

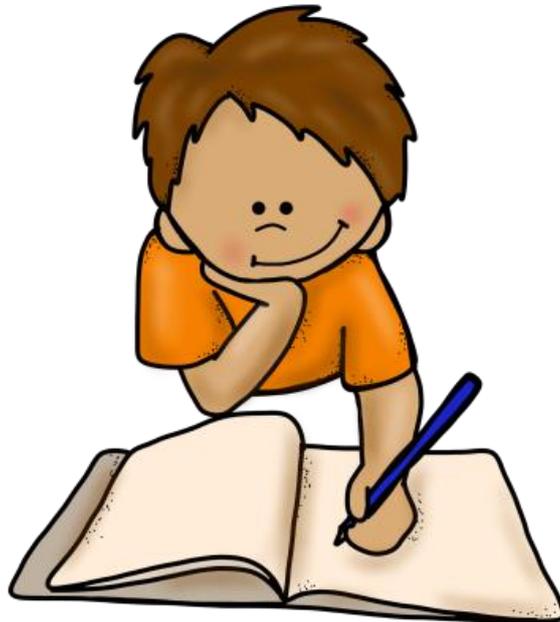
A small school, dreaming big

Westbury-on-Severn CE Primary School



**Westbury-on-Severn
CE Primary School**

Handwriting policy 2025



At Westbury-on-Severn CE Primary School, our aim is for all pupils to leave school in Year 6 with legible, neat, joined up handwriting. In this digital world, we still believe that children need to be able to communicate in writing by hand clearly, neatly and confidently.

The National Curriculum expectations for pupils are as follows:

By the end of the Reception Year:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed

By the end of Year 2:

- form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another in some of their writing
- use spacing between words
- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join some letters (Greater Depth)

By the end of Year 6:

- maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed.

In order for pupils to meet these curriculum aims in writing, they need to be taught letter formation and joins in a systematic and regular way, starting in the Early Years, through to the end of Year 6.

At Westbury-on-Severn CE Primary school, we follow the **Nelson Handwriting** scheme. This begins once pupils have been taught their single letters during their Reception year Little Wandle lessons.

However, we are aware that pupils do often start mark making and writing before their Reception year so we have carefully considered our handwriting progression across the school, starting in Chestnuts (Preschool class), right through to Oak Class (Y4,5,6), synchronising our approach alongside other resources we use.

This policy is set out as guidance for teachers and information for parents. We have created this policy in consultation with staff. We will review this policy every three years.

This policy is due to reviewed in 2028 by the Headteacher and Governing Board in consultation with staff.

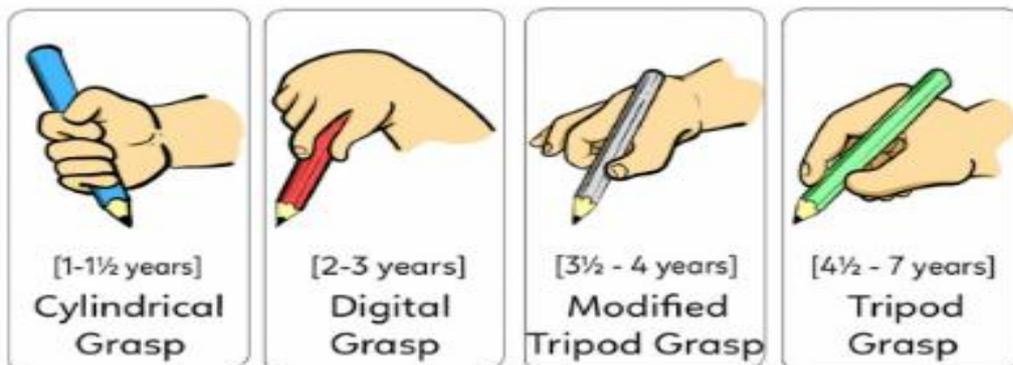
Handwriting in the Early Years: Chestnuts

Pupils love to mark make in the early years, with a range of materials, and this is actively encouraged by staff. Pupils are starting to understand that writing holds meaning and may be noticing letters in their name and wanting to write them. Staff in Preschool support children in their attempts and, where appropriate, model correct letter formation and pencil grip. This is done sensitively and positively, and only if the pupil is deemed developmentally ready to receive "correction".

Staff will start to use the language of "lower case letters" and "Capital Letters" when engaging with young pupils about their writing, so that they start to learn the difference.

It must be noted that pupils can, early on, embed poor handwriting habits, so the aim for staff in Preschool is to help pupils get letter formation right from the get-go, to support pupils in their transition to Reception. This is always done encouragingly through modelling and support. Pupils often need staff to hold the pencil with them, to feel the movement of the pencil in the right direction.

Pencil grip progression



Noticing the stages of pencil grip can be a useful guide for staff when observing children writing and drawing. However, not all children progress in this way and sometimes children switch between grips as they are gaining confidence. Again, staff may decide to support the child to improve their pencil grip, if it is developmentally appropriate to do so.

Pupils in Chestnuts are encouraged to "write" using a range of resources- crayons, pens, pencils, chalk, paint. This supports their fine motor skill development which is a prerequisite for writing.

Handwriting in the Early Years: Willow Class- Reception year

Pupils are likely to enter the Reception year with some writing skills, either attempting to or competently writing their own name and maybe some other letters.

The first formal handwriting teaching pupils will encounter will be via the **Little Wandle** phonics scheme. Pupils will systematically be taught letter formation through this scheme, using the rhymes to help them remember the approach. Pupils will practice these letters using the Little Wandle sheets to be confident with their single letter formation, and in conjunction with learning the letter sounds. It is important that pupils get close support and observation from staff to ensure that they are not embedding bad formation habits early. Formation of **d, a, b, m, n, p, u** are of particular note- pupils must learn to start in the right place.

Towards the end of the Autumn term pupils will start having handwriting lessons several times a week using the Nelson Workbooks A, B and C, with a view to completing the workbook C by the end of the academic year in July. Lessons will be short (10-15 mins) where the letter formation in the workbook is modelled by the teacher before pupils practice independently. Practice might be on a whiteboard. Lessons may start with some enjoyable warm up activities, as suggested by the Nelson scheme. (Ten little fingers/Rain/ Incy Wincy/Grandma's spectacles).

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/oxford-owl-videos/handwriting-videos--1/>

It is important that these lessons are short and engaging, with all pupils progressing at the same pace and not continuing to write in their workbooks ahead of others.

Pupils only learn to write the letters that they have been taught in the Phonics scheme. Pupils in Reception are likely to start their handwriting lessons after the first few weeks of Phonics teaching and complete Workbook A by Christmas, Workbook B by April and Workbook C by July.

It is very important that staff model correct letter formation in all writing visible to the children, in live modelling as well as on school books or name cards etc. Children learn from our example. It is very beneficial for them to watch us form letters and to see excellent handwriting in the class environment.

Pre-Cursive letter formation taught in EYFS. The k has no loop:

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Handwriting in Year One: Willow Class

Pupils continue to progress in their handwriting skills using Workbooks 1 A and 1B supported by textbooks. Teaching again needs to be in short, engaging sessions (10-15 mins) with teacher modelling beforehand and all pupils progressing at the same pace, with support where needed. 1-2 pages a session is recommended. ***During the Spring Term, pupils start learning simple joins in their handwriting lessons*** but are not expected to use them in their writing unless they feel able to. This lays the foundation for joined up handwriting as they progress through school. Pupils are taught how to sit at the table, chair tucked in, feet on the floor, holding the book steady with their free hand.

All writing visible to the children needs letters to be formed correctly, it is very beneficial to see staff modelling good handwriting.

Precursive letter formation in Y1 and beyond- the k now has a loop to support joining:

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Each year group needs to be taught separately for handwriting several times a week.

Handwriting in Year Two: Sycamore Class

Pupils continue with Workbooks 2A and 2B across the year. Textbook Pupil Book 2 is there to support pupils and to allow the teacher to follow the programme. Handwriting ***must*** again be modelled but pupils are now developing more confidence and independence. All joins are reviewed and pupils are starting to gain mastery of them. The expectation is that all pupils are writing with joined up handwriting in/***by the end of Year 2*** in both handwriting lessons and English. To facilitate this, the teacher needs to be modelling the correct joins in all writing visible to pupils, for example on the front of books and any handwritten notices as well as modelling in lessons.

Handwriting in Year Three: Sycamore Class

At the start of Key Stage 2, pupils move away from handwriting lessons using workbooks to handwriting lessons on lines similar to those used in English lessons. This means they have less modelling in front of them when they practice.

In Year 3 they need to learn how to size their letters accurately – lower case and Capital letters- and consolidate the joins they learnt in Y1 and Y2. There are 27 units

to be taught in Year 3, each of which needs to be no more than 20-30 mins. The teacher has a text book to work through- direct teaching/modelling/pupil practice in their books with live marking.

Each year group needs to be taught separately for handwriting at least once a week.

Handwriting in Oak Class: Years 4, 5 and 6

Each year group has their own programme of handwriting to follow with the teacher using the textbook to directly teach and model, with pupils using normal English books to practice in, with live marking supporting them when possible. Once a week is sufficient at this stage of their handwriting journey with a lesson for each year group of 15-20 mins. There are 28 units to complete.

Each year group needs to be taught separately for handwriting at least once a week.

This means that there will be time in the summer term for each year group, or the whole class, to address areas of weakness and to practice KS2 NC spellings using their best joined handwriting.

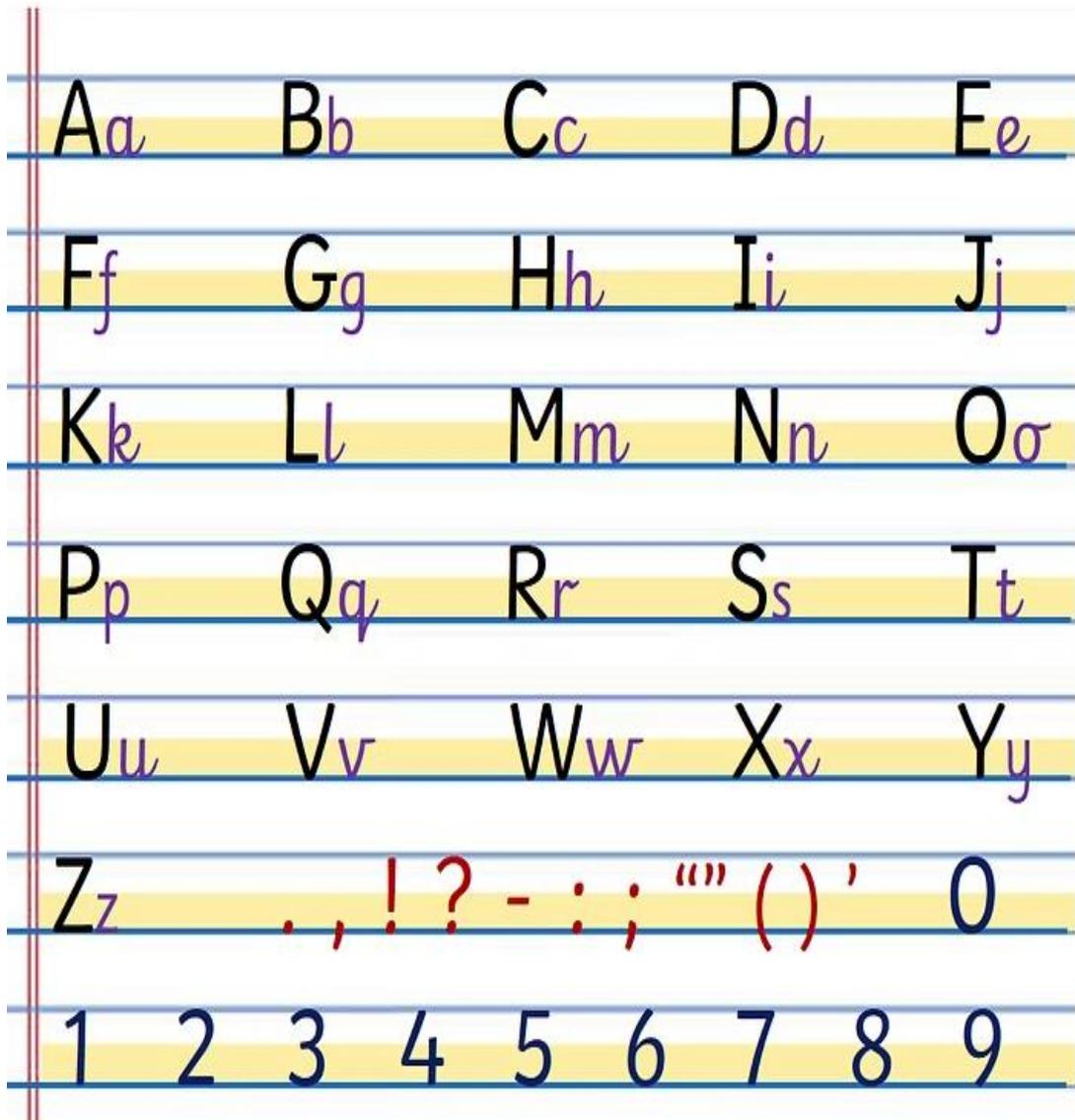
Years 4 and 5 are the years where pupils consolidate and refine their joined handwriting. Year 6 is when they find their own style and can be introduced to different ways of writing ***j/g/f/y*** for example.

In Oak Class all pupils have the opportunity to earn a pen licence. This is awarded if a pupil is showing consistently strong, clear and well-formed joined up handwriting in all lessons, including Foundation subjects. They then have permission to write with a blue or black pen in all lessons bar Maths. This can be from school or a pen from home.

In the final term of Year 6, all pupils are permitted to use a pen to write with, to prepare them for secondary school.

All pupils in Oak Class are permitted to use a pen, if they wish, when publishing work in English. Pupils are expected to use their best handwriting in all published work.

Teachers and Teaching Assistant in Oak Class are all expected to model correct joins and neat handwriting when teaching, when marking and on any labels or notices in the classroom, to ensure children are exposed to a consistent approach to handwriting.



abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

The “break letters” in our scheme are b, g, j, p, s, x. This means that a join does not follow on from this letter. This rule can be changed in UKS2, once pupils are confident joiners, to allow them to develop their own style and the teacher might want to model options.

Notice that Capital letters are DOUBLE the size of lower case letters and are never joined, into or out of.