

# NEWTON BLUECOAT CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL



*Shine from the inside out*

## Handwriting Policy

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### Aims

At Newton Bluecoat Church of England Primary School, our aims in teaching handwriting are:

- For all children to develop a well-formed, legible style of handwriting in both joined and printed styles, with increasing fluency, confidence and speed
- To raise attainment for all pupils in handwriting through a consistent approach, guided by Letter Formation (Lancashire County Council) Handwriting Patter
- That all teachers and support staff use and model the agreed cursive style of handwriting when writing on the board or marking work
- That teachers, support staff and pupils use all opportunities for writing as handwriting practice in all writing across the curriculum
- To make provision for left-handed children to develop free flowing writing
- For all children's skills in handwriting to be reflected in the presentation of their work and their joy of writing.

In order to achieve this, children will be taught:

- To develop fine motor control
- The importance of correct posture and paper position whether right or left-handed
- To use a pen/pencil and to hold it effectively
- To write from left to right and top to bottom on a page
- To start and finish letters correctly
- To form letters of consistent size and shape
- The language of writing and how to use the correct terminology, (e.g. ascenders)
- To put appropriate spaces between words
- How to form upper and lower-case letters
- How to join letters correctly
- How to write legibly in both joined and printed style
- To use different styles of writing for different purposes
- The importance of neat and clear presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
- To develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident.

## **Teaching Handwriting**

### **Teaching handwriting in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

In the Foundation Stage children need to develop skills which will later enable them to acquire a legible, fluent and fast handwriting style.

In Nursery and Reception children will develop:

- Gross and fine motor skills through sensory activities
- Recognition of pattern and language to talk about shapes and movement e.g. forming shapes and letters in sand/ shaving foam
- Shaping of patterns and basic letter movements
- A comfortable tripod pencil grip (between the thumb and forefinger with the pencil resting on the third finger) that allows for efficient control of the pencil
- Correct formation of all lower-case letters (taught through Lancashire Letter Formation Patter)

### **Teaching Handwriting in Key Stage 1 and 2**

The highest priority is given to teaching the correct letter formation before any attempt is made at joining. All pupils have at least two handwriting lessons per week with daily 'short burst' opportunities to revisit and practise skills.

#### **Key Stage 1**

Children will continue to develop fine and gross motor-skills with a range of multisensory activities. Teachers and support staff continue to guide children on correct letter formation using a comfortable tripod pencil grip that allows for efficient control. Through the Lancashire Letter Formation patter, children will begin to learn how to join letters in Year 1 and continue to practise this skill in Year 2.

#### **Key Stage 2**

Children will continue to have regular practice of handwriting, securing joins and developing speed and fluency. By the end of Year 6, children should have a clear, fluid handwriting style. Children will have the opportunity to use a handwriting pen from Year 5 upwards, rather than a pencil at the discretion of the teacher.

Additional activities to support handwriting include:

- enhancing gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern-making and physical activities
- exercises to develop fine motor skills such as mark-making on paper, whiteboards, sensory trays, Squiggle Whilst you Wiggle program.
- becoming familiar with letter shapes, their sounds, formation and vocabulary
- correct sitting position and pencil grip for handwriting

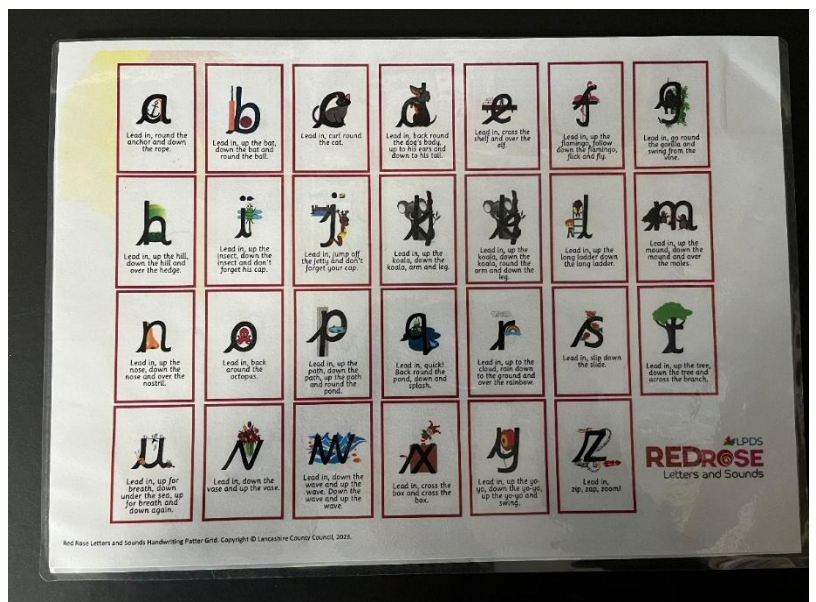
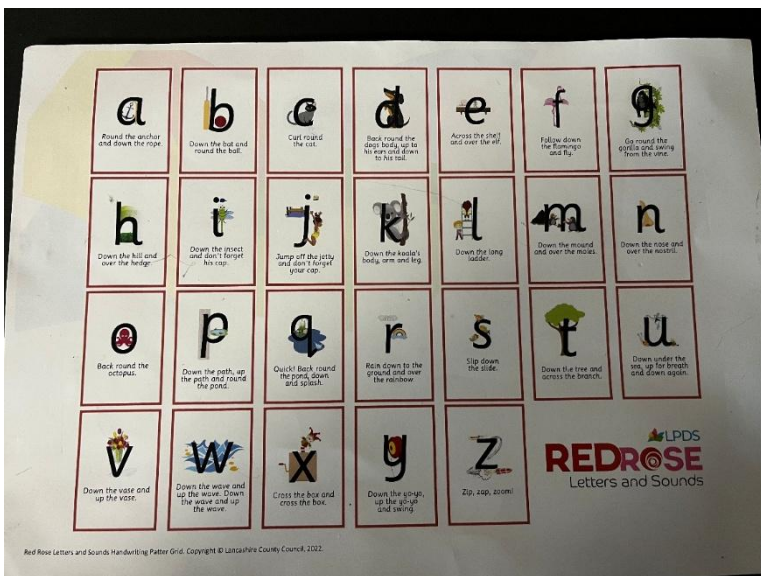
# Teaching Order

Formal handwriting skills will be taught regularly and systematically through the use of the Letter Formation (Lancashire County Council) Handwriting Patter and our Handwriting Progression document. (See our **Handwriting Progression Document** for more specific guidelines on handwriting skills and development in each year group).

The five stages are identified and these form the basic organisation of the scheme:

1. Readiness for writing: gross and fine motor skills leading to letter formation (Foundation)
2. Pre-cursive (Lower KS1)
3. Securing joins (Upper KS1/Lower KS2)
4. Securing joins, practising speed and fluency (Lower KS2)
5. Presentation skills (Upper KS2)

## Our Letter Formation Handwriting Patter



## **Agreed Letter Families and order of Teaching**

These are the four-letter families and order that they are taught:

Printed then revised in pre-cursive script:

Curly Letters: c, a, g, q, o, e, f, s, d

Long Letters: l, t, i, u, j, y

Bouncing Letters: r, n, m, p, h, b, k

Zigzag Letters: v, w, x, z

More complex letters from the four families: f, j, y

Digits: 0-9 (**see number patten in Appendix 3**)

Capital letters: A-Z - Capital letters do not join to lower case letters.

**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**

Following the teaching of the four-letter families, pupils will move on to learning letter joins.

- By the end of Year 2 all letters should join as follows, although there may be minor variation when joining x and z abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxy

We use the font 'XCX pre-cursive' in Foundation stage and 'XCX Joined 1a. from Years 1 – Year 6 classes will have the appropriate font (before or after joining) displayed in their classroom

### **Handwriting Feedback**

Marking should be timely and relevant. Staff should give immediate feedback during handwriting lessons. Modelling correct formation and joins in pupil's books before giving opportunities for the child to practise.

### **Assessment and Progress**

On-going assessment in handwriting gives staff the chance to spot errors or inconsistencies that are likely to impede a fast, fluent handwriting style.

For Foundation pupils, there is a beginning of year 'J.A. Naglieri' assessment.

From Year 1 we will make a summative assessment of pupils twice a year, by answering these questions in relation to the end of year expectations for their year group:

- Are all letters formed correctly?
- Are letters consistently sized?
- Are the known joins used?
- Are the known joins used correctly?
- Are ascenders and descenders parallel?
- Are the spaces within and between words regular?
- Is good handwriting carried over into other areas of the curriculum?

- What are the next handwriting targets for this child?

## **Inclusion**

The vast majority of children are able to learn to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support. Children who are not yet ready to write are provided with a range of pre-writing activities. Children who need handwriting interventions are identified early, and intervention programs, such as Teodorescu handwriting assessment is used. There is a Motor Skills Group run for children that need additional support throughout school. Further intervention may be arranged with specialist advice from the SENCO and other specialists such as Occupational Therapists, who may provide targeted support for individual children. Additional resources will be provided by the SENCO, where deemed necessary, such as sloping surfaces and pencil grips.

For children who need further support with handwriting, we use the Lancashire Diagnostic Assessment Tool for Handwriting (**see Appendix 1**).

## **The Role of Parents/Carers**

The Lancashire Letter Patter formation will be inside children's Reading Diaries (in Foundation) and on our school website which provides information for Parents/Carers so that they are made aware of formations of letters and are encouraged to practise with their children at home.

# Appendix 1: Lancashire Diagnostic Tool



## Diagnostic Tool for Handwriting Observation, Assessment & Planning



Child's name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months

Date of 1<sup>st</sup> assessment \_\_\_\_\_ Date of 2<sup>nd</sup> assessment \_\_\_\_\_

Using classroom observation and the first handwriting sample (process & product), reflect on each of the following statements. Tick all that apply. Add notes. Repeat after intervention.

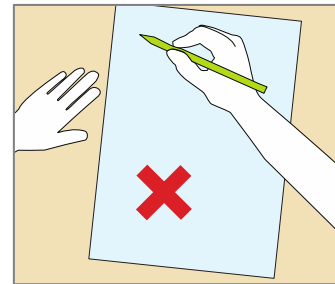
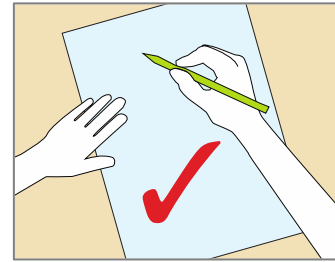
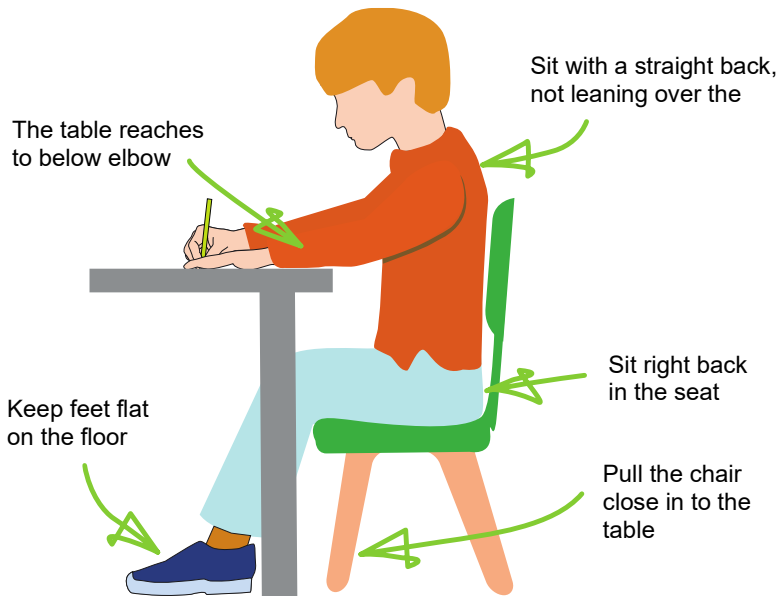
Characteristics	1 <sup>st</sup> Assessment	2 <sup>nd</sup> Assessment
Legibility is (very) poor.		
Some letters are incompletely formed.		
Letter sizes are inconsistent.		
The spacing between words is too narrow.		
Writing appears laboured.		
Writing doesn't have a smooth, consistent movement (rhythm).		
Writing is positioned above the line.		
Pressure applied through the writing instrument is too light.		
Pressure applied through the writing instrument is too heavy.		
Writing does not move horizontally across the page, but slopes either up or down.		
The first line of writing starts at the left and goes right across the page, but the lines underneath drift from the margin.		
When several sentences are written, some lines merge.		
Writing is an inappropriate mixture of print and joined letters.		
Some letters are joined inappropriately, e.g. the letter o is connected from its base.		
It is difficult to see clear ascending strokes on letters such as <b>b, d, f, h, l, j, k l</b> and <b>t</b> .		
It is difficult to see clear descending strokes on letters such as <b>g, p, q, y</b> and <b>j</b> .		
Alignment of ascenders and descenders is inconsistent: some slant forwards, some backwards, and some are straight.		
<b>Notes:</b>		

## Appendix 2:

# 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



Paper position for right-handed children

## LEFT-HANDED CHILDREN

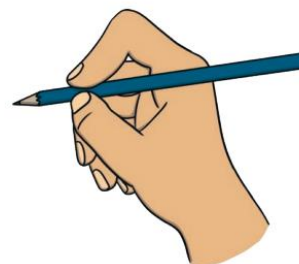
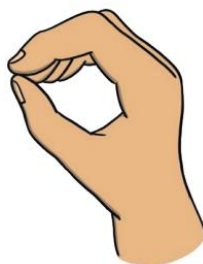
Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow right-handed teachers as they demonstrate letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.

- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises

## How to hold a pencil

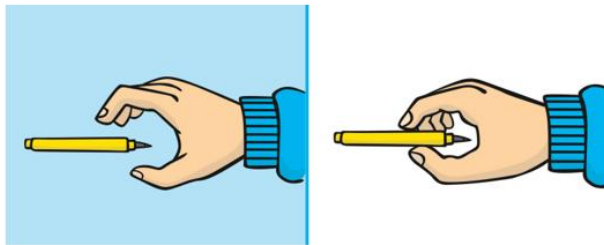
### Crab Claw

Pinch thumb and finger together to create the claw. Tuck the body (the other three fingers) underneath.



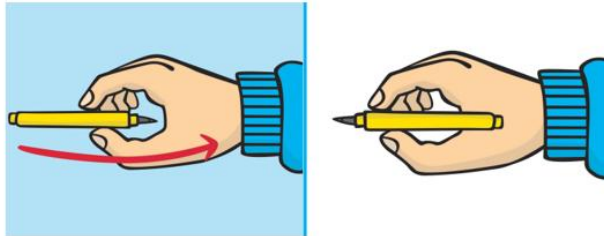
1.

NIP



2.

FLIP



3.

GRIP



### Appendix 3 (Lancashire Number Formation)

<p>Back around the lemon.</p>	<p>Straight down the birthday candle.</p>	<p>Round the swan's head, across its body and stop. Glide to the wings.</p>	<p>Round the seahorse's head and stop. Curve round its body.</p>
<p>Down the branch and stop. Across the branch and cut through the cactus!</p>	<p>Put the King's crown on and stop. Down his head and round his tummy.</p>	<p>Curl around the snail's shell.</p>	<p>Nibble along the crust and stop. Eat across the pizza.</p>
<p>Slither around the snake, back round its body and tie it up!</p>	<p>Back around the ice cream and stop. Straight down the cone.</p>		

Written by: Lucy Dewhurst  
Reviewed by: all teaching staff  
Date: March 2026







