



Handwriting Policy 2024



Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum. At the end of Key Stage 2 all children should have the ability to produce fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy joined-up handwriting, and to understand the different forms of handwriting used for different purposes. We aim to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.

At Heartwood, before we teach children to form letters correctly, we ensure that we develop their pre-writing skills: oral communication, developing an interest in reading, immersing in a print rich environment, being able to hold a pencil correctly and building strength in their hands.

Once children are able to draw vertical lines, horizontal lines, a circle, an add sign, a square and diagonal lines they are taught how to form letters correctly.

Children are encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib (see appendix 1 for pencil grip and control progression map).

All children are taught to sit in the perfect handwriting position when writing:

- Feet flat on the floor
- Bottom at the back of the chair
- Body one fist from the table
- Shoulders down and relaxed
- Back leaning forward slightly
- Left/right hand holding the page
- Left/right hand ready in a tripod grip

Read Write Inc. (RWI) handwriting is followed in line with the RWI phonics programme taught at Heartwood. Children learn correct letter formation using the same picture mnemonics they have already been taught in the RWI Speed Sounds Set 1 lessons (see appendix 2)

These letters are taught in handwriting groups:

- 'Around' letters: **c a o d g q**
- 'Down' letters: **l t b p k h i j m n r u y**
- 'Curly' letters: **e f s**
- 'Zig-zag' letters: **v w z x**

When children can form letters correctly, they learn how to place the letters on the line.

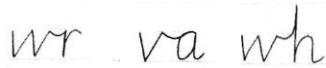
- Small letters: **a c e i m n o r s u v w x z**
- Letters that are written below the line are taught as descenders: **g j p q y**
- Tall letters are taught as ascenders: **b d h k l t f**

After children can form their letters correctly and their letters are a relative size, they are then taught to join their letters using two basic joins: the arm join (diagonal) and the washing line join (horizontal) (see appendix 3)

The arm join has three variations:

Handwritten examples of arm joins: 'ai', 'ab', and 'ic'. Each pair of letters is shown on a set of three horizontal lines (top, middle, bottom). The 'ai' join is a diagonal line from the top of 'a' to the middle of 'i'. The 'ab' join is a diagonal line from the top of 'a' to the middle of 'b'. The 'ic' join is a diagonal line from the top of 'i' to the middle of 'c'.

The washing line join has three variations:

Handwritten examples of washing line joins: 'wr', 'va', and 'wh'. Each pair of letters is shown on a set of three horizontal lines (top, middle, bottom). The 'wr' join is a horizontal line from the middle of 'w' to the middle of 'r'. The 'va' join is a horizontal line from the middle of 'v' to the middle of 'a'. The 'wh' join is a horizontal line from the middle of 'w' to the middle of 'h'.

When teaching children to join letters, the following letters are 'break' letters and do not join to the next letter: **b q p s z x r**

In Years 5 and 6, children are taught to join all letters (no break letters).

In Key Stage Two (Years 3-6) children are also taught:

To improve quality, speed and stamina of handwriting

- Quality: Ensure letters are consistently sized with equal word spacing and that ascenders and descenders are parallel and do not touch words on the lines above and below
- Speed: Improve speed of handwriting to allow creative writing to take precedence over the task of handwriting and be able to take 'quick notes' at a faster pace
- Stamina: Have the strength and mobility to be able to write for longer periods of time without fatigue.

To have full knowledge and ability of the different forms of handwriting for different purposes:

- Neat, joined letters for writing passages and large amounts of text, lists and letters
- Printed or capital letters for posters, notices, headings, labelling and form filling

Left-Handed Children

- Left-handed children should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- 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 children write left to right automatically.

Inclusion and SEND

Children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills, including left-handed children, and children with SEND, will be given additional support. Additional resources may also be used (i.e. a writing slant, pencil grips etc.)

High Expectations

All teaching and support staff are expected to use neat handwriting, following the school's agreed handwriting style, for all handwriting tasks, including when writing on the board, writing labels or signs for displays and when marking children's work. Pupils should experience coherence and continuity in the learning and teaching of handwriting across all subjects and all school years and be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work. To ensure consistent high expectations and pride in presentation, children may be asked to rewrite some of their work if needed.






Celebrating handwriting

All staff should praise children and comment on the particular skill they are practicing or have mastered in their writing. Once children can write neatly and fluently using all the joins correctly, they will be awarded with their pen license. Children are expected to use the handwriting pens issued by the school.

Parents/Carers

The school's agreed handwriting style will be shared with parents/carers at the beginning of each academic year, or when a new pupil enters the school, so that they can support and encourage handwriting at home that reflects the work we do at school.

PENCIL GRIP & CONTROL Progression Map

<p>FISTED GRIP</p>	<p>DIGITAL PRONATE GRIP</p>	<p>4 FINGER GRIP HIGH INDEX</p>	<p>4-6 YEARS</p> <p>HOOKED WRIST OR EXTENDED WRIST</p> <p>CROSS THUMB</p> <p>THUMB TUCK</p> <p>FLEXED POSITION THUMB IN A JOINT OF INDEX FINGER AND</p> <p>EXTENDED POSITION INDEX FINGER JOINT IN HYPER</p> <p>EXTENDED POSITION THUMB IN HYPER</p> <p>GRASP, FINGERS MOVE AS ONE</p> <p>STATIC TRIPOD GRIP-3 FINGER</p> <p>LATERAL TRIPOD</p>							<p>DYNAMIC TRIPOD GRIP</p>
<p>1-2 YEARS</p>  <p>FISTED GRIP 1-2 years old The child holds the pencil with the whole hand.</p>	<p>2-3 YEARS</p>  <p>DIGITAL PRONATE GRIP 2-3 years old The child holds the pencil with the fingers and thumb, the palm is facing down.</p>	<p>3-4 YEARS</p>  <p>4 FINGER GRIP 3-4 years old A tripod grip is used for the writing. The thumb and index finger are on the sides of the pencil.</p>	<p>4-6 YEARS</p>  <p>HOOKED WRIST CROSS THUMB THUMB TUCK FLEXED POSITION THUMB IN A JOINT OF INDEX FINGER AND EXTENDED POSITION INDEX FINGER JOINT IN HYPER EXTENDED POSITION THUMB IN HYPER GRASP, FINGERS MOVE AS ONE STATIC TRIPOD GRIP LATERAL TRIPOD</p> <p>A three-finger grasp, where the thumb, index finger and middle finger work as one unit. Movement is usually from the wrist with this static grasp. A static quadropod grip has a fourth finger involved. Triangles, circles and squares can be copied with this grip.</p>							<p>6-7 YEARS</p>  <p>DYNAMIC TRIPOD GRIP 6-7 years old The child holds the pencil with the fingers and thumb, the palm is facing up.</p>
<p>Pencil is held in the palm. All fingers and thumb are used. Movement is from the shoulder; the arm and the hand move as a unit. Light scribbles are produced with this pencil grip.</p>	<p>All fingers are holding the pencil but the wrist is turned so that the palm is facing down towards the page. Movement comes mostly from the elbow and the shoulder is now stabilized. Horizontal lines, vertical lines and circular lines are able to be copied.</p>	<p>Fingers are held on the pencil shaft opposite the thumb, beginning to form the arc between the thumb and index finger. Movement occurs from the wrist; the hand and fingers move as a whole unit. Zigzag lines, crossed lines and simple humans can be drawn with this grip.</p>	<p>Reception Age Range</p>							<p>Pencil is held in a stable position between the thumb, index and middle finger. The ring and little fingers are bent and rest comfortably on the table. The index finger and thumb form an open space. Movement comes from the fingertips. This is the ideal grip to move the pencil efficiently, accurately and for letter formation practice.</p>

Appendix 2

Rhymes for letter formation - taken from Read Write Inc.

<p>a</p> 	<p>b</p> 	<p>c</p> 	<p>d</p> 	<p>e</p> 	<p>f</p> 
<p>Around the apple and down the leaf.</p>	<p>Down the laces to the heel and around the toe.</p>	<p>Curl around the caterpillar.</p>	<p>Around the dinosaurs bottom, up his tall neck & down to his toes.</p>	<p>Lift off the top and scoop out the egg.</p>	<p>Down the stem and draw the leaves.</p>
<p>g</p> 	<p>h</p> 	<p>i</p> 	<p>j</p> 	<p>k</p> 	<p>l</p> 
<p>Around the girls face, down her hair and give her a curl.</p>	<p>Down the head, to his hooves and over his back.</p>	<p>Down the body and dot for the head.</p>	<p>Down his body, curl, dot for his head.</p>	<p>Down the kangaroo's body tail and leg.</p>	<p>Down the long leg.</p>
<p>m</p> 	<p>n</p> 	<p>o</p> 	<p>p</p> 	<p>qu</p> 	<p>r</p> 
<p>Down Maisie, mountain, mountain.</p>	<p>Down Nobby and over his net.</p>	<p>All around the orange.</p>	<p>Down the pirates plait and around his face.</p>	<p>Round her head, up past her earring, down her hair, and flick.</p>	<p>Down the robots back and curl over his arm.</p>
<p>s</p> 	<p>t</p> 	<p>u</p> 	<p>v</p> 	<p>w</p> 	<p>x</p> 
<p>Slither down the snake.</p>	<p>Down the tower, across the tower.</p>	<p>Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle.</p>	<p>Down a wing, up a wing.</p>	<p>Down, up, down, up.</p>	<p>Down the arm and leg, repeat the other side.</p>
<p>y</p> 	<p>z</p> 				
<p>Down a horn, up a horn and under head.</p>	<p>Zig-zag-zig.</p>				

'Around' letters



Checklist: caterpillar

- ✓ start at the caterpillar's head
- ✓ curl around the body



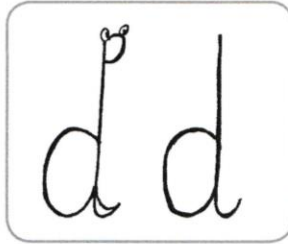
Checklist: apple

- ✓ start at the stalk
- ✓ draw a nice round apple
- ✓ go back up to the stalk, then down
- ✓ curl the leaf at the bottom



Checklist: orange

- ✓ start at the stalk
- ✓ draw a nice round orange



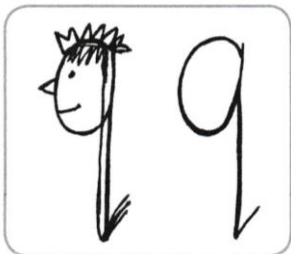
Checklist: dinosaur

- ✓ draw a big round bottom
- ✓ up the tall neck
- ✓ down the straight line to the feet
- ✓ draw a curl for the feet



Checklist: girl

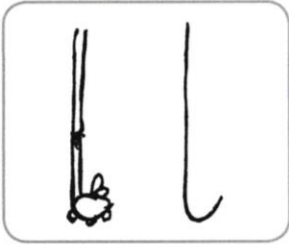
- ✓ start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- ✓ draw a nice round face
- ✓ go back up to her bobble
- ✓ down her very straight hair
- ✓ draw a round curl to finish



Checklist: queen

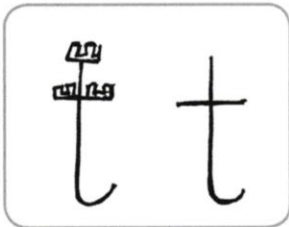
- ✓ start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- ✓ draw a nice round face
- ✓ go back up to her bobble
- ✓ down her very straight hair
- ✓ add a sharp flick to finish

'Down' letters



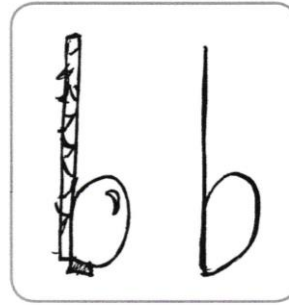
Checklist: Liam's leg

- ✓ start at the top of his leg
- ✓ go down his long leg
- ✓ add a curl for the shoe to kick the ball



Checklist: tower

- ✓ start at the top of the tower
- ✓ draw a straight line down the tower
- ✓ add a curl at the bottom – then lift the pencil off the page
- ✓ draw a straight line across the tower



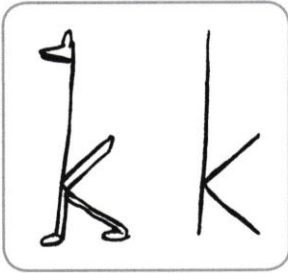
Checklist: boot

- ✓ start at the top of the boot
- ✓ draw a straight line down the boot
- ✓ go round over the toe
- ✓ go back to the heel



Checklist: Polly Pirate

- ✓ start at the top of her plait
- ✓ draw down her long straight plait
- ✓ go round over her face
- ✓ finish under her chin



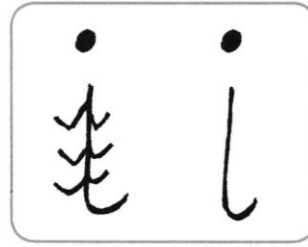
Checklist: kangaroo

- ✓ start at the kangaroo's head
- ✓ draw down the long straight body – then lift the pencil off the page
- ✓ draw a straight tail to the body – two-thirds of the way down
- ✓ draw a straight back leg from the body



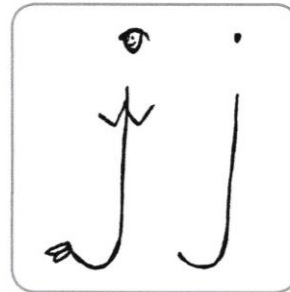
Checklist: horse

- ✓ start at the horse's head
- ✓ draw down her long straight neck
- ✓ continue down to her feet
- ✓ go round her back
- ✓ draw a straight back leg
- ✓ add a little curl of dust as the horse runs away



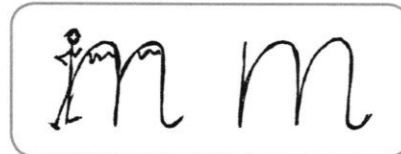
Checklist: insect

- ✓ start at the top of the insect's neck
- ✓ draw down the short straight body
- ✓ draw a curl for a small round tail
- ✓ add a little dot for the head



Checklist: jack-in-a-box

- ✓ start at the top of the jack-in-a-box's neck
- ✓ draw down the long straight body
- ✓ draw a smooth curl for the legs
- ✓ add a dot for the head



Checklist: Maisie and the mountains

- ✓ start at Maisie's head
- ✓ draw a straight body for Maisie
- ✓ go over the mountains – from Maisie's waist
- ✓ check the mountains are the same height as Maisie
- ✓ add a small curl for the grass



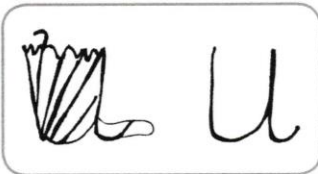
Checklist: Nobby and his net

- ✓ start at Nobby's head
- ✓ go straight down Nobby
- ✓ go over the net – from Nobby's waist
- ✓ check the net is the same height as Nobby
- ✓ add a small curl for the grass



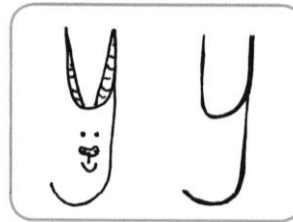
Checklist: robot

- ✓ start at the robot's head
- ✓ go straight down its body
- ✓ go over the robot's arm – from its waist



Checklist: umbrella

- ✓ start at the top of the handle
- ✓ draw down the straight line for the handle
- ✓ go round underneath the umbrella and back up the other side
- ✓ go down the umbrella
- ✓ add a little curl for the puddle



Checklist: yak

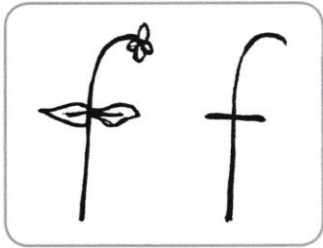
- ✓ start at the top of the first horn
- ✓ draw down the straight line for the first horn
- ✓ go round underneath the horns
- ✓ draw a straight line up for the second horn
- ✓ go down and curl under its head

'Curly' letters



Checklist: egg

- ✓ draw up around the shell that needs to be cut off the boiled egg
- ✓ go round underneath the egg



Checklist: flower

- ✓ start at the top of the flower
- ✓ draw around and down the flower stem – then lift the pencil off the page
- ✓ draw a straight line across the leaves



Checklist: snake

- ✓ start at the snake's head
- ✓ curl one way
- ✓ curl the other

'Zigzag' letters



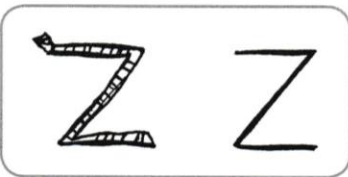
Checklist: vulture

- ✓ draw two straight lines for the wings – down, up



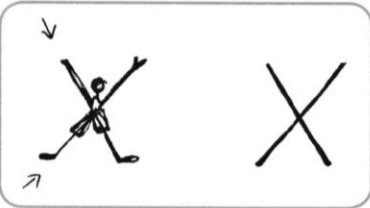
Checklist: worm

- ✓ draw four straight lines, all the same length – down, up, down, up



Checklist: zigzag

- ✓ draw three straight lines – across, diagonally back, across



Checklist: exercise

- ✓ start at the top left
- ✓ draw one straight line diagonally down – lift the pencil off the page
- ✓ start at the bottom left
- ✓ go diagonally up

Appendix 3

Use for joining:

a c d e h i k l m n t u

to:

e i j m n p r u v w x y z

See examples on the following pages.

ai ae aj am ar

ci ce cu cy

di dr dy de

ee ei em er

he hu hi hy

ie ir ip iw iy

ke ki kn ky

le lm lu ly

me mi mm mu

ne ni nu ny

te ti tu ty tw

ui ue up

uw uy

Use for joining:

a e i d h k l m n t u c

to:

b h k l t

Examples:

ab ah ak al

at eb eh ek el

et ib ik il it

al ch mb th da

Use for joining:

a c d e h i k l m n t u

to:

a d g c o q

Examples:

ic ka ko la

ld lo

Use for joining:

v w r f o

to:

i j m n p r u v w x y z e

Examples:

m vu

drop further

wi wr wy we

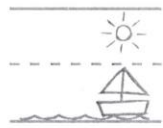
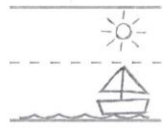
drop further

ri rr ry re

fi fr fn fu fy

start

oi or ow ou oy



Use for joining:

v w r f o

to:

b h k l t

Examples:

wh wl rb

rh rl fl ob

oh ol ot

Use for joining:

v w r f o

to:

a d g c o q

See examples on the following page.

va vo

wa wo

ra ro rd rg

fa fo

oa oo od og

Use for joining:

a e i d h k l m n t u c

to:

b h k l t

Examples:

Use for joining:

g j y

to:

a c d o g l t h w r y m n p v

