

Handwriting Progression 26/27

Rationale

Handwriting is a core component of English. The DfE states that “writing fluently refers to how smoothly and quickly a pupil can write down their thoughts in words” and that pupils need transcription skills that are “sufficiently fluent and effortless” to meet the demands of the curriculum.

Physical readiness is the foundation of handwriting success. Occupational therapy and motor-development studies show that fine motor control builds on gross motor strength, stability, and coordination. Children who lack core strength or shoulder stability often struggle not because they “can’t write”, but because they do not yet have the physical base they need.

Fluent handwriting is a strong predictor of writing success, so pupils should practise regularly to develop legibility and speed.

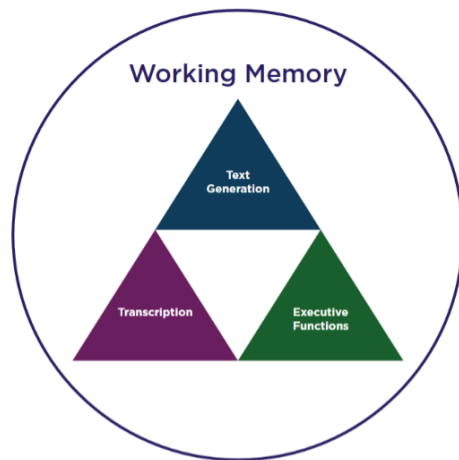
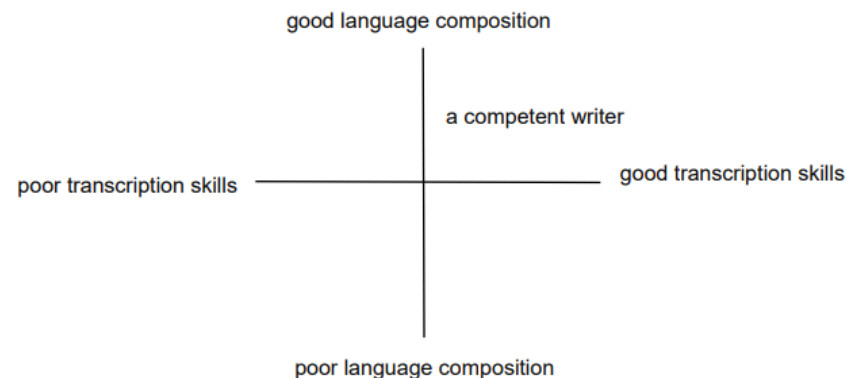


Figure 1: An illustration of the simple view of writing



Reception: Handwriting is linked to Read Write Inc Phonics, using the handwriting phrases to help children remember how to form the letters.

[RWI handwriting phrases](#)

Reception	Autumn	Spring	Summer
<i>Children at the expected level of development will:</i> • <i>Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.</i> • <i>Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery.</i> • <i>Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.</i>	• I can follow instructions. • I can touch each finger on its own to thumb. • I can use a pincer grip. • I can show a consistent hand preference. • I can begin to cut with scissors.	• I can cross the midline of my body. • I can balance on one leg for 10 seconds. • I can change for PE independently. • I can sit upright in a chair. • I can hold a pencil in a tripod grip. • SLN Stage 1 assessment	• I can sit at a table with the correct posture. • I can apply an appropriate amount of pressure when writing with a pencil. • I can copy the first pre-writing shapes. • I can hold scissors with the correct grip. • I can cut out simple shapes with reasonable accuracy. • I can cut a straight line with scissors. • I can recognise, copy and match shapes, patterns and objects. • I can track from left to right along a line. • SLN Stage 2 assessment

Key Stage 1: Teachers in Year 1 and 2 use the Ruth Miskin Letter Village videos to teach the stages of handwriting.

Year 1	Autumn	Spring	Summer
• <i>sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly</i> • <i>begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place</i> • <i>form capital letters</i> • <i>form digits 0-9</i> • <i>understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.</i>	• I can hold a pencil in a tripod grip. • I can sit at a table with the correct posture. • I can apply an appropriate amount of pressure when writing with a pencil. • I can form the 'straight down' letter family of i, j, l, t, k and u and y. • I can form the 'back and around' letter family of a, c, d, g, o, q and e, f and s. • SLN Stage 2 assessment	• I can form the 'bounce back up' letter family of b, h, k, m, n, p, and r. • I can form the 'zig zag or diagonal' letter family of v, w, x and z. • I can form clear descending strokes. • I can form clear ascending strokes. • I can distinguish between b/d, u/v, m/n, r/n, n/h, and g/p/q. • SLN Stage 3 assessment	• I can form all individual letters with accuracy, consistency, and increased speed. • I can form all capital letters and numerals with accuracy, consistency and increased speed • Letters are placed in the correct position on the line. • I can use appropriate and consistent spacing between letters and words. • I can demonstrate correct posture, paper position and pen/pencil grip. • SLN Stage 3 assessment

Year 2	Autumn	Spring	Summer
• <i>form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another</i> • <i>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</i> • <i>write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters</i> • <i>use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.</i>	• I can demonstrate correct posture, paper position and pen/pencil grip. • I can form all individual letters with accuracy, consistency, and increased speed. • I can form all capital letters and numerals with accuracy, consistency and increased speed. • SLN Stage 3 assessment	• I can perform lead outs from the bottom – straight down letters. • I can perform lead outs from the bottom – back and around letters. • I can perform lead outs from the bottom – bounce back up letters. • I can perform lead outs from the top of letters. • I can identify and use break letters or can lead out by looping back. • SLN Stage 4 assessment	• I can demonstrate correct posture, paper position and pen/pencil grip. • I can perform two letter diagonal joins without ascenders or descenders. • I can perform two letter diagonal joins to ascenders. • I can perform two letter diagonal joins from ascenders. • SLN Stage 4 assessment

Key Stage 2: From Year 3, teachers use the SLN handwriting scheme to teach handwriting.

Year 3	Autumn	Spring	Summer
• 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].	<u>SLN Stage 4:</u> <i>Block 1 Weeks 1 – 7: revision of all letter families, capital letters and numerals</i> • I can demonstrate correct posture, paper position and pen/pencil grip. • I can form all individual letters with accuracy, consistency, and increased speed. • I can form all capital letters and numerals with accuracy, consistency and increased speed <i>Block 2 Weeks 8 – 12: introducing the letters that lead out from the bottom</i> • I can perform lead outs from the bottom – straight down letters. • I can perform lead outs from the bottom – back and around letters.	<u>SLN Stage 4:</u> <i>Block 3 Weeks 13 – 15: introducing the letters that lead out from the top and a revision week of review and practice using spelling words</i> • I can perform lead outs from the top of letters. • I can identify and use break letters or can lead out by looping back. <u>SLN Stage 5:</u> <i>Block 1 Weeks 1 – 4: revision of capital letters, numerals and lead outs</i> <i>Block 2 Weeks 5 – 10: introducing the diagonal join</i> • I can perform two letter diagonal joins without ascenders or descenders. • I can perform two letter diagonal joins to ascenders. • I can perform two letter diagonal joins from ascenders. • SLN Stage 4 assessment	<u>SLN Stage 5:</u> <i>Block 3 Weeks 11 – 14: introducing the horizontal join and break letter practice using spelling words</i> • I can perform two letter diagonal joins to the letter 's'. • I can perform two letter diagonal joins to the letter 'e'. <i>Block 4 Weeks 15 – 22: further diagonal and horizontal joins</i> • I can perform two letter horizontal joins without ascenders or descenders. • I can perform two letter horizontal joins with ascenders. • SLN Stage 5 assessment

	• I can perform lead outs from the bottom – bounce back up letters. • SLN Stage 4 assessment		
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Year 4	Autumn	Spring	Summer
• <i>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</i> • <i>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].</i>	<u>SLN Stage 5:</u> <i>Block 5 Weeks 23 – 31: break letter practice using spelling words and further diagonal and horizontal joins</i> • I can perform two letter joins to loop and difficult to join letters or identify and use break letters. <u>SLN Stage 6:</u> <i>Block 1 Weeks 1 – 5: revision of capital letters, numerals building handwriting fluency through suffix work</i> • I can perform diagonal joins without ascenders or descenders. (Two or more letters). • I can perform diagonal joins which include descenders and ascenders. (Two or more letters). • SLN Stage 5 assessment	<u>SLN Stage 6:</u> <i>Block 2 Weeks 6 – 11: building handwriting fluency through prefix and spelling word work</i> • I can perform a sequence of joins which include a horizontal join. (Two or more letters). <i>- Block 3 Weeks 12 – 17: further handwriting fluency practice through suffix, prefix and spelling word work</i> • I can perform letter joins which include loop and difficult to join letters or identify and use break letters. (Two or more letters). • SLN Stage 6 assessment	<u>SLN Stage 6:</u> <i>Block 4 Weeks 18 – 25: further handwriting fluency through homophones, and spelling exception word work</i> • I can perform the appropriate joins with consistent letter size when given a printed word. <i>Block 5 Weeks 26 – 31: further handwriting fluency through spelling rules, harder suffixes and prefixes and spelling word work</i> • I can join letters in words and write short sentences with appropriate spacing between words keeping consistency in letter size. • SLN Stage 6 assessment

Year 5	Autumn	Spring	Summer
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.	SLN Stage 7: <i>Block 1 Weeks 1 – 6: introducing positive feedback. Introducing choosing a style and implement to suit a task. Introducing slant in handwriting and practising presentation</i> • I can form letters correctly with consistent lead out strokes-direction and flow maintained. • I can write familiar words fluently, maintaining legibility whilst speed increases. <i>Block 2 Weeks 7 – 12: exploring different forms of note taking, including the use of symbols, bullet points, mind maps and headings</i> • I can improve handwriting after practice. • I can choose the appropriate style for the purpose. • SLN Stage 7 assessment	SLN Stage 7: <i>Block 3 Weeks 13 – 18: exploring handwriting for a purpose (functional handwriting) and knowing when, and why, to apply different styles</i> • I can choose the appropriate implement for the style, showing an understanding of purpose. • I can perform clear well-placed titles. Headings are consistent and laid out appropriately across a page. <i>Block 4 Weeks 19– 24: exploring creative lettering and its uses, including line weight and emphasis</i> • I can maintain handwriting style across page. Can sustain neat writing over time. • SLN Stage 7 assessment	SLN Stage 7: <i>Block 5 Weeks 25 – 30: exploring presentation styles, consistency across the page and increasing speed and stamina without losing handwriting quality</i> • I can increase speed without loss of clarity. • SLN Stage 7 assessment

Year 6	Autumn	Spring	Summer
<i>write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:</i> • <i>choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters</i> • <i>choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.</i>	<u>SLN Stage 8:</u> <i>Block 1 Weeks 1 – 6: copying – focus on consistency of letter size and spacing, write longer passages, introducing words per minute tracking, and legibility scale (pupil friendly version). Includes teacher modelling, repetition, troubleshooting poor examples, self and peer assessment.</i> • When copying, I can maintain handwriting fluency and legibility over time. Increased speed without loss of clarity. • SLN Stage 8 assessment	<u>SLN Stage 8:</u> <i>Block 2 Weeks 7 – 12: listening – focus on dictation and maintaining control, consistency without a visual model. Gradually increasing sentence length. Self-assess against legibility score, troubleshooting handwriting issues when writing at speed, discussing differences between copying and dictation.</i> • When writing from dictation, I can maintain handwriting fluency and legibility over time. • SLN Stage 8 assessment	<u>SLN Stage 8:</u> <i>Block 3 Weeks 13 – 18: independent – focus on composition, handwriting while thinking, sustaining fluency without copying. Led by teacher modelling – writing while thinking aloud. Continuing with WPM recording and legibility scale.</i> • When writing from imagination, I can maintain handwriting fluency and legibility over time. Increased speed without loss of clarity. • SLN Stage 8 assessment