



## Handwriting Policy

### Introduction

Here at Galley Common School we are very proud of our pupil's handwriting. We use Nelson Handwriting by Oxford Owl as the basis of our handwriting policy that covers all the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum and takes into account recommendations from research in Strong Foundations in the Early Years (Ofsted 2024) and the DfE Writing Framework (2025).

Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum. At the end of Key stage 1 pupils should be able to:

- Write legibly
- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in some of their writing
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lowercase letters
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting families and practice forming these.

Some children will have the ability to produce fluent, legible and, eventually speedy joined-up handwriting.

We aim to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.

See **Appendix 1** for our chosen letterforms.

### School Aims

We aim for our pupils to develop a neat, legible handwriting so that letters and words are formed automatically in independent writing.

By the end of Year 2 pupils will begin to use diagonal joins to join some letters and understand the importance of neat presentation to help communicate meaning clearly.

## **Method**

Teachers and Teaching Assistants at Galley Common School use neat, handwriting for all handwriting tasks including writing on the board, marking and comments. All laptops have the chosen font SasoonPrimaryInfant, which uses the appropriate letter 'a'.

Pupils will experience coherence and continuity in the learning and teaching of handwriting across all school years and be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work. Our aim is to help pupils enjoy learning and developing their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride.

During handwriting lessons, adults will explicitly model what children need to do and how to form their letters. They will provide children with verbal feedback during sessions and support children to make corrections in the moment to avoid incorrect letter formation becoming a habit- Ofsted Strong Foundations in the First Years of School (2024).

## **Handwriting frequency**

Handwriting is a cross-curriculum task and will be taken into consideration during all lessons. Formal teaching of handwriting is to be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure Key Stage targets are met.

We know that teaching handwriting during phonics lessons alone, does not provide sufficient time for children to master the basics of letter formation so that they have a foundation for speedy and fluent handwriting later on- Ofsted Strong Foundations in the First Years of School (2024).

Handwriting is explicitly taught four times per week in Reception and daily in Key Stage 1. This will allow pupils' letter formation to become automatic, efficient and fluent over time- DfE Writing Framework (2025).

## **Reception**

In Reception children do four handwriting sessions a week as part of their Phonics lessons, as well as a small group once a week, following the Nelson handwriting scheme.

Reception use the "Write Dance" scheme. They have a session once a week, which is followed by activities in class, to develop their gross and fine motor skills. The development of gross motor skills in the Foundation Stage will be encouraged through creative and physical development, which will in turn develop fine motor skills. They will develop pre-writing skills through emphasis on pattern work using a range of tools and working with different media. From the earliest stages emphasis will be placed on helping children to hold

pencils correctly and developing core stability, crossing the mid-line, shoulder and elbow pivot and fine motor skills.

- Writing will be encouraged in the context of structured play and use of the graphics area. Some examples of how this is achieved are:
- Movements to enhance gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern making, dancing
- Exercises to develop fine motor skills such as making marks on paper, whiteboards, blackboards, sand trays and I-pads.
- Letter learning to familiarise letter shapes, formation and vocabulary

### **Key Stage 1**

In Years 1 & 2 children have daily handwriting session lasting 15 minutes. In these sessions we will cover:

- Gross and fine motor skills exercises
- Letter formation reinforcement, learning and practice
- Numerals, capitals and printed letters: where and when to use, learning and practice

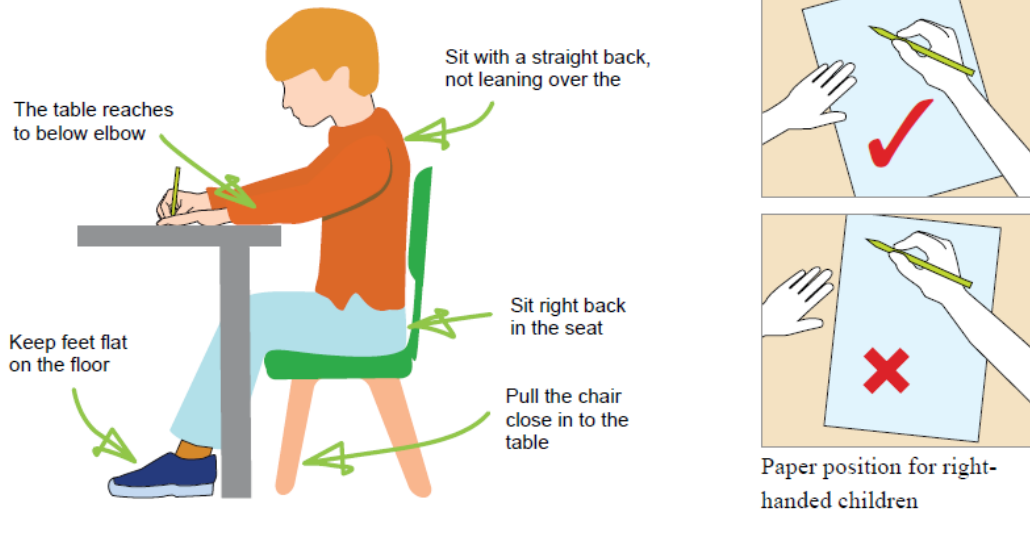
In Key Stage 1 pupils have separate handwriting books to ensure high standards of handwriting.

Handwriting is a high priority at Galley Common School and we celebrate the progress, efforts and achievements of all pupils.

### **Correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting**

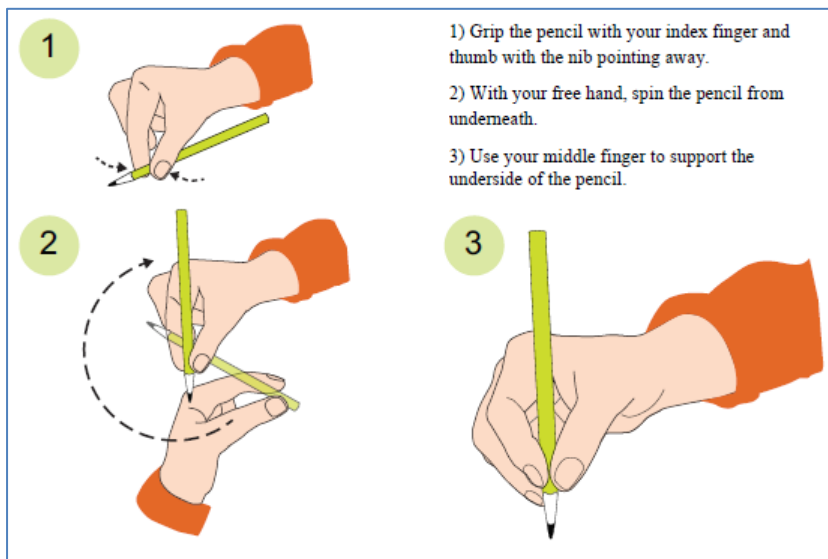
Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

## SITTING POSITION



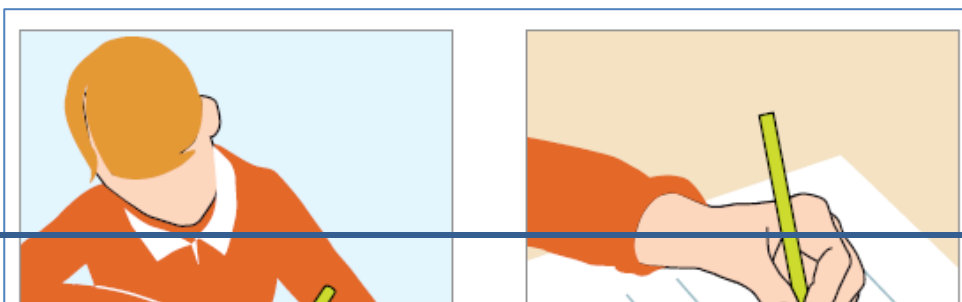
## The tripod pencil grip

Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib.



## Left-handed children

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow right-handed teachers as they demonstrate letter formation (and vice versa). It may be appropriate for teachers to demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group a basis.



## **Inclusion**

All children's handwriting skills will be valued and built upon. Children with special needs in handwriting will be helped by appropriate teacher intervention, in physical groups. For these children a physical assessment will be carried out so that any needs can be addressed effectively (see **Appendix 2**). These needs can be met using specific resources found on [www.teachhandwriting.com](http://www.teachhandwriting.com) in the 'Key Strengths Needed for Handwriting' section of the website. The particular needs of the left-handed children will always be taken into consideration. They will be shown how to position their book or paper so that they ensure movement across the page.

## **Pens and pencils**

Children are encouraged to start handwriting using a soft pencil. In Year 2, when children show that they can consistently use, legible and correctly formed letters in all of their handwriting across the curriculum they will earn their 'pen licence'. This means they will be able to use a blue handwriting pen.

## **Teaching**

### **Reception**

- Improve fine and gross motor skills by enjoying drawing patterns in a variety of writing materials such as modelling clay, air writing, sand trays, felt pens, crayons, pencils, IWB, iPads
- Understand the language need to describe pencil movements in preparation of letter formation

- Hold a pencil in an effective manner for writing and be encouraged to correct any errors in grip or stature
- Understand that letters are written on a base line
- Begin to form some recognisable letters, capital letters and numerals
- Have an understanding of writing their own name
- Understanding different shape letter families

### **Key Stage 1**

- Write legibly using upper and lower case letters
- Ensure that letters sit on the base line and are consistent in size with ascenders and descenders that are the correct length and formation
- Leave the correct space between words
- Form capital letters and use where appropriate
- Form numerals that are consistent in size and sit on the base line
- Improve the speed of writing and begin to write automatically so promoting creativity in independent writing

In Year 2 children will begin to learn the horizontal and diagonal joins needed to begin joining. This will follow the Nelson handwriting scheme, and it is expected that some children will be joining some of their letters by the end of Year 2.

Reviewed by: H. Parker-Brown November 2025

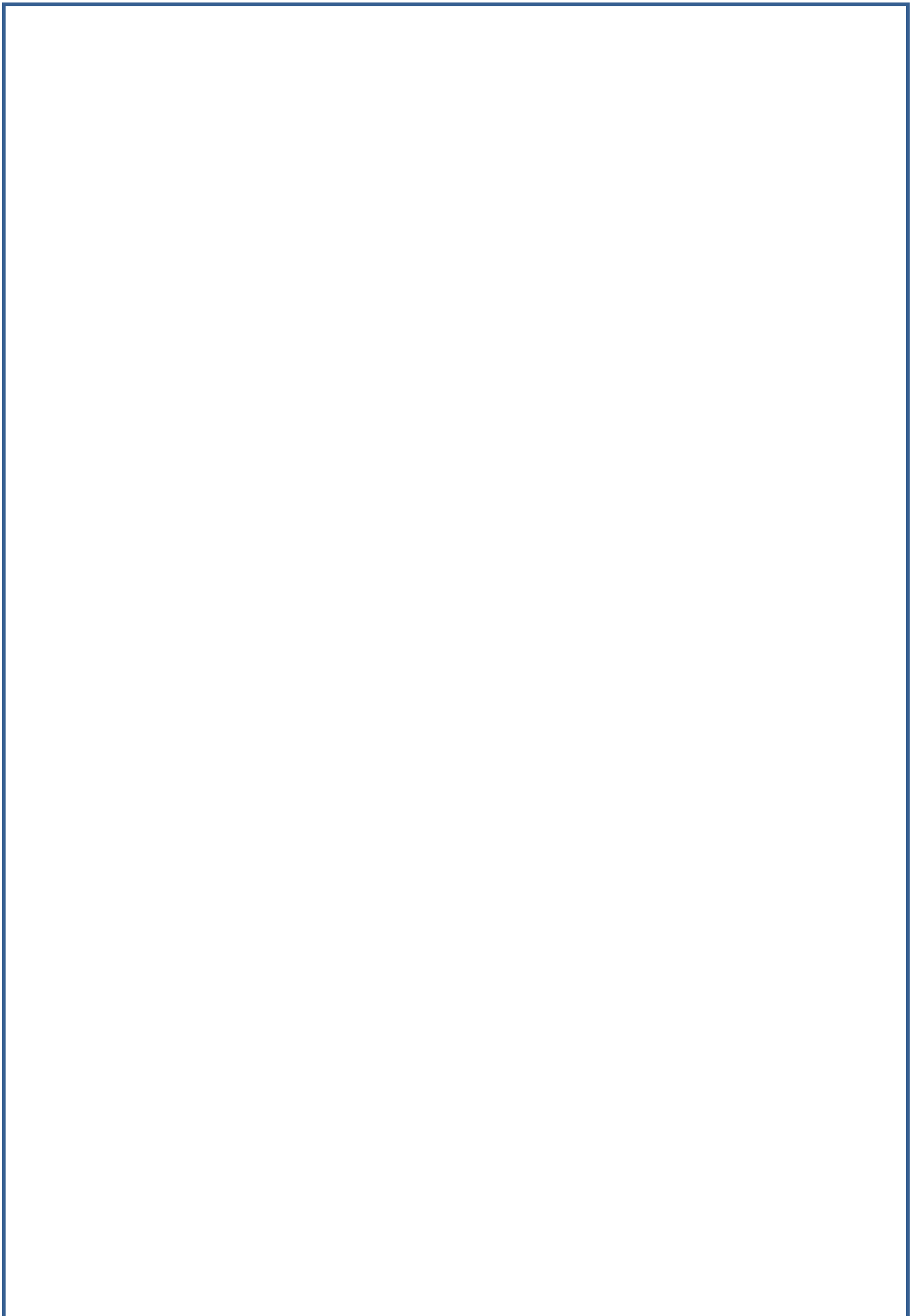
### **Appendix 1**

Chosen letterforms used at Galley Common School

Non-cursive letter formation for all year groups.

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





## Appendix 2

Physical assessment for children experiencing difficulties with their handwriting.

Teach Handwriting		Assessment Record Sheet		Sensory Perception Base		YES	NO
Name: _____ Date: _____							
<b>Posture Base</b>		YES	NO				
<b>Curl-ups (Core Strength)</b>				<b>Guess the Object (Tactile Perception)</b>			
Can they do this quite easily?				Can they identify the object using both hands?			
<b>Stairs (Balance &amp; Co-ordination)</b>				Can they identify the object using the right hand only?			
Manage Independently?				Can they identify the object using the left hand only?			
Are they using alternating feet (ages 5 and up)?				Can they identify an object when there are several items in the bag using both hands?			
<b>Tightrope Walking (Balance &amp; Stability)</b>				Can they identify an object when there are several items in the bag using just one hand (try both left and right hand)?			
Can they walk the line and maintain their stability?				<b>Tactile Play (Tactile Defensive)</b>			
Can they Pigeon Step along the line and maintain balance (age 5 & up)?				Are they happy to touch wet, cold, smooth or slimy textures?			
				Are they happy to touch and mould resistant modelling type materials?			
				Are they happy to touch gritty or rough textures?			
				<b>How Much Pressure (Tactile Perception)</b>			
<b>Bilateral Co-ordination Base</b>		YES	NO	Can they make shallow indentations with the fingers from the right hand?			
<b>Hands &amp; Knees (Mid-line)</b>				Can they make shallow indentations with the fingers from the left hand?			
Can they touch the right hand on to the left knee?				Can they make deep indentations with the fingers from the right hand?			
Can they touch the left hand on to the right knee?				Can they make deep indentations with the fingers from the left hand?			
<b>Simon Says (Understanding of Left &amp; Right &amp; Body Awareness)</b>				<b>Hand &amp; Finger Muscle Base</b>		YES	NO
Can they identify their left from right?				<b>How Many Can You Hold? (In-Hand Manipulation)</b>			
Can they accurately point to the body parts mentioned in the game?				Can they hold one or more items in the palm of their right hand while picking up another piece with this hand?			
<b>Ball Skills (Co-ordination)</b>				Can they hold one or more items in the palm of their left hand while picking up another piece with this hand?			
Can they stop/catch a rolling ball?				<b>Shake the Dice (Arch of Hands &amp; Grip Release)</b>			
Can they fairly accurately roll the ball back?				Can they cup their hands?			
Can they catch an under arm thrown ball?				Do they release the dice easily?			
Can they throw the ball back fairly accurately (preferably using an under arm throw)?				<b>Finger Tap Dancing (Individual Finger Movement)</b>			
				Can they touch each finger to their thumb on the right hand?			
				Can they touch each finger to their thumb on the left hand?			
				Can they change speed, order and pressure of the taps?			
<b>All Base Areas</b>		YES	NO				
<b>Crazy Scissors</b>							
Can they cut different thicknesses of paper?							
Can they cut fairly accurately around a shape or picture?							

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[http://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/Check%20lists%20and%20Assessment%20\(Colour%20Version\).pdf](http://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/Check%20lists%20and%20Assessment%20(Colour%20Version).pdf)