope and hanging on monkey bars will be modelled and encouraged.</p> <p>Opportunities for children to develop and further refine their small motor skills will include threading and sewing, woodwork, pouring, stirring, dancing with scarves, using spray bottles, dressing and undressing dolls, planting and caring for plants, playing with small world toys, and making models with junk materials, construction kits and malleable materials like clay.</p> <p>The posture for handwriting, will be taught through phonics and handwriting sessions. High expectations about adhering to the correct posture will be implemented. Visual reminders of this will be displayed within the classroom.</p> <p>Chairs and tables within the classroom will be at the correct height for the range of children in the class, so that their feet are flat on the floor or a footrest.</p> <p>Air writing will be modelled, and correct pencil grip encouraged as part of RWI phonics lessons, handwriting sessions and within the provision.</p> <p>Children will be encouraged to draw freely. Engage children in structured activities: guide them in what to draw, write or copy.</p> <p>Capitals letter will be taught in the summer term. By the end of Reception, children must know ABOUT capital letters and can form the ones personal to them (in their names and the letter 'I')</p> <p>RWI letter formation including capital letter will be displayed in classrooms.</p>

	Expectation	How we will achieve these expectations?
Y1	<p>Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.</p> <p>Form capital letters.</p> <p>Begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.</p> <p>Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.</p> <p>Form digits 0-9</p>	<p>Handwriting is taught explicitly daily using the RWI Handwriting progression. These lessons should always begin with referring to and having high expectations of the correct sitting position, capital letters should be taught alongside lower-case letters.</p> <p>Letter formation including capitals to be displayed in all classrooms and teaching spaces.</p> <p>Number formation to be taught daily. Number formation - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wYlaCmVMBE</p> <p>Year 1 children should be secure in printed handwriting, before moving to a cursive style. As handwriting is taught in mixed age classes children may be exposed to pre-cursive and cursive teaching.</p>
Y2	<p>Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another.</p> <p>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 un-joined.</p> <p>Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters.</p> <p>Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.</p>	<p>Handwriting should be discretely taught for 5-10 minutes per day using the RWI handwriting scheme.</p> <p>High expectations within written work that capital letters are never pre-cursive or cursive.</p> <p>As children are learning the diagonal and horizontal strokes to join, the f, g, k should now be taught with a loop.</p> <p>Letter entry strokes to be displayed in classrooms.</p>
	Expectation	How we will achieve these expectations?
Y3	<p>Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined.</p> <p>Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel</p>	<p>Handwriting should be discretely taught for 5-10 minutes per day. Teach handwriting route D letter choice 2 https://teachhandwriting.co.uk/key-stage-2-handwriting.html should be used to model and teach handwriting, in conjunction with the current spelling patterns being taught.</p>
Y4		

	and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].	Pre-cursive and cursive stokes to be displayed in classrooms and all teaching spaces.
Y5	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.	Taught spelling patterns with correct letter formations should be modelled and displayed in classrooms.
Y6		Children should be encouraged to find their own writing style by experimenting with letter shapes, ie looped or not looped f, g, k. Joined or unjoined z,q. Children should be encouraged to write in pen or pencil in varying areas of the curriculum to support neat or artistic presentation.

Summary of progression in Handwriting

Nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop fine and gross motor skills • Begin to notice and use a dominant hand • Work towards independently using small tools and equipment such as cutlery, paintbrushes etc. • Work towards being able to dress and undress independently, by negotiating zips, buttons etc. • Work towards using a tripod grip when holding writing and drawing tools.
Reception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With adult support, sit in the correct position for handwriting. • Write recognisable correctly formed letters. • Hone and refine letter formation until it is automatic • Hold a pencil, using the tripod grip in almost all cases • Independently use small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery, with precision • Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing • Learn capital letter formation in the summer term,
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly, with minimal adult support • Form capital letters correctly, and use them effectively. • Form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place, beginning to notice how the size of their letters effects their overall presentation. • Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these. • Form digits 0-9 correctly.
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 un-joined. • 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.

Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters • Begin to develop a personal handwriting style through understanding which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined.
Year 4	
Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch]. • Hone handwriting skills to allow for the development of a personalised neat handwriting style. • Choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task.
Year 6	