Guided by God, we build a community of learners who flourish and are filled with hope.

Keighley St Andrew's C of E Primary School

Handwriting Progression Document

Intent

The intent of our handwriting strategy is to ensure that all pupils develop fluent, legible, and consistent handwriting skills. A key focus of this approach is the development of gross motor foundations, which are essential for preparing children to write. Building shoulder, arm, and core strength provides the stability necessary for effective fine motor control. From this foundation, pupils can progress to developing accurate letter formation and good posture.

The process of forming handwriting skills relies on repetition, muscle memory, and the gradual strengthening of neural pathways. To ensure handwriting learning is embedded for the long term, it is essential to use strategies that promote whole-body development alongside structured teaching and regular practice at each stage. Through this progressive approach, the strategy aims to cultivate confident, capable writers who can continue to refine and apply their handwriting skills throughout their education.

Aims

The key aims of the handwriting strategy are:

- **Developing Gross Motor Skills:** Providing opportunities to build shoulder, arm and core strength to ensure children are ready to develop their fine motor skills.
- **Developing Fine Motor Skills:** Providing activities and exercises that strengthen hand muscles and improve dexterity, supporting pupils in forming letter accurately and consistently.
- **Promoting Consistency and Legibility:** Encouraging uniformity in letter formation, spacing, and alignment, ensuring that pupils produce clear and readable handwriting.
- **Supporting Proper Posture and Grip:** Teaching pupils the correct posture, pencil grip, and arm movement, ensuring they can write comfortably for extended periods.
- **Building Confidence and Independence:** Offering opportunities for practice and progress, empowering pupils to take pride in their handwriting and use it effectively across subjects.
- **Encouraging Enjoyment of Writing:** Creating a positive and engaging environment where handwriting is viewed as an enjoyable skill, not a task, motivating pupils to develop their handwriting through fun activities and incentives.

This strategy will be implemented through direct instruction, guided practice, and ongoing assessment, with individualised support provided where necessary to meet the needs of all learners.

Adaptive teaching in handwriting for identified children focuses on tailoring instruction to meet the individual needs and abilities, ensuring that all students, regardless of their skills level, can improve their handwriting. This approach considers different learning styles, motor skills, and developmental stages.

Our Handwriting Sessions Consist of Three Elements (EEF Approach)

1. **Preparing for Handwriting**

In this first element, pupils prepare themselves physically for the handwriting session by addressing their seated position and handgrip. Proper posture and a correct pencil grip are essential for developing fluid, effective handwriting.

Key Activities:

- **Seated Position:** Pupils are reminded to sit with their feet flat on the floor, their backs straight, and their shoulders relaxed.
- **Handgrip:** Teachers guided pupils to hold their pencil with the correct grip, ensuring their fingers are positioned comfortably to support controlled writing.
- **Focus on Relaxation:** Encouraging pupils to relax their hands and arms, preparing them for smooth and fluid movements during writing.

2. **Warm-Up Activity**

The second element of the session focuses on warming up the hand muscles and practicing foundational skills needed for handwriting. Pupils engage in a brief, interactive task designed to improve their fine motor control and coordination.

Key Activities:

- **Funky Finger Warm-Up:** Pupils perform finger exercises and activities that strengthen hand muscles, such as stretching, twisting, and bending their fingers.
- **Short Pen/Pencil Task:** These tasks involve practicing hand control through actions like following a dotted line, tracing shapes, or drawing loops and curves. These activities help reinforce the fine motor skills required for letter formation.
- **Visual-Motor Coordination:** Pupils practice following lines and shapes to improve their visual tracking and control, which will support more accurate handwriting.

3. **Handwriting Activity (Teach, Practice, Apply)**

In the third element, pupils directly apply their skills they've learnt through focused handwriting activities. This task is more substantial, with pupils practicing and refining specific handwriting skills such as letter formation and joining letters.

Key Activities:

- **Teach:** Teachers demonstrate the correct formation of letters or bigrams (pairs of consecutive letters), explaining how to form them correctly with attention to directionality, size, and spacing.
- **Practice:** Pupils repeat the letters or bigrams multiple times to build muscle memory and consistency. This may involve writing on worksheets, whiteboards, or through interactive resources. Children will also apply their skills in short sentences or words.
- **Apply:** Integrating the handwriting technique into more functional writing tasks. This helps to solidify the connection between handwriting practice and writing in real contexts.

By incorporating these three elements – preparation, warm-up, and main handwriting activity – each session ensures that pupils are ready, engaged, and supported in developing their handwriting skills. Gradually building their confidence and fluency.

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching.

EYFS and Year 1 & 2:

The focus is on correct pencil grip and forming printed letters correctly. By the end of Year 1, children should be able to form all letters correctly and on the line. In order to help children to learn the letter formations, a multi-sensory approach needs to be taken using a range of writing materials and implements to develop both gross and fine motor skills. Year 2 children will be taught the leads in and out. Children that naturally begin to join these letters are encouraged to however children are not explicitly taught to join.

All modelled and displayed writing will be in print form using the following font:

HfW precursive

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWYXZ

Year 3-6:

Pupils are taught to join and eventually develop their own style.

All modelled and displayed writing will be in HfW cursive.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

See **Appendix** for additional information on the correct posture, pencil grip and left-handed writers.

Expectations and non-negotiables for handwriting:

Teaching:

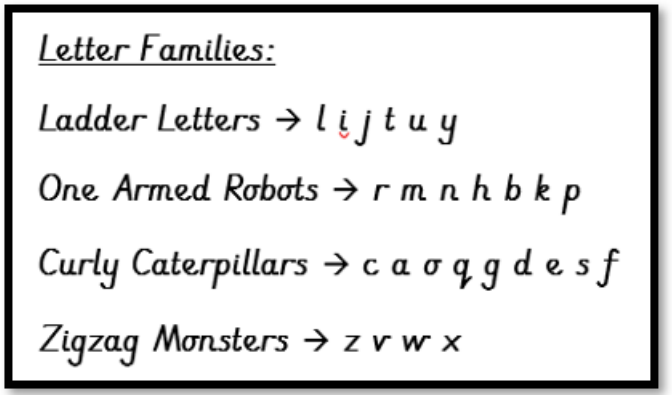
Focused handwriting lessons are taught as follows:

EYFS: Correct letter formation is taught in a print style. From Spring 1, pupils will have 3 taught handwriting sessions per week.

Year 1 and 2: A minimum of 2 x 15-minute sessions per week focusing on correct letter formation and writing on the line in the in a print / pre-cursive style.

Year 3-6: A minimum of 2 x 15-minute sessions per week teaching cursive writing. Further sessions can be incorporated into explicit spelling lessons.

A Reception – Y6 school approach is taken so the entire school focus on two letters per letter family a week. Two letters a week enables each letter to be repeated 3 times every academic year. Implementing a consistent approach across Reception to Year 6, where the entire school focuses on two letters per letter family each week, provides a structured and systematic way to build strong handwriting skills. This approach supports with repetition, muscle memory, and long-term retention of letter formation.



In Upper Key Stage 2, once pupils are secure in their foundational handwriting skills, the focus shifts from teaching basic letter formation to the **application** of these skills in more complex and meaningful ways. This shift provides UKS2 teachers with the flexibility to explore different forms of writing and to integrate handwriting practice across subjects in an engaging and purposeful manner.

Typical handwriting session proforma for Y1 and Y2 (Teachers to adapt)

<table>
<tr><td>Teach</td><td>Now have a go at writing 5 copies of the letter in your handwriting book below.

Bb</td></tr>
<tr><td>Practise</td><td>Copy the following words into your handwriting book in the space below.


book

boat

sob

crab

book boat sob crab</td></tr>
<tr><td>Apply</td><td>Now apply your practise to the sentence below in your book.

The baby boy lost the book and sobbed.</td></tr>
</table>

Typical handwriting session proforma for KS2 (Teachers to adapt)

Teach

Ii

Now have a go at writing 10 copies of the letter in your handwriting book below.

Practise

Copy the following words into your handwriting book in the space below.

 iguana	 igloo	 ice cream	 ice cube
 river	 insect	 pillow	 shrimp

Apply

Now apply your practise to these sentences below. First, write each sentence in your handwriting book and then write each sentence on the lined paper in this booklet.

1. I have a big, icy igloo in my yard.
2. The itchy insect is hiding in the pink iris.
3. I like to ride my shiny bike to the park.
4. The little bird is flying in the bright sky.
5. My kitty is inside, playing with a tiny, white ribbon.
6. The kids giggled while eating ice cream in the sun.
7. I found an interesting insect in the grass.
8. The pirate is digging for shiny, golden coins.

Handwriting is cross-curricular and therefore handwriting skills should be applied not only in English but across all subjects.

Modelling & Marking:

When modelling handwriting, either on the whiteboard or with printed resources, the correct script for year groups/phase should be modelled. When marking books, the appropriate handwriting script should be adopted and the teacher should correctly demonstrate the letter formation and joins.

Learning Environment:

All classroom should display the correct font for their age range.

At Keighley St Andrew's we pride ourselves on being the best that we can be including in the way we present our work. The intended impact of this strategy is that pupils leave Keighley St Andrew's equipped with the skills and ability to produce fluent, legible and, speedy joined-up handwriting. Pupils will understand the importance of neat presentation and the need for different letterforms (cursive, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly.

Progression of skills in handwriting

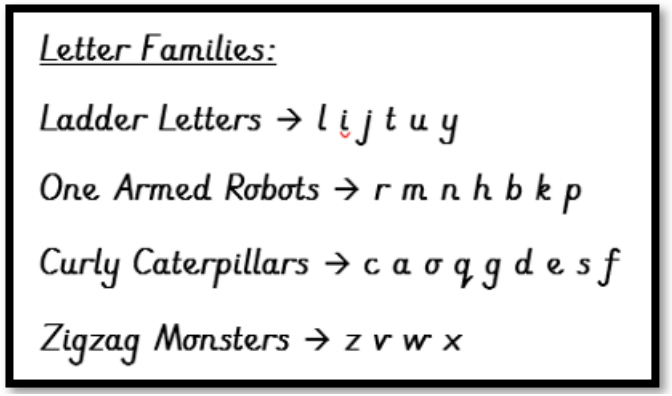
	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Letter Formation, Placement and Positioning	• Use large-muscle movements to wave flags and streamers, paint and make marks. • Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors. • Use a comfortable grip with good control 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.	• 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 practice these.	• 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.	• To use a neat, joined handwriting style with increasing accuracy and speed.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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			• To begin to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters	• 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.	• To confidently use diagonal and horizontal joining strokes throughout their independent writing to increase fluency.	• To confidently use diagonal and horizontal joining strokes throughout their independent writing in a legible, fluent and speedy way	• 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).

Teaching Handwriting in each Phase

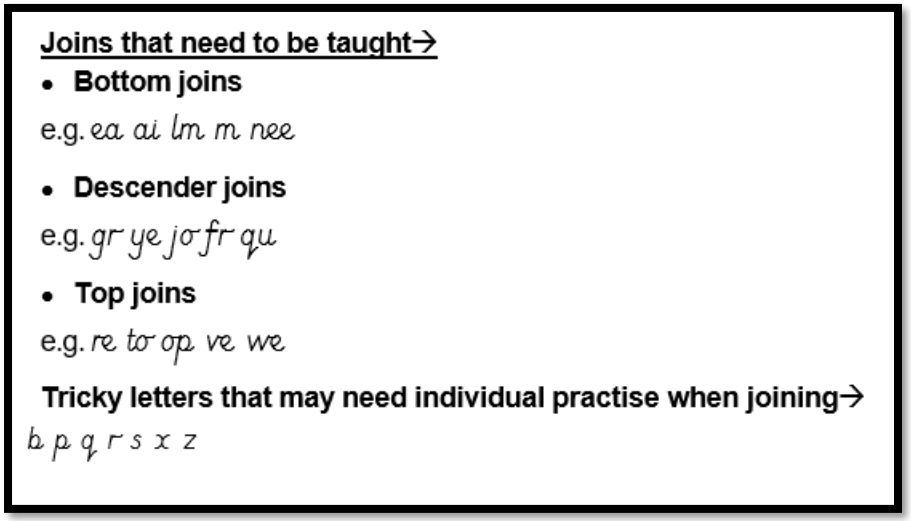
Letter formation in **Reception** is taught in line with phonics teaching following the progression of graphemes taught. B the time pupils leave reception, all pupils should be bale to correctly from most letters of the alphabet. In addition to introducing letter formation in phonics, daily handwriting sessions begin in Autumn 2. These focus on revising and revisiting the letters that have already been taught. Once all letters have been introduced through phonics, the are then revised in the daily handwriting sessions on cyclical basis.

In **Year 1**, teaching of handwriting focuses on refining letter formation and ensuring all pupils can form each letter correctly. The teaching of letters is grouped into 'letter families' so that pupils practise letters that are formed in similar ways together. Pupils are not expected to write in pre-cursive and instead focus on perfecting printed letters that are formed correctly.



In **Year 2,** the foundations of cursive writing are taught moving from print to pre-cursive. Pupils are taught the revised letter formations in the same families are in Y1.

In **Year 3-6,** pupils are taught to join their handwriting so that they can write in continuous cursive. For children to be successful, they need to be taught the different types of join as well as be given time to practise whole words/sentences. As pupils move further up KS2, their cursive writing will become more fluent and recap lessons will be used where needed to revise and reteach joins where teachers find a need to do so. Where all pupils ina class are writing in continuous cursive correctly, handwriting sessions will focus on size, speed and ensuring neatness.



Teaching resources for practising letter formation and letter joins can be found on:

- **Twinkl – KS1/KS2 Handwriting**
- **SMART Notebook**

These resources do not have to be used and are there to support teachers in the teaching of handwriting and also provide pupils with additional practise tools for handwriting. Handwriting lessons will be recorded in handwriting books across all year groups.

Letter Formation Patterns & Rhymes following the Little Wandle Phonics Progression:

Phase 2 grapheme information sheet — Autumn 1

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
s s	 snake	Show your teeth and and let the **s** hiss out **ssssss ssssss**	Under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail.
a a	 astronaut	Open your mouth wide and make the '**a**' sound at the back of your mouth **a a a**	Around the astronaut's helmet, and down into space.
t t	 tiger	Open your lips; put the tip of your tongue behind your teeth and press **t t t**	From the tiger's nose to its tail, then follow the stripe across the tiger.
p p	 penguin	Bring your lips together and push them open and say **p p p**	Down the penguin's back, up and round its head.
i i	 iguana	pull your lips back and make the '**i**' sound at the back of your mouth **i i i**	Down the iguana's body, then draw a dot [on the leaf] at the top.
n n	 net	Open your lips a bit,put your tongue behind your teeth and make the **nnnnn** sound **nnnnn**	Down the stick, up and over the net.
m m	 mouse	Put your lips together and make the **mmmmm** sound **mmmmm**	Down, up and over the mouse's ears, then add a flick on the nose.

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
d d	 duck	Put your tongue to the top and front of your mouth and make a quick **d** sound **d d d**	Round the duck's body, up to its head and down to its feet.
g g	 goat	Give me a big smile that shows your teeth. Press the middle of your tongue to the top and back of your mouth and push your tongue down and forward to make the sound **g g g**	Round the goat's face, up to his ear; down and curl under his chin.
o o	 octopus	Make your mouth into round shape and say **o o o**	All around the octopus.
c c	 cat	Open your mouth into a little smile, make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say **c c c**	Curl around the cat.
k k	 kite	Open your mouth into a little smile, make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say **k k k**	Down the kite, up and across, back and down to the corner.
ck ck	 sock	Open your mouth into a little smile, make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say **c c c**	c Curl round the heel of the sock. k Down the sock, up and round, back and down and to the corner. **Catchphrase:** Rock that sock!
e e	 elephant	Open your mouth wide and say **e e e**	Around the elephant's eye and down its trunk.

Phase 2 grapheme information sheet

Autumn 2

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
u u	 umbrella	Open your mouth wide and say **u u u**	Down and around the umbrella, stop at the top and down to the bottom and flick
r r	 rainbow	Show me your teeth to make a **rrrr** sound **rrrrr rrrrr**	From the cloud to the ground, up the arch and over the rainbow.
h h	 helicopter	Open your mouth and breathe out sharply **h h h**	Down, up and over the helicopter
b b	 bear	Put your lips together and say **b** as you open them **b b b**	Down bear's back, up and round his big tummy.
f f	 flamingo	Open your lips a little, put your teeth on your bottom lip and push the air out to make the sound **fffffff fffffff**	Down the flamingo's neck, all the way to its foot, then across its wings.
l l	 lollipop	Open your mouth a little, put your tongue up to the top of your mouth behind your teeth and press **llll llll**	All the way down the lollipop.

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
j j	 jellyfish	Pucker your lips and show your teeth use your tongue as you say **j j j**	All the way down the jellyfish. Dot on its head.
v v	 volcano	Put your teeth against your bottom lip and make a buzzing **vvvv vvvv**	Down to the bottom of the volcano, and back up to the top.
w w	 wave	Pucker your lips and keep them small as you say **w w w**	From the top of the wave to the bottom, up the wave, down the wave, then up again.
x x	 box	Mouth open then push the **cs**/**x** sound through as you close your mouth **cs cs cs** (**x x x**)	Start at the top, then across to the bottom of the box. Start at the top, then across to the bottom of the box.
y y	 yoyo	Smile, tongue to the top of your mouth, say **y** without opening your mouth	Down and round the yo-yo, then follow the string round.
z z	 zebra	Show me your teeth and buzz the **z** sound **zzzzzz zzzzzz**	Zip across, zag down and across the zebra.

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase Catchphrase
qu qu	 queen	Pucker your mouth, then open it as you say **qu qu qu**	Round the queen's face, up to her crown, down her robe with a flick at the end. qu Quick, it's the queen!
th th	 thumb	**Voiced:** Tongue on your teeth, teeth almost closed to make a 'buzzing' th th th **Unvoiced:** Tongue on your teeth push the air out **th th th**	th Thumbs up, we're having fun.
sh sh	 shells	Show me your teeth and push the air out **shshshshsh shshshshsh**	sh Share the shells.
ch ch	 cherries	Pucker your lips and show your teeth. Use your tongue as you say **ch ch ch**	ch Chew the cherries, children.
ng ng	 ring	Open your mouth a bit and then use your tongue at the back of your mouth to say **ng ng ng**	ng Bling on a ring.
nk nk	 pink panda	Open your mouth a bit and then use your tongue at the back of your mouth to say **ngk ngk ngk**	nk I think I am pink.

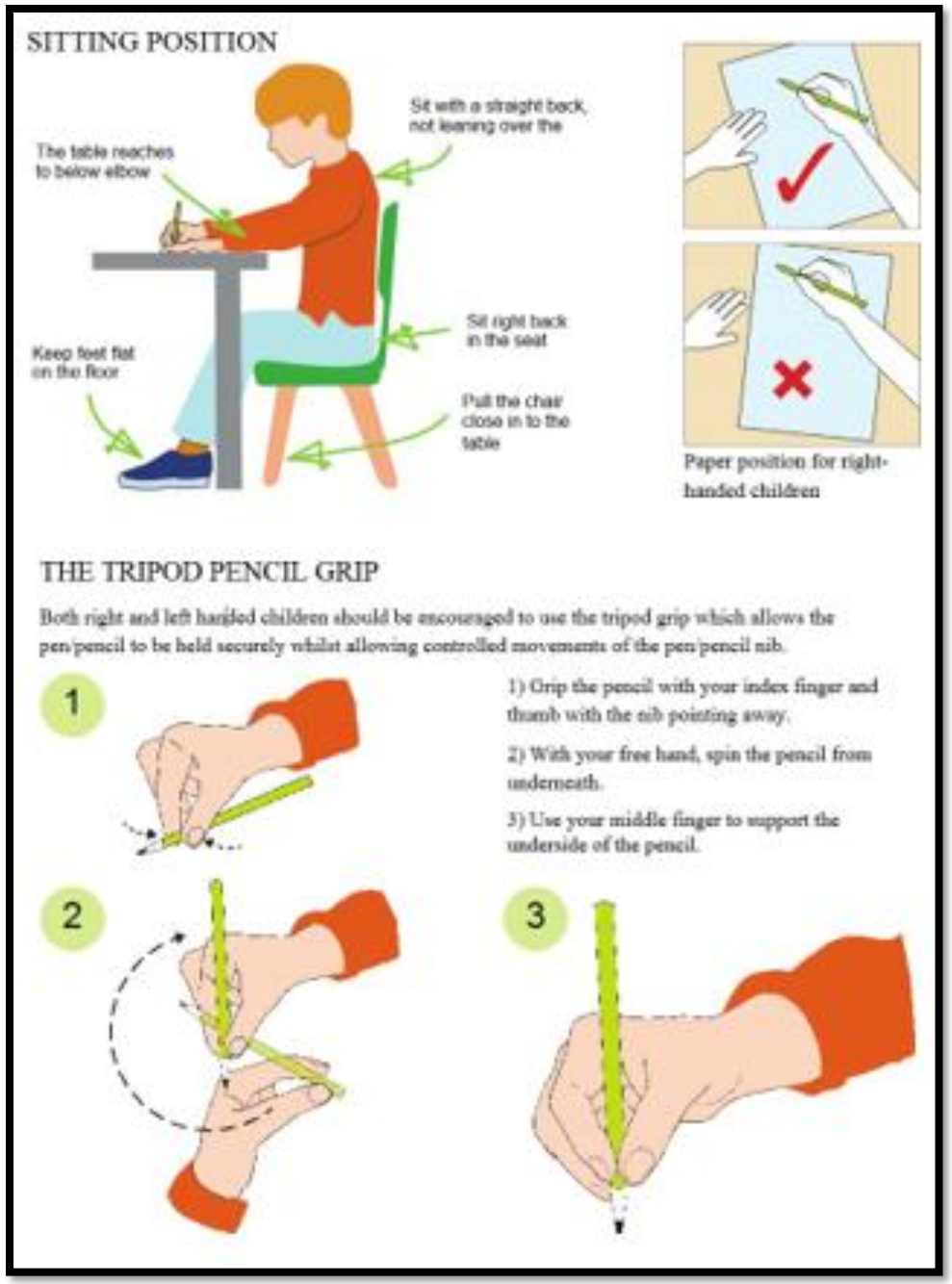
Letter formation: Capital letters

Use this document to ensure correct letter formation when you are teaching children to form capital letters.

Letter	Capital letter formation phrase
A	From the top, diagonally down to the left, up to the top, diagonally down to the right. Lift up and across.
B	From the top, down, back to the top. Round to the middle, round to the bottom.
C	From the top, curl around to the left to sit on the line.
D	From the top, down, back to the top. Curve right, down to the bottom.
E	From the top, down, back to the top. Across, back. Down to the line, across. Lift up and across the middle.
F	From the top, down, back to the top. Across, back. Lift up and across the middle.
G	From the top, curl around to the line, carry on up, then straight down. Lift up and across.
H	From the top and down. Space. From the top and down. Lift up and join the lines across the middle.
I	From the top to the bottom and stop.
J	From the top, all the way down, then short curl to the left.
K	From the top, down, up to the middle. Diagonally up, back and diagonally down to the line.
L	From the top, down and across the line.
M	From the top, down, back to the top. Diagonally down, diagonally up. Straight down to the line.
N	From the top, down, back to the top. Diagonally down, then straight up to the top.
O	From the top – all around the o.
P	From the top, down then back up. Curve right to halfway down.
Q	From the top – all around the o. Lift off. Short line diagonally down.
R	From the top, down, then back up. Curve right to halfway down. Diagonally down to the line.
S	From the top, under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail.
T	From the top, down and stop. Lift up and from the left, make a line across the top.
U	From the top, down and curve right, then straight up to the top.
V	From the top diagonally right to the bottom, then diagonally up to the top.
W	From the top diagonally right to the bottom, diagonally up (halfway), diagonally down to the line, then diagonally up again.
X	From the top, diagonally right to the bottom. Space. Start at the top, then diagonally left to the bottom.
Y	From the top diagonally right to halfway right. Space. Start at the top, then diagonally left to the bottom.
Z	From the top go across, diagonally down to the left and across the bottom.

Appendix: Additional information around handwriting, posture and pencil grip.

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



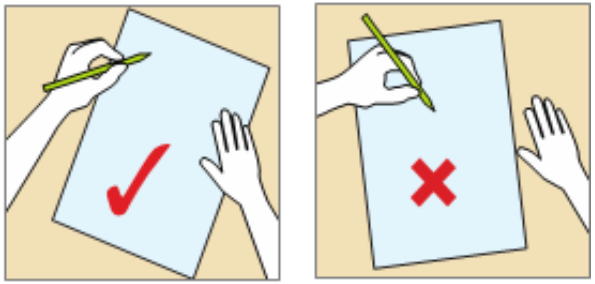
Left-handed children:

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