



Preston Candover CE Primary School

Love, Hope and Justice

Inspire learning for life

Encourage each other and build each other up - 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Handwriting Policy

November 2026	Review Date: November 2029
Signed:	Headteacher: Mrs Simrit Otway
Date:	

Teaching and Learning Handwriting

The skill of handwriting needs to be taught systematically, progressively and effectively. 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, grammar, syntax, style and content.

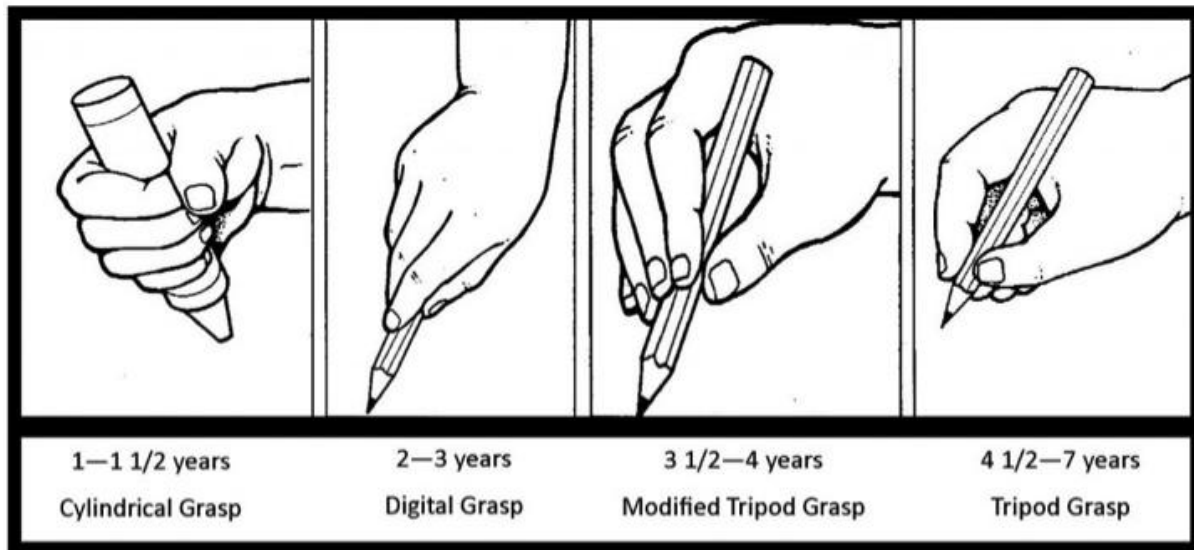
At Preston Candover CE Primary handwriting is taught alongside phonic and spelling knowledge at all stages.

Effective teaching of handwriting can only be achieved through clear modelling. Teachers and LSAs must demonstrate letter formation and joins regularly and children must practice by carefully copying and repeating. It is important to observe children writing to ensure they are forming letters correctly.

Handwriting Principles

- Handwriting should be taught explicitly, in short, frequent sessions, ideally daily where possible. It should be modelled by the teacher or Learning Support Assistant and then supervised. Children should be self/peer assessing, looking for consistency.
- Where possible, it should be linked to phonic and spelling patterns. This will help with handwriting and with the 'muscle memory' of spellings.
- When ready, pupils should be practising on the lines they are going to use in their writing books.
- High expectations of writing are needed. Children need to repeat work that is not satisfactory.
- High quality presentation in written work reflects the pride with which a child has taken in their work.
- From Spring Term in Y4, children use a pen. At this point, we would hope to see them demonstrating correct formation of letters, consistent fluidity and correct joins.

Pencil Grip Development



Handwriting in the Foundation Stage

Good handwriting relies on secure motor control and hand-eye coordination. Children in the Foundation Stage should learn handwriting through movement with the actual writing of letters as the ultimate aim. Children will:

- Engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination.
- Use one-handed tools and equipment.
- Draw lines and circles using gross motor movement.
- Manipulate objects with increasing control.
- Begin to use anticlockwise movement and retrace vertical lines.
- Begin to form recognisable letters.
- Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.

Throughout the Foundation Stage, children need lots of opportunities to develop:

- Physical control through large-scale movement such as outdoor play. Balancing, climbing, marching, moving to music etc.
- Manipulative skills such as using tools, utensils and scissors.
- Fine motor control and hand-eye coordination, through activities such as jigsaws, threading, cutting and manipulating 'small world' equipment.

The National Curriculum English Programmes of Study provide guidance on teaching handwriting:

Year 1 pupils should be taught to:

- 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
- Form capital letters
- Form digits 0-9
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these
- Make links with phonics and spelling

Year 2 pupils should be taught to:

- 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 not 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 3-4 pupils should be taught to:

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left not joined
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

Year 5-6 pupils should be taught to: Write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed and personal style by:

- Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding, as part of their personal style, whether or not to join specific letters
- Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters)

Joined up handwriting style

At Preston Candover CE Primary we introduce joined up handwriting at an early stage of a child's development: from Year 1 upwards. Learning a series of early rhythmical movements can help children with specific learning difficulties improve their fine motor coordination.

Supporting individual children:

- Children should be encouraged to use the correct pencil grip and sit with a good posture.
- Left handed children should sit to the left of right handed children to avoid their writing arms from bumping each other. The angle of the paper depends on the handedness of the pupil. Left-handers should sit with their body and paper at a slant to the right. This enables them to see their pencil tip, prevents them smudging their work with their writing hand and allows the pencil to move more freely. A left-hander may also benefit from holding the pencil higher up. (See appendix at end of document).
- Some children with specific difficulties may benefit from using a sloping surface and special equipment e.g. triangular pencil grip for a short period of time. It is important to use appropriate writing materials at each stage of writing development.
- A sharp pencil is essential for all handwriting activities.
- Children move on to pen from Year 4 upwards
- Children need to see good examples of handwriting in classroom displays.
- Children should practice their handwriting skills in the appropriate handwriting books.

Other Useful Information

Paper: Early writers will write on both unlined and lined paper so that they are able to write at a size appropriate to their needs. Children will be shown how to place their letters correctly on the line. Lines at an interval of 15mm will be standard in KS1, and 8mm or 10mm in KS2, although some children may have different needs. Where work is redrafted and presented for display, children may use plain paper and guidelines, with the same line spacing. A photocopiable master is included in the Appendix. For the teaching and practice of handwriting, it may sometimes be helpful to use handwriting exercise books or “handwriting paper” to give further support for the relative heights of parts of the letters; photocopiable masters are included in the Appendix.

Correcting mistakes: use of rubbers is to be discouraged except in the case of work in pencil for display. Otherwise, mistakes in pencil or ink should be crossed out using a single horizontal line, and the whole word rewritten. As a school we use purple polishing pens to do this. Using double line spacing for work in draft is an option that can be used to allow the children space to improve their own work.

Writing implements: In Year 4, pupils progress to a fibre tip “school handwriting pen”, which will then be used for all written work in school.

Biro is not to be used by children in their written work.

Pencil Sizes and Ink: Year R-Triangular pencils.

Year 1/2- Year 3: HB yellow and black pencils. Pencil grips available

Year 4- Year 6: HB pencil and Berol handwriting pen.

Appendix for Handwriting policy

Key vocabulary for the teaching of handwriting

<u>Year R</u>	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>	<u>Year 4</u>	<u>Year 5</u>	<u>Year 6</u>
Pencil grip / tripod grip	Letter formation	Joining / joins	Cursive handwriting / fully joined handwriting	Speed	Efficient handwriting	Automaticity
Posture, sitting position, paper position	Lower-case / upper-case	Entry strokes / exit strokes	Fluent joins	Flow	Personal style	Rapid, fluent handwriting
Mark-making, patterns, shapes	Capital letters	Diagonal join / horizontal join	Letter families	Slope	Readability	Mature personal style (legible and consistent)
Start point	Letter families	Break letters	Uniform size	Consistency of joins	Control	Adaptation for purpose
Name writing	Tall letters, short letters	Consistency	Parallel ascenders / descenders	Presentation	Adapt handwriting for purpose (e.g., notes vs neat presentation)	Precision
Lower case letters	Ascenders/ Descenders	Even spacing	Legibility	Proportion		Extended-writing consistency
Capital letters	Directionality	Line sitting	Spacing between lines	Word/letter spacing		
Numbers/ numerals	Word spacing					

