



**Twydall**  
Primary School

**HANDWRITING  
GUIDANCE**



## Handwriting Guidance

An effective handwriting guidance is based on a style that is quick and easy to learn. It should be neat, legible and fast. Pupils should eventually develop the ability to produce letters without thinking. An automatic style releases the brain to concentrate on other ideas i.e. spelling, syntax, grammar, style and content.

Initially, handwriting will need to be taught as a discreet subject as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, with emphasis not only on letter formation, but pencil grip and sitting position. As it links with spelling and phonological development, it can be brought more into the general English teaching in Key Stage 1.

Practice, however, still requires an adult to observe and help children maintain accurate letter formation. The adult, who walks around the class, continuously correcting pencil grips, sitting position, letter formation, size or placement, will stop bad habits forming before they happen. It is better to have one good letter than a row of poorly formed ones with the purpose of learning to write well rather than finish copying the text.

Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters in words as a series of continuous flowing movements or patterns. Words can be written without taking the pencil off the page. Continuous style provides a directional left, right movement. This flowing, rhythmical movement aids speed and fluency particularly when practiced from Foundation level with the final product being neat and fast. This cursive style also lessens the chance of reversing letters by eliminating the need to lift the pencil between letters. The spaces between words become distinct and distinction between upper and lower case is clearer.

Pupils with specific learning disabilities find continuous cursive useful because the pencil stays on the page throughout every word, thus simplifying the movement, this is also a recommendation from the British Dyslexic Association. Children with motor problems learn a series of easy, rhythmical movements, which help to improve fine motor co-ordination. In addition, the motor memory of the child's hand and fingers helps him to spell, as each word becomes one movement rather than many. Ideas, images and descriptions can flow more swiftly if fewer decisions need to be made about where each letter starts and how letters are formed.

Children are introduced to the joined hand at the earliest stages. Thus, the pupil avoids learning two different styles of writing.

### Pre- Writing Skills

In the early stages of handwriting development, children are introduced to activities to establish fine motor skills. Patterning, drawing and colouring helps establish the feeling of continuous flow and teaches the hands the most frequently used movements. Multi- sensory experiences ensure that the techniques are not only fun to learn, but that pupils learn the skill effectively with a variety of learning styles.

Suggestions:

- Create patterns using a variety of tools e.g. felt tips, paint, chalk, glitter pens.
- Go outside and use playground chalks or water from squeeze bottles to create patterns on the ground.
- Introduce finger painting, painting over pre-drawn spirals and wavy lines.
- Develop fine motor control by embellishing the finished patterns with felt tip pens.
- Use a variety of surfaces e.g. white boards, black boards, different coloured paper on a horizontal or vertical surface



- Stimulate touch by using different materials such as textured boards made of velour, carpet, sandpaper.
- Use trays containing sand, salt, shaving foam to practice patterns.
- Encourage motor memory by using blindfolds, tracing in the air or on other children's backs.
- Verbalise the movements with the children to encourage auditory and kinesthetic links in memory.
- Encourage the children to produce big patterns. Large movements relax the hand and arm muscles and release a tense, tight grip. With practice movements can reduce in size.
- Trace large patterns on the floor in P.E. using hands and feet.
- Develop physical strength and co-ordination by teaching finger rhymes and games. Introduce play-dough activities involving pulling, shaping and squeezing. A more detailed list of ideas for developing co-ordination, motor control and physical strength can be found under 'everyone', Occupational Therapy Resources.
- Strengthen pencil grip by tearing paper to create collages
- Develop confident pencil control through fun activities such as dot to dot, tracing, driving through mazes, drawing and colouring.

### Hand writing development

Children need to be taught to hold and pencil correctly and write in a legible and neat style, forming all letters correctly and making sure the letters are the correct sizes relative to one another. The tripod grip is the most effective method for holding a pen. This is encouraged by all staff, along with correct posture. Letters are taught within the RWI program with a "Whoosh" and a "Swoosh" (entry and exit of cursive writing). Within KS 1 we have writing books to develop the correct size of writing and letters that sit above and below the line.

Writing Interventions are used to foster writing skills where necessary. We understand that not all of our pupils may be able to develop good penmanship due to their physical needs and adaptations are sought when needed. This continues into KS2 with more structured interventions, which may include stamina for writing. All upper KS2 are expected to use a handwriting pen for writing. Lower KS2 have to earn pen licence for consistently demonstrating acceptable cursive writing, fluency, correct formation for joins and awareness of presentation of their work. The school places a high emphasis on neat presentation in all books as this encourages a good Attitude to Learning and pride in their work.



	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Reception	To understand how to represent writing on a page. To sit correctly at a table and hold a pencil comfortably and correctly.* To begin to form all lower case letters in the correct direction; starting and finishing in the correct place.					
Year 1	To make sure the children sit comfortably when writing and hold a pencil correctly and comfortably* To form all letters correctly; starting and finishing in the correct place and recognising which letters belong to the same family when practising. To join letters together to write words.** To form capital letters correctly. To form digits 0-9 correctly.					
<p>* Research shows pencil grip is very hard to correct beyond the age of 6. Therefore priority will be given to pencil grip and writing position during Reception and Year 1.</p> <p>** NC guidance (non-statutory): Pupils should revise correct letter formation across all year groups frequently. They should be taught to write using cursive script as soon as they can form letters securely with correct orientation. School policy: whole school learning cursive style writing from Reception.</p>						
Year 2	To form lower case letters correctly, maintaining a consistent size with tall/low letters sized relative to one another. To join writing using appropriate diagonal and horizontal strokes and knowing which letters are best left unjoined. To write capital letters and digits using correct size, orientation and formation. To use regular sized spaces between words which reflects the size of the letters and to keep handwriting neat.					