

Potterhanworth Church of England Primary School

Handwriting policy



Our Potterhanworth Church School Vision is inspired by Jesus' offer of 'life in all its fullness' (John 10 v10).

We believe that 'life in all its fullness' is about living a life full of opportunities, excitement, learning and respect for **ALL**.

We work together to encourage **ALL** our children to become advocates of justice and peace. We support our school community to look beyond its horizons, encourage a positive outlook on life and to overcome any challenges we may face.

Our fulfilment is achieved by creating an environment where **ALL** our children can thrive and blossom as we nurture them in their growth and journey through life.

Respect, Trust, Commitment, Fairness, Friendship, Responsibility

Policy Approved on : 26th November 2025

Signed on Governor Hub

Policy Review Date : November 2028



Handwriting Intent

We aim for our children to leave in Year 6 with the ability to write using their own style of fast, fluent, legible and sustainable handwriting, as well as other styles of writing for specific purposes. In addition to teaching handwriting during our regular handwriting lessons, we have high expectations that what is taught and practiced in handwriting lessons will be used in all writing activities. We believe that handwriting is integral to a child's personal development and know that children's engagement and self-esteem can be improved by their satisfaction and pride in good quality presentation.

Aims

Handwriting is a taught skill that develops at different rates for different children. All of the teachers in the school put a priority on teaching handwriting and have high expectations for handwriting across the curriculum. Our school uses *Penpals for Handwriting* to ensure that:

- The importance of handwriting is recognised and given appropriate time.
- The progression of handwriting is consistent across the school.
- Handwriting is acknowledged to be a whole body activity and emphasis is placed on correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting.
- Expectations of left-handed children are equal to those of right-handed children, and appropriate advice and resources are available to ensure that they learn to write with a comfortable, straight wrist.
- Handwriting is linked into grammar, punctuation and spelling in order to practice and contextualise all of the transcriptional and stylistic skills for writing.
- Children learn to self-assess their own writing and develop understanding and responsibility for improving it.
- Children learn to write in different styles for different purposes such as print for labelling a diagram, illustrated capitals letters for creating a poster, swift jottings for writing notes, making a 'best copy' for presentation and fast, fluent and legible writing across the curriculum.

Progression of skills

Penpals enables us to teach and secure the development of handwriting throughout the school:

- First, children experience the foundation of handwriting through multi-sensory activities (EYFS F1 and F2).
- Correct letter formation is taught, practised, applied and consolidated (EYFS F1/Y1).
- Joining is introduced only after correct letter formation is used automatically (Y1/Y2/Y3).
- Joins are introduced systematically and cumulatively (Y2–Y6).
- As children practice joining, they pay attention to the size, proportion and spacing of their letters and words (Y3–Y6).
- Once the joins are secure, a slope is introduced in order to support increased speed and fluency (Y5).
- Children are introduced to different ways of joining in order that they can develop their own preferred personal style (Y6).

In using *Penpals*, we ensure that our children follow the requirements and recommendations of the National Curriculum. We share the aspirations that children's handwriting should be 'sufficiently fluent and effortless for them to manage the general demands of the curriculum' and that 'problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say'.

Handwriting tools

Throughout their time in school, children use a range of tools for different purposes and styles of handwriting including:

- A wide range of tools and media for mark-making in the EYFS.
- Whiteboard pens throughout the school.
- Fingers when writing on the interactive whiteboard.

- Art supplies including coloured pens and pencils for posters, displays and artwork.
- Sharp pencils for most writing until a pen licence is awarded.
- A handwriting pen for when they sustain a good level of presentation.

Handwriting is introduced on lined whiteboards and on lined paper so that children quickly learn about letter orientation including ascenders and descenders. As children's fine motor skills improve and their letter formation or joining becomes increasingly accurate, the width between the lines they write on gradually decreases.

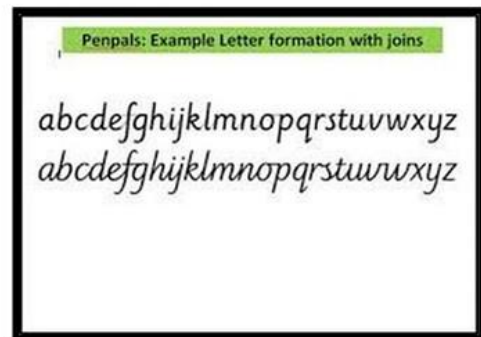
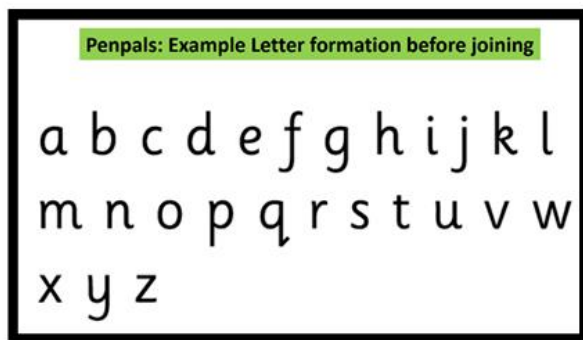
Equality of opportunity

All of our children have equal access to handwriting lessons and to the resources available. We recognise that some children take longer to develop the necessary skills and we cater for those children by providing additional opportunities for skills development. Children who need specific fine motor or handwriting interventions are identified early and the impact of interventions is carefully monitored. Children with a physical disability are catered for, and progress is monitored, according to their individual action plans. More information on left hand writers below.

The Sassoon Font Penpals

Penpals uses the Sassoon font. All classes will have the appropriate font (before or after joining) displayed in their classroom. It is cursive, but not fully cursive. This means it:

- Does not start on the line with the lead in but the letters do have the exit flicks.
- Capital letters stand alone and are not joined to the next letter.
- Does not loop the f, g or y
- Teaches the 'k' with a loop



abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Teaching Handwriting Teaching handwriting in the Early Years Foundation Stage In the Foundation Stage children need to develop skills which will later enable them to acquire a legible, fluent and fast handwriting style. In Nursery and Reception children will develop:

- Gross and fine motor skills through sensory activities
- Recognition of pattern and language to talk about shapes and movement e.g. forming shapes and letters in sand/ shaving foam
- Shaping of patterns and basic letter movements

- A comfortable tripod pencil grip (between the thumb and forefinger with the pencil resting on the third finger) that allows for efficient control of the pencil
- Correct formation of all lower case letters (taught through Floppy Phonics and Penpals scheme)

Teaching Handwriting in Key Stage 1 and 2 The highest priority is given to teaching the correct letter formation before any attempt is made at joining.

YR, 1 & 2 - 4 times per week.

KS2 – 3 times per week minimum

This does not have to be a Penpals session. But handwriting should be modelled in person to focus on areas the teacher's picked up on from recent work. This could be as a dictation lesson therefore addressing multiple areas at once (sentence structure, handwriting, spelling). This could be an element in two of the weekly English lessons.eg: 2 Penpals sessions, 1 dictation session and 1 session based on AfL.

Key Stage 1 Children will continue to develop fine and gross motor-skills with a range of multisensory activities. Teachers and support staff continue to guide children on correct letter formation using a comfortable tripod pencil grip that allows for efficient control. Through the Penpals scheme, children will begin to learn how to join letters in Year 1 and continue to practise this skill in Year 2.

Key Stage 2 Children will continue to have regular practice of handwriting, securing joins and developing speed and fluency. By the end of Year 6, children should have a clear, fluid handwriting style. Children will have the opportunity to use a handwriting pen from Year 3 upwards, rather than a pencil at the discretion of the teacher. See appendix 1 for more specific guidelines on handwriting skills and development in each year group.

See Appendix 2 for National Curriculum links.

Letter Families

As recommended in the Writing Framework 2025, letter formation will be taught through the letter families using the posters below. This information will be share with families using the Pen Pals information for parents pdf.



3 P's – Posture, pencil-hold and paper position – Ready to Write.

The child's chair and table should be at a comfortable height.

The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor.

Children should be encouraged to sit up straight and not to slouch.

The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and the feet flat on the floor.

Tables should be free of clutter and there should be adequate light to allow children to see what they are doing. Ideally, left-handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners so that their movements are not restricted.

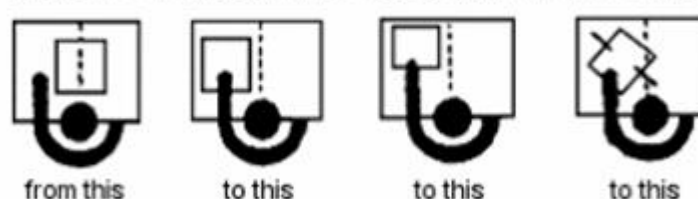
Printable poster in Appendix 3.

Provision for left-handed children

Left handed children (approximately 10% of the population) are supported by being encouraged to:

- Sit with light coming from the right-hand side, to avoid working in the shadow of their hand.
- Sit on a slightly higher chair than a right handed writer, to see over their hand more easily and so their arm and hand have more freedom of movement.
- Sit slightly to the right of the desk space so they have plenty of room to their left.
- Sit on the left hand side of right-handed writers – to avoid their paper and elbows bumping.
- Not sit in a hunched or stiff way. Usually this happens because the paper position isn't right.
- Practice left-to-right exercises before writing left-to-right

Figure 1: Correct positioning of paper for left-handed writer



Appendix 1

Teaching Sequence

Year Group	Units / Outcomes		
EYFS	<p>By the end of Reception year children will have been introduced to:</p> <p>A comfortable and efficient pencil grip</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •producing a controlled line which supports letter formation •writing letters using the correct sequence of movements •pattern-making and letter/number formation in various media <p>Developing gross motor skills</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Whole-body responses to the language of movement 2 Large movements with equipment 3 Large movements with malleable materials 4 Body responses to music <p>Developing fine motor skills</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Hand and finger play 6 Making and modelling 7 Messy play 8 Links to art 9 Using one-handed tools and equipment 	<p><u>Techniques for teaching letter formation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide demonstrations when introducing and teaching letter shapes. • Observe individuals as much as possible while they practise. This enables the teacher to recognise and correct bad habits as they arise. • Talk the children through the process using appropriate language • Encourage children to verbalise what they are doing. • Writing involves visual and motor skills. Use the following ideas to reinforce the teaching of letter shapes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. make patterns in the air with ribbons 2. form letters by drawing in the air 3. finger trace over tactile letters 4. write over dotted or shadow writing 5. draw round templates 6. write in sand with a finger or stick 7. write on an interactive whiteboard 8. write letters boldly with a wax candle and then apply a colour wash 9. form letters with pegs on a pegboard or with beads in plasticine 10. form letters with fingers and/or bodies, individually and in groups 	

	10 Hand responses to music Developing patterns 11 Pattern-making 12 Investigating dots 13 Investigating straight lines and crosses 14 Investigating circles 15 Investigating curves, loops and waves 16 Investigating joined straight lines and angled patterns 17 Investigating eights and spirals		
EYFS	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
	1 Dots 2 Straight lines and crosses 3 Circles 4 Waves 5 Loops and bridges 6 Joined straight lines 7 Angled patterns 8 Eights 9 Spirals 10 Left-to-right orientation 11 Mix of patterns 12 Review of patterns	13 Introducing long-legged giraffe letters: l 14 Practising long-legged giraffe letters: l, i 15 Practising long-legged giraffe letters: u, t 16 Practising long-legged giraffe letters: j, y 17 Practising all the long-legged giraffe letters: l, i, t, u, j, y 18 Introducing one-armed robot letters: r 19 Practising one-armed robot letters: b, n 20 Practising one-armed robot letters: h, m 21 Practising one-armed robot letters: k, p 22 Practising all the one-armed robot letters: r, b, n, h, m, k, p 23 Practising all the long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters 24 Reviewing all the long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters	25 Introducing curly caterpillar letters: c 26 Practising curly caterpillar letters: a, d 27 Practising curly caterpillar letters: o, s 28 Practising curly caterpillar letters: g, q 29 Practising curly caterpillar letters: e, f 30 Practising all the curly caterpillar letters: c, a, d, o, s, g, q, e, f 31 Practising all the curly caterpillar, long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters 32 Introducing zig-zag monster letters: z 33 Practising zig-zag monster letters: v, w, x 34 Practising all the zig-zag monster letters: z, v, w, x 35 Practising all the curly caterpillar and zig-zag monster letters 36 Reviewing all the curly caterpillar and zig-zag monster letters
One	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
	1 Practising long-legged giraffe letters 2 Writing words with ll 3 Introducing capitals for long-legged giraffe letters 4 Practising one-armed robot letters 5 Practising long-legged giraffe letters and one-armed robot letters 6 Introducing capitals for one-armed robot letters 7 Practising curly caterpillar letters 8 Writing words with double ff 9 Writing words with double ss 10 Introducing capitals for curly caterpillar letters	11 Practising long-legged giraffe letters, one-armed robot letters and curly caterpillar letters 12 Practising zig-zag monster letters 13 Writing words with double zz 14 Mixing all the letter families 15 Practising all the capital letters 16 Practising all the numbers o–g 17 Writing words with ck and qu 18 Practising long vowel phonemes: ai, igh, oo 19 Practising vowels with adjacent consonants: ee, oa, oo 20 End-of-term check	21 Numbers 10–20: spacing 22 Practising ch unjoined 23 Introducing diagonal join to ascender: c-h 24 Practising ai unjoined 25 Introducing diagonal join, no ascender: a<i 26 Practising wh unjoined 27 Introducing horizontal join to ascender: w#h 28 Practising ow unjoined 29 Introducing horizontal join, no ascender: o&w 30 Assessment
Two	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
	1 Practising diagonal join to ascender: th, ch 2 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: ai, ay 3 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: ir, er 4 Practising horizontal join to ascender: wh, oh 5 Practising horizontal join, no ascender: ow, ou 6 Introducing diagonal join to e: ie, ue 7 Introducing horizontal join to e: oe, ve 8 Introducing ee 9 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: le 10 Writing numbers 1–100	11 Introducing diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: ea 12 Practising diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: igh 13 Practising diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: dg, ng 14 Introducing horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: oo, oa 15 Practising horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: wa, wo 16 Introducing mixed joins for three letters: air, ear 17 Practising mixed joins for three letters: oor, our 18 Practising mixed joins for three letters: ing 19 Size and spacing 20 End-of-term check	21 Building on diagonal join to ascender: ck, al, el, at, il, ill 22 Building on diagonal join, no ascender: ui, ey, aw, ur, an, ip 23 Building on horizontal join to ascender: ok, ot, ob, ol 24 Building on horizontal join, no ascender: oi, oy, on, op, ov 25 Building on diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: ed, cc, eg, ic, ad, ug, dd, ag 26 Building on horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: oc, og, od, va, vo 27 Introducing joins to s: as, es, is, os, ws, ns, ds, ls, ts, ks 28 Practising joining ed and ing 29 Assessment 30 Capitals
Three	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
	1 Practising joining through a word in stages: no ascenders or descenders 2 Practising joining through a word in stages: parallel ascenders 3 Introducing joining from s to ascender: sh, sl, st, sk 4 Introducing joining from s, no ascender: sw, si, se, sm, sn, sp, su 5 Introducing joining from s to an anticlockwise letter: sa, sc, sd, sg, so, sq 6 Introducing joining from r to an ascender: rb, rh, rk, rl, rt 7 Introducing joining from r, no ascender: ri, ru, m, rp 8 Introducing joining from r to an anticlockwise letter: ra, rd, rg, ro 9 Introducing joining from r to e: are, ere, ure, ore, ire 10 Introducing break letters: g, j, y, f, b, p, x, z	11 Introducing joining to f: if, ef, af, of 12 Introducing joining from f to an ascender: fl, ft 13 Introducing joining from f, no ascender: fe, fi, fu, fr, fy 14 Introducing joining from f to an anticlockwise letter: fo, fa 15 Introducing ff 16 Introducing rr 17 Introducing ss 18 Introducing q u 19 Revising parallel ascenders and descenders 20 End-of-term check	21 Revising joins: letter spacing 22 Revising joins: spacing between words 23 Revising joins: consistency of size 24 Revising joins: fluency 25 Revising joins: parallel ascenders 26 Revising joins: parallel ascenders and descenders 27 Revising horizontal join from r to an anticlockwise letter: rs 28 Revising break letters 29 Assessment 30 Revising capital letters

Four	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
	1 Introducing diagonal join from p and b to ascender: ph, pl, bl 2 Introducing diagonal join from p and b, no ascender: bu, bi, be, pu, pi, pe 3 Introducing diagonal join from p and b to an anticlockwise letter: pa, po, ps, ba, bo, bs 4 Revising parallel ascenders and descenders: bb, pp 5 Break letters: x, z 6 Spacing in common exception words 7 Consistent size of letters 8 Relative size of capitals 9 Speed and fluency 10 End-of-term check	11 Revising parallel ascenders 12 Revising parallel ascenders and break letters 13 Relative sizes of letters 14 Proportion of letters 15 Spacing between letters 16 Spacing between words 17 Writing at speed 18 Improving fluency 19 Speed and fluency 20 End-of-term check	21 Consistency of size 22 Proportion 23 Spacing between letters and words 24 Size, proportion and spacing 25 Fluency: writing longer words 26 Speed and fluency 27 Revising break letters 28 Print alphabet: presentation 29 Assessment 30 Capital letters: presentation
Five	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
	1 Introducing sloped writing in letter families 2 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join to ascender: th, sh, nb, nd, ht, st 3 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join, no ascender: ai, ay, kn, er, ie, en 4 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join to an anticlockwise letter: ac, sc, bo, da, ea, ho 5 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join to ascender: wh, wl, oh, ol, of, ob 6 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join, no ascender: oi, oy, ou, op, ve 7 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join to an anticlockwise letter: oo, oa, wa, wo, va, vo 8 Practising sloped writing: joining from r: ra, re, ri, ro, ru 9 Practising sloped writing: joining from s: sh, su, sc, sl, sw, sp 10 End-of-term check	11 Practising sloped writing: proportion – joining from f to ascender: fl, ft 12 Practising sloped writing: size – joining from f, no ascender: fa, fe, fi, fo, fu 13 Different styles for different purposes: writing a paragraph 14 Practising sloped writing: speed: ff 15 Practising sloped writing: speed and legibility: rr 16 Practising sloped writing: size, proportion and spacing: ss 17 Practising sloped writing: building speed: lqu 18 Different styles for different purposes: decorative alphabets 19 Different styles for different purposes 20 End-of-term check	21 Sloped writing: proportion, joining p and b to ascenders: ph, pl, bl 22 Handwriting for different purposes: joining from p and b, no ascender: bu, bi, pe, pu, pi, pr 23 Practising sloped writing: parallel downstrokes: pp, bb 24 Practising sloped writing: all double letters 25 Practising sloped writing for speed: tial, cial 26 Practising sloped writing for fluency 27 Personal style 28 Handwriting for different purposes: print alphabet 29 Assessment
Six	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
	1 Style for speed: crossbar join from t: th, ti, tr, ta, tt 2 Style for speed: looping from gl, gr, ga, gg 3 Style for speed: looping from j and y: je, jo, ye, yr, yo 4 Style for speed: looping from f 5 Style for speed: different joins to s 6 Style for speed: looping from b 7 Style for speed: joining from v, w, x and z 8 Handwriting for different purposes: abbreviations 9 Spacing between words 10 End-of-term check	11 Improving handwriting: the importance of consistent sizing 12 Improving handwriting: the importance of proportion 13 Improving handwriting: the importance of spacing 14 Improving handwriting: the importance of consistent sizing of parallel ascenders and descenders 15 Improving handwriting: the importance of closed and open letters 16 Improving handwriting: pen breaks in longer words 17 Handwriting for different purposes: annotations 18 Handwriting for different purposes 19 Choice of handwriting tools 20 End-of-term check	21 Handwriting for different purposes: fast-joined and print letters 22 Handwriting for different purposes: note making 23 Handwriting for different purposes: neat writing 24 Handwriting for different purposes: print letters for personal details 25 Different styles of writing 26 Handwriting for different purposes: presentation 27 Handwriting for different purposes: decorated capitals 28 Handwriting for different purposes: layout 29 Assessment 30 Handwriting for different purposes: handwriting patterns

Appendix 2 National Curriculum Links

YEAR 1

Handwriting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • form capital letters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • form digits 0-9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

YEAR 2

Handwriting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another

YEAR 5 AND YEAR 6

Handwriting
write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task

Are you ready for writing?

Posture

- Are your feet flat on the floor?
- Is your chair tucked in?
- Are you comfortable?



Pencil

- Is it sharp?
- Nip, flip, grip!

right



nip



flip



grip

left



nip



flip



grip

Paper

- Is the paper supported by your non-writing hand?
- Is the paper sloped towards your writing hand?

If you write with
your **right** hand.



If you write with
your **left** hand.

