

Handwriting at Pendragon Primary School

EYFS

At Pendragon, our handwriting approach starts with mark-making using a range of tools and sensory media for example flour, glitter, soil. Research has shown that mark making is crucial for a child's development and learning. It not only teaches young children how to hold a pen correctly, but it also prepares them for writing and develops their handwriting skills.

When children are making these early marks, they are practising to hold a pencil and are attempting to control their marks with their muscles. This enhances their physical development by improving their fine and gross motor skills and helps to develop their hand-eye coordination.

Some children begin school showing a dominant hand, for those who do not, we provide a supportive environment that allows them to further explore, and experiment before establishing their preference.

The children are encouraged to use a tripod grip when holding writing implements.



During whole class and small group teaching sessions children begin to mark-make on a whiteboard using the eight simple marks (**See Appendix 1**). This resource enables children to build their confidence and resilience knowing that they can edit their work and the chunkier pen is easier to grip than a pencil. This work is highly valued and continues to be throughout Early Years. Handwriting practise must take place sitting at a table.

The next stage is to introduce the children to letter graphemes as part of our Storytime Phonics programme. As each phoneme is introduced the corresponding grapheme is also modelled. The children are taught a grapheme rhyme linked to the Storytime Phonics book and are encouraged to say these while forming the letter (**See Appendix 2**). We teach the children a cursive style of writing i.e. with lead-ins before the letter and exit flicks after the letter, so the Storytime Phonics rhymes have been adapted to match using the language 'follow or take.' Digraphs are taught as joined graphemes.

Handwriting is practised in conjunction with a wide range of practical activities that continue to develop and strengthen fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination.

ELG Physical Development Fine Motor skills

Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases

ELG Literacy Writing

Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed

Our handwriting approach continues through the school in line with the National Curriculum expectations.

In Y1 pupils are taught to:

- ♣ sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- ♣ continue to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place (continuing to use the rhymes from Storytime Phonics). Digraphs continue to be taught as joined graphemes. Where appropriate, two or three letter high frequency words to be taught as joined graphemes e.g. to, the.
- ♣ 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

In Y2 pupils are 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 unjoined (**See Appendix 3**)
- ♣ 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.

In Y3 and Y4 pupils are 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 unjoined
- ♣ increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].

In Y5 and 6 pupils are taught 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
 - choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.
- ♣ Maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed (Writing Framework for end of KS2)

Taught handwriting sessions take place weekly throughout the school on lined paper/writing books. Additional handwriting support will take place when needed. In KS2, handwriting sessions are often combined with practising spelling patterns or the teaching of vocabulary in different subjects.

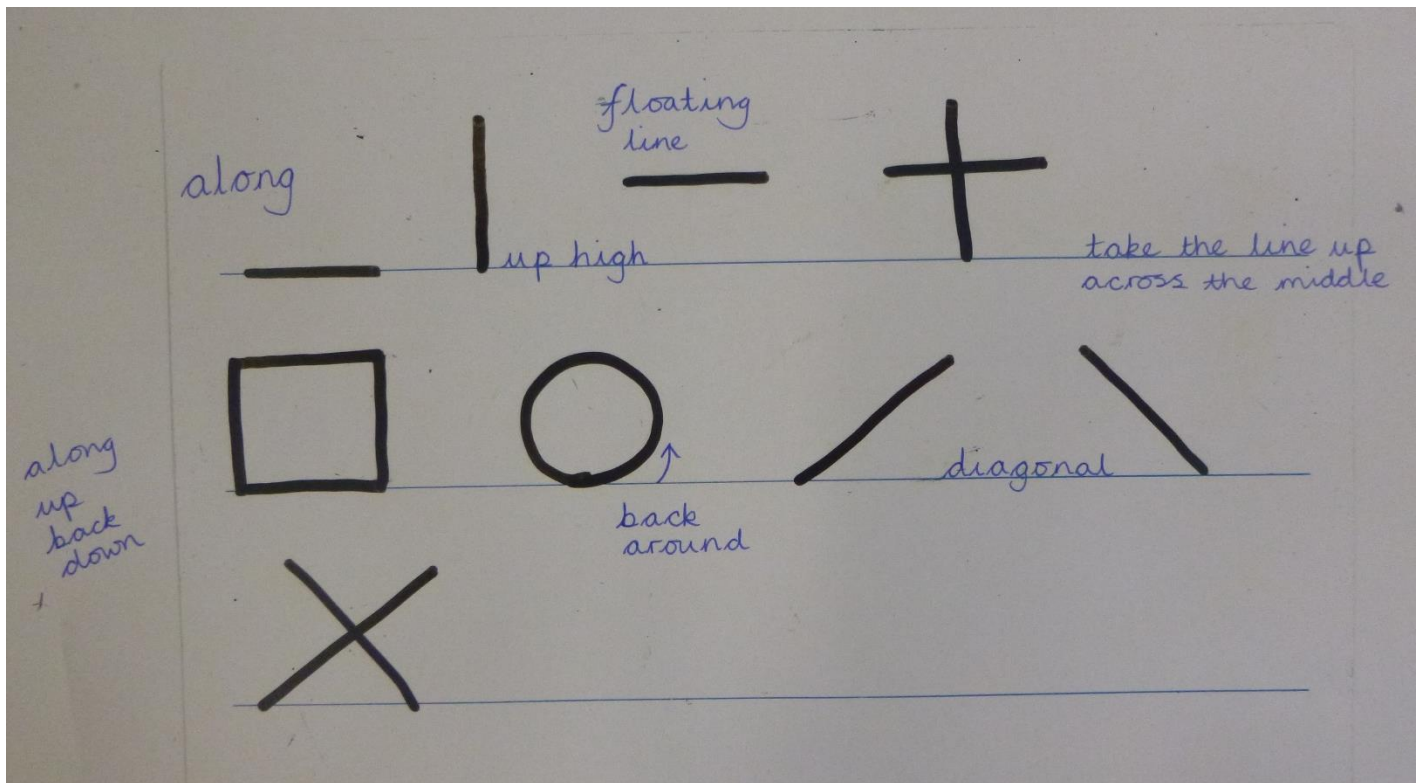
Children write in their books in pencil in EYFS and KS1. In Lower KS2, handwriting pens will be used for handwriting practise and presentation work e.g. double-page spreads. In Upper KS2, children will use a handwriting pen for all written work where appropriate.

Left-handed children should be seated on the left of a right-handed child and positioned where they can see the whiteboard. All children should be seated correctly with their feet on the floor.

Interventions are provided for any children who have difficulty with their handwriting and presentation. This may take the form of hand-therapy – activities to develop hand manipulation, hand arch development, hand dominance and hand strength or focused hand writing practise targeting particular areas of weakness (physiotherapy leaflet 'Clever Hands' - **See Appendix 4**). Equipment such as pencil grips and writing slopes are used where appropriate.

All staff must model the school handwriting style in handwriting lessons, on wall displays, spelling aids, etc. All staff laptops have the school font, JointItC11, installed.

Appendix 1: 8 simple marks and shapes (EYFS)



Appendix 2: Storytime Phonics Grapheme rhymes

The following rhymes are linked to each of the story time books that we have been using to teach phonics.

They are designed to support children when writing each grapheme using the cursive style of handwriting.

- O Follow the octopus over the top, back around to the top and away.
- C Follow crunching caterpillar over the top, back around and away.
- a Follow the fly over the top, back around, up, down and flick it away.
- d Follow the diamond over the top, back around, up high in the sky, down and flick it away.
- g Follow Gruff's face over the top, back around, up down and under his tummy.

- q** Follow the queen's hat over the top, back around up, down underground and flick it away.
- S** Follow Jake the snake over to the start of the lake, back around the lakes and away.
- i** Take Incy Wincy for a short walk up the drainpipe, back down the drainpipe and flick it away.
Add a raindrop.
- t** Take tip tap up high in the sky, tip tap down, heel flick away. Then slide across the middle.
- l** Take Lazy Ladybird up high in the sky, back down and away.
- u** Take the underpants up, take the underpants down, under, up, down and away.
- w** Take the smell up, take the smell down, under, up, down, under up and whiff it away.
- y** Take the Yeti up, take the Yeti down, under his chin, up then slide down under his arm and away.
- j** Take the jelly up, take the jelly all the way down, under the plate. Add a cherry on top.
- r** Take the dinosaur's mouth up, take the dinosaurs mouth down, up and over the top of his teeth.
- n** Take the hose up, take the hose down, up over the fire, down and away
- m** Take Munch up, take Munch down, up, over down, up over down and flick it away

- h** Take the rabbit up high into the sky, back down, up half way over the hat and away.
- p** Take Pirate Pete for a short walk up the plank, all the way back down, up to the top, around the deck and away.
- b** Take Baby Brains up high into the sky, back down, up half way around the world and away.
- k** Take the bottle up, take the bottle down, up half way, around the lid, diagonal down and away
- f** Take the fog up, over the top of the tree, all the way back down underground and away. Then slide across the middle branch.
- X** Take the wand up, take the wand diagonal down, off then diagonal up and away
- Z** Take the monster up, along, diagonal down and along the bottom.
- V** Take the racing car up, diagonal down the track, diagonal up to the finish line and away.
- e** Go diagonal across the egg, back around and away.

Appendix 3: Letter joins progression

Diagonal join to ascender

a c d e h i k l m n t u joining to these letters: **b f h k l t**

Diagonal join, no ascender

a c d e h i k l m n t u joining to these letters: **i j m n p r u v w y a c d g o q s e**

Horizontal join, no ascender

o v w joining to these letters: **i j m n p r u v w y a c d g o q s e**

Horizontal join to ascender

o v w joining to these letters: **b f h k l t**

Break letters

These letters do not join: **g j y**

Appendix 4: Clever Hands



Do the **PENPALS** 7 point check!

Are you ready for handwriting? Relax!



Are your elbows off the desk?

Sit up and lean slightly forward

Are your feet flat on the floor?

Is your body a fist width away from the desk?

Are all chair legs touching the ground?

Left Handers



Is there a circle gap between your thumb and finger?

Right Handers



Is your paper tilted at a slight angle?

PENPALS for Handwriting

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Promoting good practice