

Newlaithes Junior School



Handwriting Policy March 2024



Handwriting Policy and Guidelines

Aims

For Teachers

1. To know the correct style, letter formations and joins in handwriting to ensure consistency across the school.
2. To understand the progression in handwriting so that pupils are taught in every lesson and pupils' handwriting develops and improves.
3. To ensure high expectations in handwriting lessons and that pupils are expected to apply the same standards in other independent writing.

For Pupils

1. To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.
2. To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by:
 - Having a correct pencil grip
 - Knowing that all letters start from the top, except d and e which start in the middle
 - Forming all letters correctly
 - Knowing the size and orientation of letters

Teaching time

There should be at least one handwriting lesson each week in Years 3 & 4 as well as time to practise. (For example, presenting work for display.) In the lower juniors teachers may also find it beneficial to have two shorter handwriting sessions per week. Handwriting lessons will take place fortnightly in Year 5 unless

the teachers feel that more time should be allocated due to the children's needs. Year 6 will work to ensure that children are maintaining legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed.

Model used

Newlathes Junior School uses the Nelson Handwriting Scheme with the following letter formation:

Lower case letters

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Capitals

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

Cursive Script

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

The Four Joins

1. to letters without ascenders
2. to letters with ascenders
3. horizontal joins
4. horizontal joins to letters with ascenders

The break letters (letters that aren't joined from) are:

b g j p q s x y z

(See appendix 2 for examples of the break letters)

Resources

Teachers can use the Nelson Scheme Teacher Resource books and the Interactive Whiteboard Resources (which are available for lower juniors).

- Nelson Handwriting Whiteboard CD ROM 1 & 2 Level
- Nelson Handwriting Resources and Assessment Book 1 and Book 2

- Nelson Handwriting Resources and Assessment Book 3 and Book 4
- Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book
- Nelson Handwriting: Pupil Book 3 (Developing Skills Book 1)
- Nelson Handwriting: Pupil Book 4 (Developing Skills Book 2)
- Nelson Handwriting: Pupil Book 5 (Developing Skills Book 3)
- Nelson Handwriting: Pupil Book 6 (Developing Skills Book 4)

Books

Many pupils will use lined books for handwriting so that they are learning to write on lines that are the same size as the books they will produce most of their work in.

Some pupils may use the small purple books with red lines if they are still learning to form individual letters correctly or write in a reasonable size. (See the Literacy Subject Leader for further advice if necessary).

Work for presentation and display will normally be written on plain paper using line guides.

Pencils and Pens

Pupils will use HB pencils however blue ink pens may be used for presentation purposes. (Erasable hand-writing pens are available for pupils who find it easier to write with these pens). Pens may be introduced in hand-writing lessons in Year 5 if it is felt appropriate. If pupils start to use pens in their independent writing they may supply their own pen which must be a blue ink pen that erases using the appropriate pen eraser. Some pupils will find their writing is neater in pencil and should be given the choice to use pen or pencil in independent writing. However, pupils should be given the opportunity to use them in hand-writing lessons in Year 5 if appropriate.

Getting ready to write

Seating and posture

- 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.
- Encourage children to sit up straight and not slouch.

- The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor.
- Tables should be free of clutter.
- Rooms should be well lit.
- Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners.

Pencil grip

- A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil.

For right handers:

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point.
- The paper should be placed to the right tilted slightly to the left.
- Use the left hand to steady the paper.

For left handers:

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger.
- Hold about 3cm from the tip.
- The hand should be kept below the writing line although some pupils will find a 'hook' more comfortable.
- The paper should be tilted slightly to the right at about 20 - 30°.
- Use the right hand to steady the paper.

Assessment

Children must be assessed on entry into Year 3 to see if they are using the correct letter formation for individual letters first. If they are not starting in the correct place they will not be able to join letters accurately. Pupils who need to learn correct letter formation for some letters must be taught this before they begin to join. Pupils will have begun to learn and use joined handwriting in Key Stage 1 and will need to start from that position in the Progression Ladder (See Appendix 1 for Progression Ladder).

Teachers will assess pupils at the start of the year and decide where teaching should begin in the Progression Ladder. The year group starting points are a guide and teachers will need to use their professional judgement. (However, be aware of the expectations at the end of the year.)

It may be beneficial to group pupils into 2 or 3 ability groups based on their handwriting ability (this may be different to their writing level). Work will be differentiated and a teaching assistant may teach and work with one ability group if available.

Senior leaders should monitor children's writing and presentation in books regularly (as part of the monitoring cycle).

The following should be considered:

- Is the writing generally legible?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with the National Curriculum?

Individual assessment

Children should be observed as they write during handwriting lessons - the teacher must circulate, monitor and intervene. Teachers also need to monitor and mark whole pieces of writing. The following should be considered:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movement when forming and or joining letters?
- Are any letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
- Is the writing easily legible?

- Is the pupil's handwriting development in line with the National Curriculum?

Teacher Modelling

It is essential that teachers model neat and cursive writing in shared writing on the whiteboard, interactive whiteboard and in pupils' books.

Application

Pupils should be encouraged to apply the hand-writing they are taught in all independent writing. Teachers must have high expectations of all pupils and expect to see examples of what they have been taught in all books.

If pupils are learning joined hand-writing they should be expected to use this in their written work. Pupils should only attempt joins if they have been taught them.

Teachers must monitor this and use praise and next steps marking to bring this to pupils' attention where appropriate.

Incentives

Rewards, incentives and praise will be used to encourage good practice. These include house points, displayed work and hand-writing competitions.

Pupils respond to positive praise. If we make our expectations clear and are consistent ourselves then the pupils will be.

APPENDIX 1

Progression ladder

Order of teaching

Single letters (YR and Y1)

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

Joins Y2 (going into Y3)

Introduction of the four hand-writing joins:

- First join; un um ig id ed eg an or ing ung
- Second join; ch sh th tl ll ill sli slu ckackststi ink unk
- Third join; odpg re veonoom
- Fourth join; wlvf of ffflflo
- Practise the break letters b p g q y j z
- Practise capital letters

Joins Y3 (going into Y4)

Revision

- Practise the break letters b p g q y j z
- Practise capital letters

Further practise of the four hand-writing joins

- inine

- utute
- ve vi
- ok oh
- sh as es (practising two ways of joining the letter s)
- rirury (practising joining from the letter r)
- oa ad as (practising joining to and from the letter a)
- eeeaed (practising joining from the letter)
- owov ox (practising joining from the letter o)
- kyhyly (practising joining to the letter y)
- ha ta fa (practising joining to the letter a)
- odoog(practising joining from the letter o)
- erirur (practising joining to the letter r)
- ai al ay
- o you oi
- reofe (practising the horizontal join to the letter e)
- fuwu vu (practising the horizontal join to the letter u)
- otol ok (practising joining to ascenders)
- ai al owol (practising all the joins)

Year 4

- ning ping ting
- oc od oo
- akeome are
- flaflofle
- whowhawhe
- ie in il
- inlykyny

- apar an
- ickuckack
- practise writing with a slope
- he
- we
- re
- fte fir fin
- wrawrikni (silent letters)
- iillttrrnn mm cc ooddssffee
- ewev ex (spacing)
- thhtfl (proportions)
- acagaf
- Capital letters
- Decorated capital letters
- Practising with punctuation ! ? - " " , ' ,

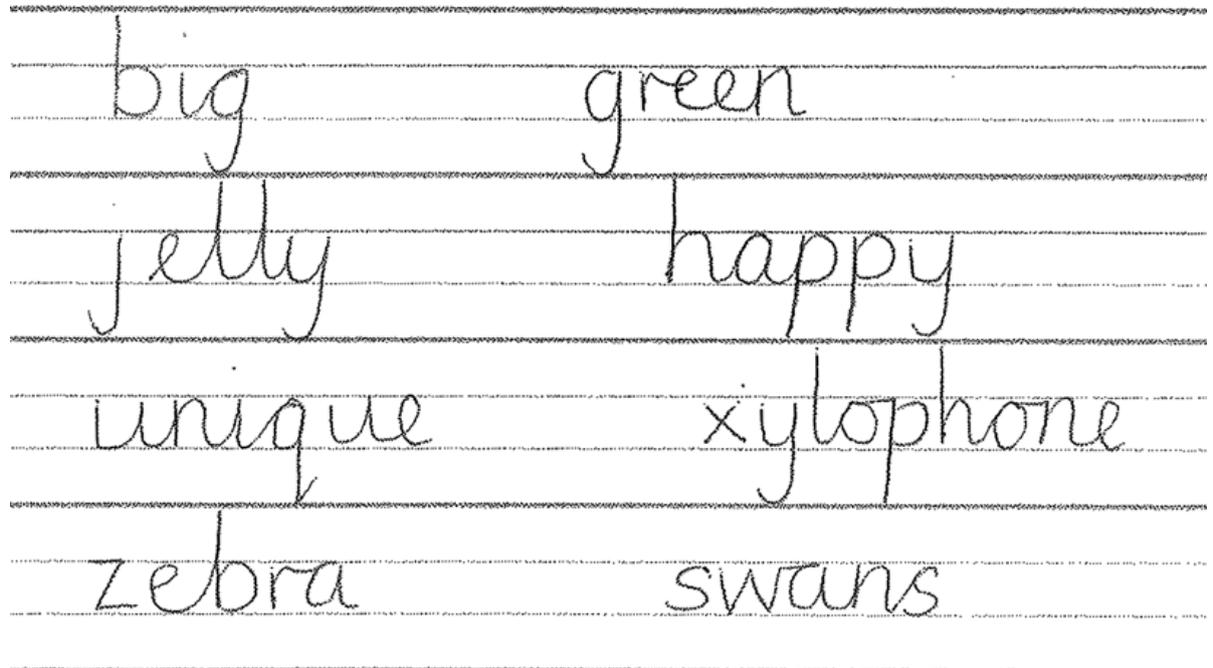
Years 5 and 6

- Practise and ensure consistency and size of letters
- Practising using a diagonal joining line
- Practising leaving an equal space between letters
- Practising joining to the letter y
- Practising using a horizontal joining line
- Practising the size and height of letters
- Practising joining from the letter i
- Practising joining to and from the letter v
- Practising consistency in forming and joining letters
- Practise speedwriting

- Practising crossing double tt on completing the work
- Practising joining to and from the letter e
- Practising joining to and from the letter w
- Practising printing
- Practising drafting and editing
- Practising joining to the letter t
- Practising with punctuation
- Practising break letters
- Practising joining from the letter m
- Ensuring the ascender on the letter t is the correct height
- Practising spacing within words
- Developing fluency
- Practising forming and joining the letter f
- Practising presentation
- Revision
- Looking at different handwriting styles

APPENDIX 2

Examples of the break letters



APPENDIX 3

Examples of the joins

I fell asleep in class
today
as I was awfully bored
I laid my head upon
my desk
and fell asleep and snored

APPENDIX 4

<p>The aims of the National Curriculum</p>	<p>How <i>Nelson Handwriting</i> delivers these aims:</p>
<p><u>Year 1</u> Handwriting <i>Pupils should be taught to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <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' (ie letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these</i> <p>Notes and guidance (non-statutory) <i>Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided. Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.</i></p>	<p><i>Nelson Handwriting</i> supports children from the earliest stages of learning to write. Guidance is given in the Teacher's Book about how to create the conditions for good writing: atmosphere, seating and posture, and pencil and pen grip. Each Developing Skills book has a flap on the front cover which reminds children how to prepare for writing. All of the lower-case and capital letters are covered in the Workbooks and Interactive Teaching Software, with clear and consistent instructions about how to start and finish letters. The digits 0-9 are covered too.</p> <p><i>Nelson Handwriting</i> groups the letters into sets based on how they join to other letters, and children practise these in a cumulative manner.</p> <p><i>Nelson Handwriting</i> is designed to be used little and often. The Teacher's Book gives guidance on direct teaching, and the Interactive Teaching Software gives animated demonstrations of each letter and join. The Teacher's Book also gives useful guidance about lefthanded pupils and their specific needs in terms of grip, posture and paper alignment. A left-hander's version of the Developing Skills book cover flap is available.</p>

Year 2

Handwriting

Pupils should be taught to:

- *form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another*
- *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*
- *write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters*
- *use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters*

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

In Year 2, *Nelson Handwriting* revises the previously-learned joins with an emphasis on relative height. Children re-cap their learning of lower-case and capital letters and practise forming them with consistency. Children are also given the opportunity to continue to practise using print letters, and are introduced to the idea that some letters are best left unjoined when next to other letters.

Year 3/4

Handwriting

Pupils should be taught to:

- 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, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch]*

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

Throughout Years 3 and 4, children continue to practise and develop their handwriting skills. The idea of writing with a slope is introduced for the first time. ***Nelson Handwriting*** provides practice in joining using diagonal and horizontal strokes as well as the 'break letters' that are best left unjoined. There is an emphasis on spacing letters consistently and on keeping ascenders and descenders in proportion.

Each of the ***Nelson Handwriting*** units is based on a context that links into areas across the curriculum, and/or picks up on a key spelling pattern, reinforcing the shape of the letters with the spelling pattern of the word. Guidance is given in the Teacher's Book about how teachers can best ensure that good handwriting is not just reserved for handwriting lessons, and about emphasising the importance of fluency, neatness and speed in writing across the curriculum.

Year 5/6

Handwriting and presentation

Pupils should be taught to:

- *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*

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra, and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.

At Years 5-6, ***Nelson Handwriting*** continues to provide structured practice for the skills that have been developed so far. Children continue to practise the joins and the break letters, looking at consistency of sizing and spacing. ***Nelson Handwriting*** empowers children to develop their own style of handwriting from a secure base, choosing their writing implement and style as appropriate to the occasion.

Nelson Handwriting continues to develop writing fluency. Speedwriting challenges help children practise automaticity and speed. Children are taught about the difference in expectation between informal jottings and final presented versions and given opportunities to practise these. A range of contexts, from writing addresses to labelling maps and diagrams, help them learn the contexts in which joined or unjoined writing is most appropriate.

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