



St. Lawrence Primary School



Handwriting Policy

The purpose of this document is to ensure a consistently high standard of handwriting across the whole school which all children and staff recognise, understand and follow.

These expectations are intended to apply to the vast majority of children in our school. Occasionally a decision will need to be made to personalise the presentation expectations for a child who has such specific needs that these expectations could be a barrier to their progress (e.g. a child with physical difficulties in writing). For those pupils who find great difficulty with writing, teachers will ensure that effort is praised/acknowledged and that touch typing is taught (using dance mat typing).

Staff will ensure that presentation of work is actively taught as it will not 'just happen'.

Handwriting is taught according to the [Read Write Inc. Handwriting Scheme](#).

Where possible, all staff should ensure that presentation is celebrated through:

- Displaying work with a high standard of presentation which includes a learning intention or title.
- Celebrating work with a high standard of presentation in whole class situations.
- Ensure good presentation is rewarded in line with whole school behaviour policy (praise, House Points, Headteacher awards, class raffle tickets etc.)
- Sharing of good work in whole school assemblies

Writing equipment

Foundation Stage

- Children's handwriting begins to develop alongside their physical development
- Children learn to write in their play through mark making
- Children will always write in pencil in books
- Other media will be used at the teacher's discretion

Key Stage 1

- All work will be written in pencil using triangular grippy pencils (L or R pencils available).

Key Stage 2

- In KS2, children will make the transition from pencil to pen.
- Teachers will set 'pen tasks' in which all children write in pen, for example to publish final drafts
- Children who achieve all their joins consistently are rewarded with a pen to keep by Mrs McDonald
- When children use a pen in class, it must be a school pen or a friction pen

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Handwriting Policy

Teaching Handwriting

- There are regular timetabled slots for handwriting to ensure that children build up their handwriting skills every day.
- We make the physical process of writing – handwriting – enjoyable from the start, so children see themselves as ‘writers’.
- We use mnemonics – memory pictures – to help children visualise the letter or join before they write it down.
- Children need to practise handwriting under the guidance of a teacher so they do not develop habits that will be difficult to undo later.
- We demonstrate formation of letters or words. We need children’s attention to be focused on their own formation of letters and joins.
- We teach children that their handwriting improves alongside their muscle strength in upper body, wrists and hands.
- We allow 5 to 10 minutes for every handwriting session marked on the timetable.

There are three handwriting stages:

Stage 1

These lessons are taught while children are in Reception and Year 1.

- Stage 1a: Children practise correct letter formation (appendix 1a)
- Stage 1b: Children learn where to place the letters on the writing line (appendix 1b).

Stage 2

These lessons are taught while children are in KS1.

Children learn a mature style of writing that will lead to joined-up writing.

Children are taught how to form capital letters at this stage.

Stage 3

These lessons are also taught while children are in Y2 and beyond.

Children learn the two basic joins: the arm join (diagonal) and the washing line join (horizontal) and the two variables for each join.



Handwriting Policy

Handwriting position

Teach children that when you use the handwriting signal they automatically go into the perfect handwriting position:

- 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.

Handwriting Stage 1a: Letter formation

Children learn correct letter formation using the same picture mnemonics they have already learnt in the Speed Sounds Set 1 Lessons. These letters are now 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.

Children write on lined paper.

The lesson plan

Practise the letters in the handwriting order. (See appendix 1a)

Use the following routine for every lesson. (This is an example lesson for the letter g.)

Demonstrate

1: TOL as you use your mental checklist to write the letter g.

- ✓ start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- ✓ round face
- ✓ back to bobble
- ✓ very straight hair
- ✓ round curl to finish.

Repeat a few times using MTYT.

2: Ask the children to TTYP to say the mental checklist.

3: Take feedback.

4: Ask two partners to tell you how to write the letter g.

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Repeat a couple more times until the children can say the mental checklist to each other.

Practice

1. Check that the children are still sitting in the perfect handwriting position.
2. Rub out the picture and any letters from the board – the children must not copy.
3. Ask the children to write one letter, slowly and carefully. (Do not ask them to draw the handwriting picture.)
4. Model again how you repeat writing the letter, getting a bit quicker each time.
5. Go round the room praising what you see so others can hear. Don't sit with one child. For example: "Nice round chin there! Love the long straight hair. What a great curl."

Review

1. Write the letter on the board and make one error, drawing on children's common errors.
2. Ask the children to TTYP to find your 'two best bits', for example, you remembered to start at the bobble. Then ask children to TTYP to find 'one to fix'.
3. Rewrite the letter perfectly, correcting using children's feedback.
4. Ask children to practise again.

On the next day, choose a new focus letter, and review one or two previously taught letters.

Note: Help children learn to visualise the letter as a picture and not the written checklist. Do not write the list on the board, though you may need a sticky note to help you remember to start with.

Handwriting Stage 1b: Relative size of letters

Once children can form the letters correctly, they learn how to place the letters on the line. Picture mnemonics help children to visualise the size and placement.

- Some small letters are called 'boat letters': a c e i m n o r s u v w x z.
- Letters that are written below the line are called 'water letters': g j p q y.
- Tall letters are called 'sun letters': b d h k l t f.

Children should write on wide-lined paper.

See 'appendix 1b'.

You will need wide-lined paper or books for the children to practise.

Explain that:

- Some letters are the same size as the boat and are called 'boat letters': a c e i m n o r s u v w x z.
- Some letters go below the water line and are called 'water letters': g j p q y.
- Some letters are as tall as the sun and are called 'sun letters': b d h k l (f and t are just a little bit smaller).

The lesson plan

Use the following routine for every lesson. (This is a sample lesson for the word and.)

See 'appendix 1b' for the other words to practise.

Demonstrate

- 1: Draw the sun, boat and water pictures in the correct position on the line.
 - Show children where to start a – level with the top of the boat. Recall the Checklist for a as you write the letter.
 - Show children where to start n – level with the top of the boat. Use the Checklist for n as you write the letter.
 - Show children where to start d – level with the top of the boat. Use the Checklist for d as you write the letter.
2. Ask children to TTYP: What size is each letter? (Choose from boat, water or sun.)

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3. Take feedback.

Practice

1. Check that the children are still sitting in the perfect handwriting position.
2. Rub out the word from the board – the children must not copy.
3. Ask the children to write each letter, slowly and carefully.
4. Model again how you repeat writing the word, getting a bit quicker each time.
5. Go round the room praising what you see so others can hear. Don't sit with one child. For example: "a is sitting on the line – good. You've made n into a boat letter."

Review

1. Write the word on the board and make one error, drawing on children's common errors.
2. Ask the children to TTYP to find your 'two best bits'. Then ask them to TTYP to find 'one to fix'.
3. Rewrite the word perfectly, correcting using children's feedback.
4. Ask the children to practise again. 5. Now ask them to find 'two best bits' and 'one to fix' in each other's work.

Handwriting Stage 2

Explain to children that they are going to use new characters to help them develop a grown-up style of writing that will lead to joined-up writing. New pictures will help them to visualise the new shapes.

See 'appendix 2 Handwriting Stage 2'.

Introduce the formation family: six sisters, two uncles and their two pets.

The six sisters – Annie, Dina, Gabi, Olivia, Carina and Queenie – all look the same. Their mother tells them that they must all have a different haircut so people can tell them apart!

The uncles – Uncle Umberto and Uncle Yaseen – look just like the sisters, except they are bald on the top of their heads.

The family have a dog and a bunny whose faces are very similar too, but they have long ears. The lesson plan Practise the letters in the handwriting order.

Use the following routine for every lesson. (This is an example lesson for the letter d.)

Demonstrate

1: TOL as you use your mental checklist to write the letter d.

- ✓ start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- ✓ all the way over the top of her head
- ✓ curve down her face
- ✓ round chin
- ✓ join the chin by her ear
- ✓ up to the bobble
- ✓ straight tall spiky hair – up and down
- ✓ curve at the line and draw small flick (not curvy) Repeat a few times using MTYT.

2. Ask the children to TTYP to say the mental checklist.

3. Take feedback.

4. Ask two partners to tell you how to write the letter d.

Repeat a couple more times until the children can say the mental checklist to each other.

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Practice

1. Use the handwriting signal to check that the children are still sitting in the perfect handwriting position.
2. Rub out the picture and any letters from the board – the children must not copy.
3. Ask the children to write one letter, slowly and carefully. (Do not ask them to draw the handwriting picture.)
4. Model again how you repeat writing the letter, getting a bit quicker each time.
5. Go round the room praising what you see so others can hear. Don't sit with one child. For example: "Nice round chin there! Love the long straight hair. What a great curl."

Review




1. Write the letter on the board and make one error, drawing on children's common errors.
2. Ask the children to TTYP to find your 'two best bits', for example, you remembered to start at the bobble. Then ask children to TTYP to find 'one to fix'.
3. Rewrite the letter perfectly, correcting using children's feedback.
4. Ask children to practise again.
5. Ask children to find 'two best bits' and 'one to fix' in each other's work. On the next day, choose a new focus letter, and review one or two previously taught letters.

Handwriting Stage 3


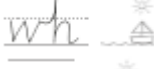

Explain to children that there are two basic joins:

- the arm join (diagonal)
- the washing line join (horizontal).

The arm join has three variations:

- arm to boat 
- arm to sun 
- arm to sister. 

The washing line join has three variations:

- washing line to boat 
- washing line to sun 
- washing line to sister 

See appendix 3 'Handwriting Stage 3'



Handwriting Policy

The lesson plan

Use the following routine for every lesson. (This is a sample lesson for joining a to i.)
See appendix 3 'Handwriting Stage 3'

Demonstrate

1: Demonstrate how to write the letters.



- TOL about where to start a – level with the top of the boat. Recall the checklist for Annie as you write the letter.
 - TOL as you write the join – not too spiky, not too round, not too squeezed, not too spaced.
 - TOL as you write i. Recall the checklist for i.
2. Ask children to TTYP: What size is each letter? (Boat, sun or water.) What is good about your join?
 3. Take feedback.

Practice

1. Use the handwriting signal to check that the children are still sitting in the perfect handwriting position.
2. Rub out the joined letters from the board – the children must not copy.
3. Ask the children to write each letter and the join, slowly and carefully.
4. Model again how you repeat writing the letters and join, getting a bit quicker each time.
5. Go round the room praising what you see so others can hear. Don't sit with one child. For example: "I love the spacing of your join and the join is not too spiky or too round."

Review

1. Write the letters and join on the board and make one error, drawing on children's common errors.
2. Ask the children to TTYP to find your 'two best bits'. Then ask them to TTYP to find 'one to fix'.
3. Rewrite the letters and join perfectly, correcting using children's feedback.
4. Ask the children to practise again.
5. Now ask them to find 'two best bits' and 'one to fix' in each other's work.



Handwriting Policy

Appendix 1a: Letter Formation (as from Year 1)

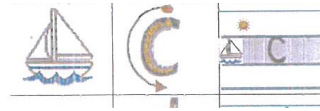
Follow the guidance on pp.25–28 of *Phonics Handbook 1* and use the checklists below to teach handwriting for the following letters:

- '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
- 'Zigzag' letters: v w z x

'Around' letters

Checklist: caterpillar

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



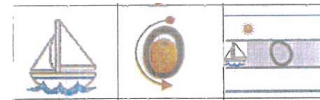
Checklist: apple

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



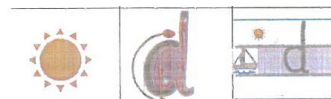
Checklist: orange

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



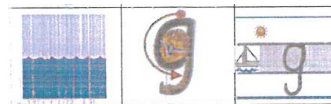
Checklist: dinosaur

- ✓ 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 plait
- ✓ 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





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'Down' letters

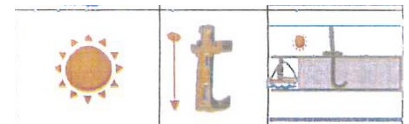
Checklist: leg

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



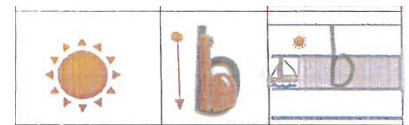
Checklist: tower

- ✓ 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 laces/boot
- ✓ go round over the boot/toe
- ✓ go back to the heel



Checklist: Pirate

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



Checklist: kangaroo

- ✓ start at the kangaroo's head
- ✓ draw down the long straight body – half-way up
- ✓ curl the tail to the body – two-thirds of the way down
- ✓ draw/kick a straight back leg from the body



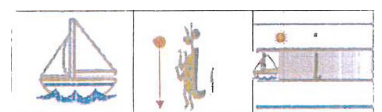
Checklist: horse

- ✓ 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





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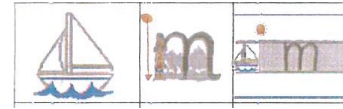
Checklist: jack-in-a-box

- ✓ 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



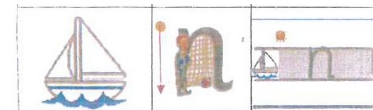
Checklist: Maisie and the mountains

- ✓ 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



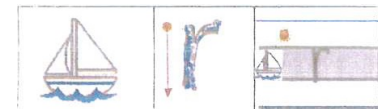
Checklist: Nobby and his net

- ✓ 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



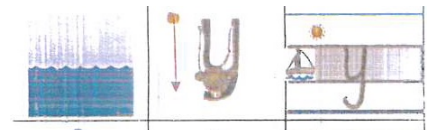
Checklist: umbrella

- ✓ 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





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'Curly' letters

Checklist: egg

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



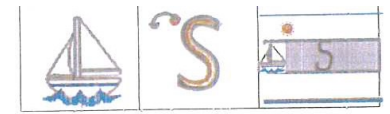
Checklist: flower

- ✓ 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

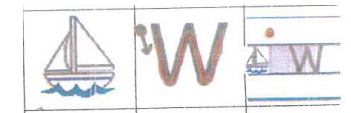
Checklist: vulture

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



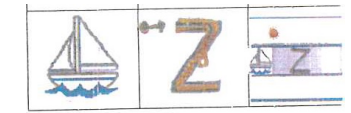
Checklist: worm

- ✓ 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





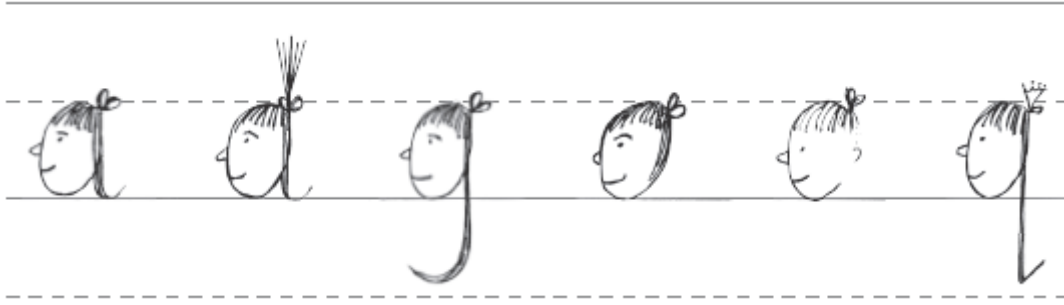
Handwriting Policy

Appendix 2: Handwriting Stage 2

Follow the guidance on pp.25–28 of Phonics Handbook 2 and use the checklists below to teach a mature style of handwriting for the following letters: a d g o c q u y b p.

Introduce the formation family: six sisters, two uncles and their two pets.

The six sisters – Annie, Dina, Gabi, Olivia, Carina and Queenie – all look the same. Their mother tells them that they must all have a different haircut so people can tell them apart!



The uncles – Uncle Umberto and Uncle Yaseen – look just like the sisters, except they are bald on the top of their heads.



The family have a dog and a bunny whose faces are very similar too, but they have long ears.





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a

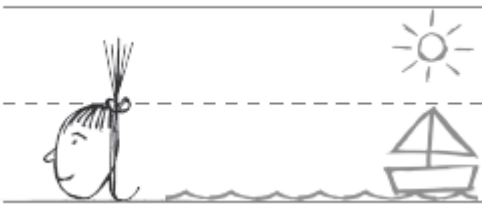


Checklist:

Annie with short shiny hair

- ✓ start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- ✓ go all the way over the top of her head
- ✓ curve down her face
- ✓ go round her chin
- ✓ join the chin by her ear
- ✓ go up to the bobble
- ✓ draw her straight hair all the way to the water line
- ✓ curve at the line and add a curl (not too curvy)

d



Checklist:

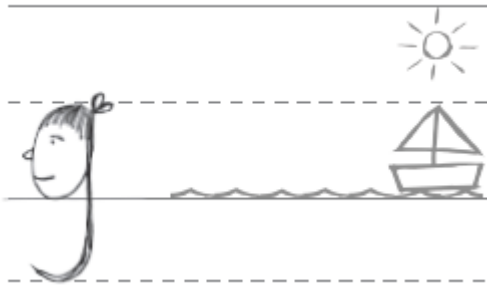
Dina with tall spiky hair

- ✓ start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- ✓ go all the way over the top of her head
- ✓ curve down her face
- ✓ go round her chin
- ✓ join the chin by her ear
- ✓ go up to the bobble
- ✓ draw her straight tall spiky hair – up and down
- ✓ curve at the line and add a curl (not too curvy)



Handwriting Policy

g

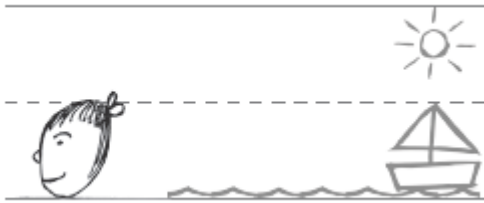


Checklist:

Gabi with long glossy hair

- ✓ start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- ✓ go all the way over the top of her head
- ✓ curve down her face
- ✓ go round her chin
- ✓ join the chin by her ear
- ✓ go up to the bobble
- ✓ draw down her very straight long hair
- ✓ add a nice round curl

o



Checklist:

Olivia with very short hair

- ✓ start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- ✓ go all the way over the top of her head
- ✓ curve down her face
- ✓ go round her chin
- ✓ join the chin by her ear
- ✓ curve up to the bobble

c





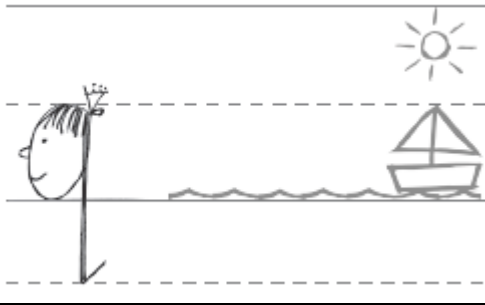
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Checklist:

Carina with even shorter hair – shaved at the back for swimming

- ✓ start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- ✓ go all the way over the top of her head
- ✓ curve down her face
- ✓ go round her chin

q



Checklist:

Queenie with long glossy hair

- ✓ start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- ✓ go all the way over the top of her head
- ✓ curve down her face
- ✓ go round her chin
- ✓ join the chin by her ear
- ✓ go up to the bobble
- ✓ draw down her very straight long hair
- ✓ draw a sharp flick

u



Checklist:

Uncle Umberto – who would look like Annie if he wasn't bald!

- ✓ start at the top of the boat
- ✓ go down his face – to the water
- ✓ go round his chin
- ✓ join the chin by his ear
- ✓ go up to the top of his head
- ✓ draw straight down the back of his head – to the water

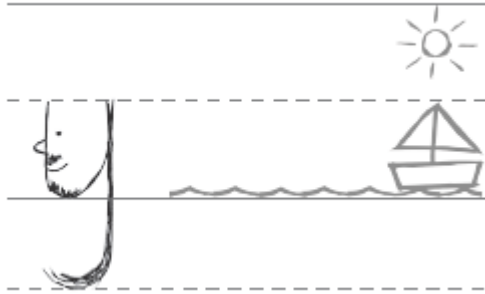
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✓ curve at the line and add a curl (not too curvy)

y



Checklist:

Uncle Yaseen – who would look like Gabi if he wasn't bald on top! He even has long hair.

- ✓ start at the top of the boat
- ✓ go down his face – to the water
- ✓ go round his chin
- ✓ join the chin by his ear
- ✓ go up to the top of his head
- ✓ draw down his very straight long hair – below the water
- ✓ add a nice round curl

b



Checklist:

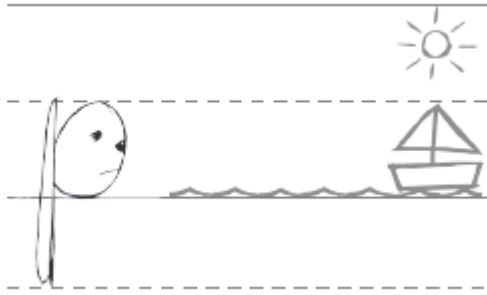
Bunny with the sticky-up ears

- ✓ start at the top of the sun
- ✓ go all the way down his straight long ears
- ✓ go all the way up over the top of his head
- ✓ curve down his face
- ✓ make a round chin
- ✓ join the chin to his ears



Handwriting Policy

P



Checklist:

Puppy with the floppy ears

- ✓ start at the top of the boat
- ✓ go all the way down his straight long ears – let them get wet in the water
- ✓ go back up again
- ✓ go all the way up over the top of his head
- ✓ curve down his face
- ✓ make a round chin
- ✓ join the chin to his ears



Handwriting Policy




Appendix 3: Handwriting Stage 3

Follow the guidance on pp.25–28 of Phonics Handbook 2 and use the checklists below to teach joined-up handwriting.




Explain to children that there are two basic joins:

- the arm join (diagonal)
- the washing line join (horizontal).

The arm join has three variations:

- a. arm to boat 
- b. arm to sun 
- c. arm to sister. 

The washing line join has three variations:

- d. washing line to boat 
- e. washing line to sun 
- f. washing line to sister. 

The arm to boat join

The arm join should not be too straight or too curly.

Phrase: 'Sweep up your arm to touch... (say letter).'

Checklist

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the curl gentle – not too round, not too spiky
- ✓ make the 'arm' sweep up in a gentle curve
- ✓ write the downstroke of the second letter very straight

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



Handwriting Policy

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





Handwriting Policy

le lm lu ly



me mi mm mu



ne ni nu ny



te ti tu ty tw



ui ue up



uw uy



The arm to sun join

Our Mission: 'To develop responsible, independent individuals who love learning and have the knowledge and attitudes to be successful in an ever changing world'.



Handwriting Policy

The arm should meet the next letter just over halfway up. It should sweep smoothly into the sun letter.

Phrase: 'Sweep up your arm to touch... (say letter) and shoot up to the top.'

Checklist

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the join like an arm – not too straight, not too round
- ✓ continue the line up to the top of the next letter
- ✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining:

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

to:

b h k l t

Examples:





Handwriting Policy

The arm to sister join

The arm should touch the sister letter's forehead and then go to the back of the head as though resting a hand. Phrase: 'Sweep up your arm to touch... (say letter) and stroke the sister's head.'

Checklist

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the join like an arm – not too straight, not too round
- ✓ continue the arm join over the head of the 'sister' letter – as though a hand is stroking back her hair
- ✓ go back along the head
- ✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining:

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

to:

a d g c o q

Examples:





Handwriting Policy

The washing line to boat join

The washing line should not be too droopy (the clothes get dirty) or too tight (the line breaks in the wind).

Phrase: 'Not too droopy, not too tight.'

Checklist

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the join like a washing line – not too droopy or too tight
- ✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining:

v w r f o

to:

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

Examples:

The washing line to sun join

The washing line should meet the next letter just over halfway up. It should sweep smoothly into the tall letter. Phrase: 'Not too droopy, not too tight – and shoot up the next letter.'

Checklist

Our Mission: 'To develop responsible, independent individuals who love learning and have the knowledge and attitudes to be successful in an ever changing world'.



Handwriting Policy

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the join like a washing line – not too droopy or too tight
- ✓ continue the washing line up to the top of the next letter
- ✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining:

v w r f o

fi fr fn fu fy



oi or ow ou oy



to:

b h k l t

Examples:

wh wl rb



rh rl fl ob



oh ol ot





St. Lawrence Primary School



Handwriting Policy

The washing line to sister join

The washing line should touch the sister letter's forehead and then go to the back of the head – as though stroking back the sister's hair. Phrase: 'Not too droopy, not too tight – and stroke the sister's head.'

Checklist

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the join like a washing line – not too droopy or too tight
- ✓ stroke back the sister's hair
- ✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining:

v w r f o

to:

a d g c o q

Examples on following page.



Handwriting Policy

va vo



wa wo



ra ro rd rg



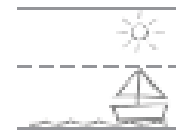
oa oo od og



Letters that join with loops

Do not to join the following letters: b q g j s y z onto the next letter.

bi gi ji si



yi pi

