



## Key Policy Features for Handwriting at Place Farm

**N.B: We are currently in a transitional phase where some pupils will continue to use entry flicks however, younger pupils will not be introduced to entry flicks.**

### Aims:

For teachers to model a clear and presentable mode of written communication. Consistent modelling will support children to use increasingly legible and joined handwriting, modelling letters correctly and independently by the end of KS2. At Place Farm we teach the continuous cursive font, where all letters are joined except for capital letters.

The children will use a combination of;

- Correct pencil grip
- Sitting correctly at table
- Knowing all letters and how to form them
- Knowing the size and orientation of letters, both capital and small.
- Form digits from 0-9 correctly

### National Handwriting Association good practice for handwriting.

Teachers should be aware of guidance (see appendix 1) in relation to the 'P checks' and 's factors'. Teachers should promote these in accordance with their children's level of development.

### Agreed Language

Staff use consistent language when describing handwriting including;

EYFS: Letter families, capital letter, lower case letter.

KS1: Capital letter, lower case letter, letter families, ascenders and descenders, exit flicks,

KS2: Capital letter, lower case letter, letter families, ascenders, descenders, exit flicks,

### Paper

EYFS: Children start off with mark-making on plain paper books. Once they have the fine and gross motor skills to form pre-letter shapes, move onto the A4 book with Lines approx. 2cm apart, on pages which are half lined and half blank. Once children have completed their 2cm book, and are deemed to have the motor skills necessary, they will be given a book with 1.5cm lines.

Year One: Children use 1cm width writing books across the curriculum. Handwriting books, with alignment paper, 15cm width to reinforce relative size of ascenders and descenders.

Year Two-Year Four: Children use narrow lined books of 1cm width. Handwriting books, with alignment paper, 15cm width to reinforce relative size of ascenders and descenders.

Year Five- Year Six: Children use narrow lined books of 1cm width.

### Fonts and formats

EYFS: Use the font Twinkl for information on the board which children will be using to support their own writing.

Year One: to use Twinkl Font

Year Two-Year Six: to use the font *Twinkl Cursive Looped*

SEND: Children with additional needs are given resources which uses the Twinkl font to support their reading and writing development.

### Pencil grip

In EYFS as pupils develop their fine motor skills they will be introduced to how to hold a pencil correctly using 'tip, flick, grip' instructions (See Appendix Two).

### Left-Hand provision

Left-handed scissors are provided

Children are shown how to position paper (See Appendix One)

Where possible, children should be sat to the left of a right-handed child to avoid elbows bumping.

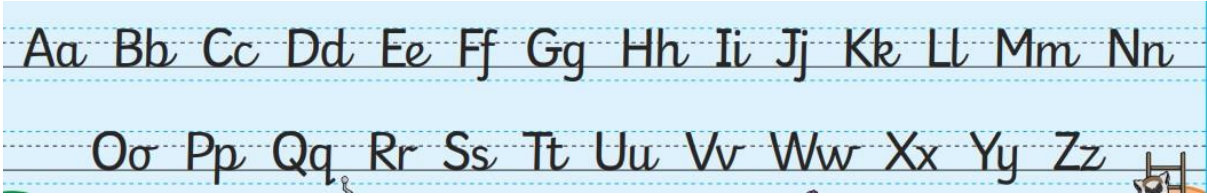
### Handwriting progression:

All children will be introduced to the letter family groups in EYFS. EYFS children are taught to form letters using the instructions in appendix Three. They are taught the letters as follows:



\*Pupils are taught to write the letter 'k' with the loop (k) to support their handwriting progression.

Pupils are assessed on their letter formation once they enter Year One. From this, consolidation of letter formation will occur until the pupil is ready to be introduced to the changes and exit flicks necessary to join. In **Year Two**, these changes are introduced to those children who are ready.



N.B Letters 'j' 'f' 'q' and 'y' are taught with the exit loop to make joining easier later on.

Cursive letter formation (introduced formally in Year Three).

Children will be formally introduced to joining in **Year Three** although each pupil is judged on an individual basis. Children should be taught the letter formations in the order that they appear in progression table below. Revision of letters and joins may occur in any year group where the teacher feels the children cannot yet form it properly.

In order for a pupil to be learning the cursive formations they need to fully embed the following skills

1. Writing on the line
2. Forming all letters correctly
3. Sizing the letters correctly, relative to one another.

## Progression and lesson content

Each handwriting lesson should last 15-20 minutes, as per the class timetable.

### EYFS

Handwriting is taught discreetly in EYFS. By the end of EYFS most pupils will be able to form the letters correctly.

### Year One

By the end of Year One, most children should be able to:

- sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly;
- begin to form lower case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place;
- understand which letters belong to which handwriting ‘families’ (letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

#### Year 1 progression

	week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12
Autumn	Consolidate letter formation, teaching letters in families								Assess and review	The ladder family (l, i, u, t, y and j)		
Spring	The ladder family (l, i, u, t, y and j)				The One-Armed Robot family (n, m, h, k, b, p and r)							Curly caterpillar
Summer	The Curly Caterpillar Family (c, a, d, e, s, g, f, q and o)							The Zig-Zag Monster Family (z, v, w and x)				

### Year Two

#### Year 2 Assessment Statements

By the end of these lessons, most children should be able 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 • use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

#### Year 2 progression

	week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12
Autumn	Consolidate letter formation, teaching letters in families								Assess and review	The ladder family (l, i, u, t, y and j)		
Spring	The ladder family (l, i, u, t, y and j)				The One-Armed Robot family (n, m, h, k, b, p and r)							Curly caterpillar
Summer	The Curly Caterpillar Family (c, a, d, e, s, g, f, q and o)							The Zig-Zag Monster Family (z, v, w and x)				

### Year Three

- Year Three teachers, continue to follow the same progression however, there is a focus on joining the letters.

Autumn	
Week	Content
1	Letter l - <u>ll</u> , li, lu, <u>ly</u>
2	Letter I - ii, <u>iu</u> , descenders <u>iy</u> and ascenders <u>il</u> , it
3	Letter r - letters of the same height ( <u>ur</u> ), descenders (up) and ascenders (uh, <u>ut</u> )
4	Letter t - which demonstrates the diagonal join to another letter 't' - their pencil/ pen should not cross their letter 't's until they reach the end of the letter pattern or word.
5	Letter y - joining from same height, descenders and ascenders
6	Letter j - joining from same height, descenders and ascenders
7	Letter n - <u>ni</u> and <u>ny</u> (later challenging letters: 'o', 'a' and 'd')
8	Letter m - me and mu (challenge: 'o', 'a' and 's')
9	Letter h - ' <u>hh</u> ' 'c', 'a', 'o' and 's'
10	Letter k - ' <u>kk</u> ' 'a', 'o', 'd', 'g' and 'q'.
11	Letter b - bi, <u>bu</u> and be
12	Letter p - pc, po, pa, <u>ps</u>

- Y4/ Y5/Y6: Pupils develop their speed, style and slant.

### What a good session looks like

Warm up activity (gross motor skills Y1, fine motor skills Y2/Y3)

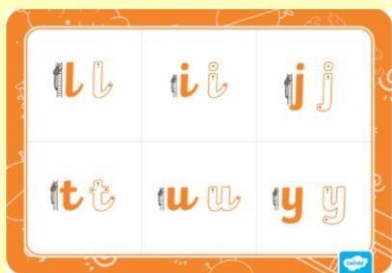
Monday 7th July 2022



Bear Walking: Crouching on all fours, children walk around a large space like a bear, moving their hands and feet in a crawling movement. Encourage children to move quickly, slowly and use all available space.

Reinforce the letter families and which one we are learning about

We are learning the long ladder letters



Explicit teaching of the letter formation or joins

Teacher models the formation of the letter.

i

Model writing the letter in the correct size and formation in words

Today we are writing words with the letter i

teacher to make sure all letters are the same height, not ascenders or descenders

sin ice win

Children practice writing it in the same words in Handwriting books (Y1,Y2,Y3) Planning Support Document

## The Journey to Cursive: The Letter 'i'

**Suggested Order**

The letter 'i' should be taught as part of a series of lessons, which links to the family it belongs to - the 'ladder' family. Ideally, it would be taught as the second letter in the series of six (l, i, u, t, y, j).

**Gross Motor Warm-Up**

**Bear Walking:** Crouching on all fours, children walk around a large space like a bear, moving their hands and feet in a crawling movement. Encourage children to move quickly, slowly and use all available space.

**Fine Motor Warm-Up**

**Palms Pressing:** Get the children to work in pairs and stand facing each other. Children put their hands out in front of them so that their palms touch. They should then gently push through their forearms to push their partner's hands away. This should be a gentle exercise, which should be done with a minimum of force to balance each other's weight.

**1 Let's Get Ready to Write!**

**Early Learning Goal -** Children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. Children handle equipment and tools effectively.

**Lines and Dots -** Children practise drawing 'lines' and 'dots', which are very important pre-writing patterns. Firstly, the children should make straight line movements with their arms by lifting them up in the air then down to the ground like a robot. Then, encourage the children to make dots by moving their arms forwards and backwards in front of them with their fists clenched.

Use the **Lines and Dots Activity Sheets** for children to practise drawing straight lines and dots in lots of different ways using lots of different media. The straight lines and dots could be completed by overwriting using finger paints, wax crayons, felt tips, chalk, or could be formed using pipe cleaners or playdough.

**2 Forming Letter Families**

**Year 1 -** Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly. Begin to form lower case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place. Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

Introduce the letter name and the sound (phoneme) of the letter 'i'. Show the animation of how to form the lower case letter 'i'. Ask children if they know which letter family the letter 'i' belongs to? Explain that this letter belongs to the ladder family (l i u t y j). Children practise air writing the letter shape 'i' with their preferred hand. They could also practise air writing on the table, on body parts or on a friend's back, where appropriate. Make large and small letter shapes. Remind children of the correct pen/pencil grip using the **Lesson Presentation** prompts or the **How to Grip a Writing**

**Tool Poster.** Remind them of the appropriate seating position and posture for good handwriting using the visual prompt on the **Lesson Presentation** or use the **Let's Look Ready to Write Poster.**

Remind the children how to position their paper correctly. Model how to complete the first part of the **Letter 'i' Activity Sheet.**

Children practise writing the letter 'i' using the **Letter 'i' Activity Sheet.** The children could also complete the **Letter 'i' Extra Practice Activity Sheet.**

**3 Positioning & Pre-Cursive**

**Year 2 -** Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Show the children how the letter 'i' is formed on the **Lesson Presentation.** Explain that the letter 'i' should be correctly positioned between the baseline and midline. Can the children think of other letters that should be the same height? (a, c, e, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x and z).

Remind the children of the correct seating position, pen/pencil grip and how to position their paper correctly using the **Lesson Presentation.**

Discuss how they will be forming words where all of the letters are the same height as 'i'. Remind the children to also think about the correct amount of space between each word (finger spaces). Children practise writing words containing the letter 'i' using the **Positioning Words Containing 'i' Activity Sheet.**

**4 Joining Letters**

**Year 3 and 4 -** Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters.

Explain to the children that they will be learning about joining from the letter 'i'. Look at the **Lesson Presentation** which demonstrates diagonal joins to other letters of the same height (l, u), descenders (y) and ascenders (i, it). Ask the children to use their 'magic pencils' fingers' in the air to follow each two letter joining pattern.

Remind the children of the correct seating position, pen/pencil grip and how to position their paper correctly using the **Lesson Presentation.** The children then complete the **Joining the Letter 'i' Activity Sheet**, which practises joining using diagonal letter joins.

The children can then use the **Letter 'i' More Joining Practice Activity Sheet** to fill an igloo with letter patterns created using diagonal joins. Remind the children that they don't dot the 'i' until they've finished all of the letters in the pattern.

**5 Increasing Fluency, Style & Speed**

**Year 5 and 6 -** Choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task.

Supply the children with a variety of writing implements, for example, ballpoint pens, HB pencils, handwriting pens, felt tips, coloured crayons, fine liners and marker pens. Use the **Lesson Presentation** to introduce the comic book character, 'Little Timmy', and discuss how the children are going to experiment writing the character's name for different purposes using what they believe to be the most suitable tool and style.

Remind the children of the correct seating position, pen/pencil grip and how to position their paper correctly using the **Lesson Presentation.** Discuss how sometimes writing may be more suitable joined, left unjoined or capitalised.

The children could also complete the **Fluency, Style and Speed Practice: The Letter 'i' Activity Sheet.**

**Assessment Activities**

**Step 1 -** Can the children make straight line movements with their body? Can they co-ordinate their arms together? Can children copy the straight lines and dots accurately using a range of media?

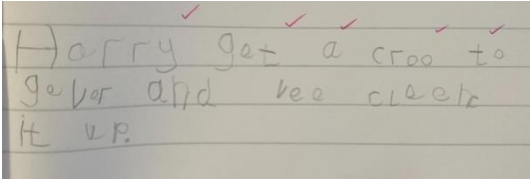
**Step 2 -** Can the children form the letter shape 'i' appropriately, starting and finishing in the correct place? Ask the children to put a 'i' next to the favourite letter 'i' shape which they have written?

**Step 3 -** Are all of the letters formed between the baseline and midline? Can they leave appropriate finger spaces between words?

**Step 4 -** Which diagonal join is easiest for them to form? Why? Is it easier to join to a letter of the same height, an ascender or a descender? Why?

**Step 5 -** Can the children discuss when different writing implements, and styles, are most suitable for a task? Can they identify situations where speed is more important than style or vice versa?

Year Group	Objective 's factors'	formation expectations and progression
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<p>EYFS</p>	<p><u>Shape:</u> Once a child is ready to write, the first important task is to learn how to form the letters correctly - best taught as a motor skill. A variety of tools will be used to support letter formation (e.g. writing in sand, with foam, making the shapes with playdoh).</p> <p>The below two factors are introduced in EYFS but may not be consistently used at the end of the year:</p> <p><u>Space:</u> Children need to understand that spaces need to be left between words so they can be easily read.</p> <p><u>Sitting</u> Once children are secure in forming letters correctly they need to know where to position them in relation to the base line.</p> <p><u>End of year example:</u></p> 	<p>The children learn the shape of the letters in the order of their phonics learning:</p> <p>s,a,t,p,l,n,m,d,g,o,c,k,ck,e,u,r,h,b,f,ff,l,ll,ss,j,v,w,x,y,z,zz,qu,</p> <p>By the end of the year, children complete a letter formation assessment.</p> <p>This should be used to support GLD Assessments.</p>
<p>1</p>	<p>Children will still be working on the 'S factors' sitting, shape and space. They also work on letter sizing.</p> <p><u>End of year example:</u></p>	<p>Pupils take a letter formation assessment to identify gaps at the end of EYFS. These are consolidated in Year One.</p> <p>Pupils consolidate letter formation during Year One, learning them in their letter families.</p> <p>Group 1) Long ladders: <i>l,t,i,u,y,j</i></p> <p>Group 2) Curly caterpillar letters: <i>c,o,a,d,g,q,e,s,f</i></p> <p>group 3) One armed robot: <i>r,n,m,p,h,b,k</i></p> <p>group 4) zig-zag <i>v,w,z,x</i></p>

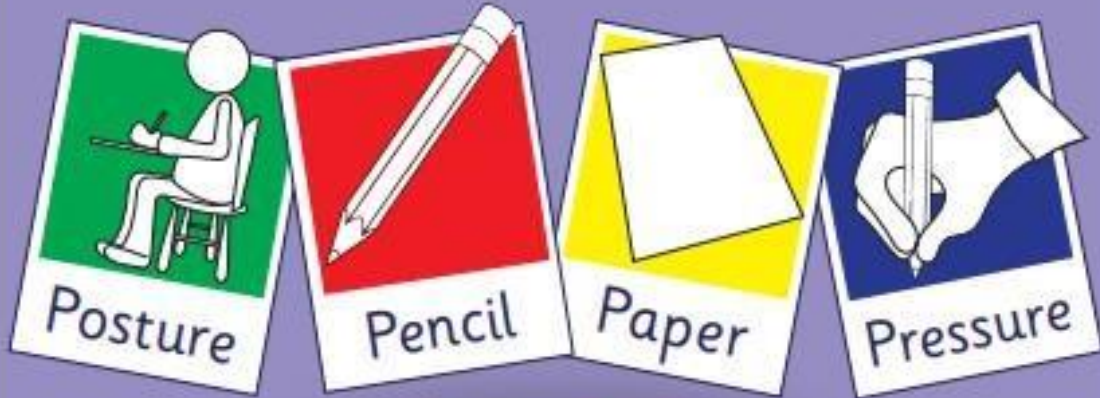
<p>2</p>	<p>Pupils are introduced to the exit flicks as and when they have completely embedded letter formation.</p> <p><u>Stringing</u> The key focus in Year Two is stringing together letters to form cursive. Pupils will <b>NOT</b> be stringing the letters together, but learning the elements necessary to do so.</p> <p><u>End of year example:</u></p>	<p>Pupils learn the exit flicks and loops necessary to join.</p> <p>Group 1) Long ladders: <i>l, t, i, u, y, j</i></p> <p>Group 2) Curly caterpillar letters: <i>c, o, a, d, g, q, e, s, f</i></p> <p>group 3) One armed robot: <i>r, n, m, p, h, b, k</i></p> <p>group 4) zig-zag <i>v, w, z, x</i></p>
<p>3</p>	<p>For most pupils, they will begin to join with a focus on “stringing”.</p> <p><u>End of Year 3 example</u></p>	<p>In Year Three, pupils learn to join letters. They will be taught how different letters will join to each other differently.</p> <p>By the end of Year Three, most children will be joining accurately in their independent work.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p><u>Slant</u> A consistent slant helps the appearance of handwriting. Teachers encourage children to use a consistent slant in their writing.</p> <p><u>End of Year Four example</u></p>	<p>Year Four pupils will continue to refine their cursive joins. Teachers will assess and refine the joins so that misconceptions are not embedded.</p>



5	<p>Children become increasingly fluent.</p> <p><u>Speed</u> Students in KS2 need to be able to write legibly and quickly.</p> <p><u>Style</u> Students should be encouraged to develop a style of writing that works for them.</p> <p><u>End of Year Five example</u></p>	<p>Children are writing in either sentences or individual words. They are able to copy accurately and beginning to use dictation. They should be writing increasingly quickly and accurately.</p>
6	<p>Speed and accuracy are secured.</p> <p><u>Speed</u> Students in KS2 need to be able to write legibly and quickly.</p> <p><u>Style</u> Students should be encouraged to develop a style of writing that works for them.</p> <p>End of year example</p>	<p>Children are writing in either sentences or individual words. They are able to copy accurately and beginning to use dictation. They should be writing increasingly quickly and accurately.</p>

Appendix One: P checks and S factors

# Prepare... for P checks



National Handwriting Association   
Promoting good practice

## Part 1 'S' Factors as a GUIDE TO TEACHING handwriting

1

Shape

EYFS: Reception  
NC: KS1

Once a child is ready to write, the first important task is to learn how to form the letters correctly - best taught as a motor skill. (This will save many problems at later stages.)

Children learn best by:

- 1 Watching the letters being made and hearing a simple patter.
- 2 Making the letters themselves in developmentally appropriate ways using just fingers - sand, paint, sandpaper, air-writing etc.- before pencils.

Letters can be put into groups or teams according to the movement needed to make them. When children learn to write a new letter, the 'lead' letter of its team will help them to start.

The 'l' team

l i u t y j

The 'c' team

c a d g q o e s f

The 'r' team

r n m h b k p

The 'zig-zag' team

z x v w y k

N.B.

These letters have exit flicks to support joining but **no entry strokes** which complicate the basic letter shapes and use diagonal lines that many young children find difficult at this stage.

A basic lower case alphabet in letter formation families

2

Space

NC: KS1

Children need to understand that spaces need to be left between words so they can be easily read.

Gradually, they need to learn to leave an appropriately-sized space - about the size of 1 or 2 letter 'o's. Lolly sticks make good spacers for beginner writers, followed by coffee stirrers if necessary later. These work much better than the traditional finger-spacing. (Fingers grow bigger while writing becomes smaller so are ineffective when the child is older. Finger spacing is also difficult for left-handers to use).

3

Sitting  
on the line

Once children are secure in forming letters correctly they need to know where to position them in relation to the base line.

The pan is hot.  
mum has a wig.  
I hid the map.

Writing on a  
single base-line

**4** **Size**  
NC: KS1

... and also to their relative sizes:

- Small/halfway letters/x-height letters e.g. a, e, o, s
- Tall letters/letters with ascenders e.g. h, l, b, k (plus all capitals)
- Tailed letters/letters with descenders e.g. p, q, y, j

A visual image helps children understand the 3 levels. Suggestions are:

- sky/grass or forest/underground
- head/body/legs

While children are learning about size it is helpful to use paper marked with a base-line and a second line above for the tops of a, e, s, o etc. The tall letters and tails are written at about twice that size.

(This is preferable to traditional 'tram-line' paper with 4 lines that encourages over-long ascenders and descenders).

lucapoesrnmvwXZ

ltdfbhk

jygfqp ABCD

Beginner writers, especially, need widely spaced lines to avoid cramping letters and all children need some flexibility in line spacing rather than 'one size fits all'.

**5** **Stringing together**  
NC: KS1 & KS2  
**Basic joins.**

**Joined or cursive writing is the next step towards fluency.**

The NC states that children 'should be taught a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation' and 'understand which letters, when adjacent to each other, are best left unjoined.'

These can be taught in a series of lessons with plenty of practice:

- Diagonal (up the hill join) to 'I' team letters, both tall and short e.g.
- Horizontal (washing line join) to both tall and short letters from o, v, w e.g.
- Joins to 'c' team letters e.g.

cu id  
ou wh  
uc nd

Practice is more fun making patterns from digrapns using felt tipped pens. (See *Tips for Teaching: Patterns* for ideas)

The NC expectation for Years 3 & 4 is that pupils will be 'using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing'. This will encourage joined writing to become automatic. Note: cursive/joined writing can have some breaks - usually after j,y,q,x,z. (See *Style* below)

**6** **Slant**  
NC: KS 2

**A consistent slant helps the appearance of handwriting.**

A slightly forward slant is a natural movement for right-handers and helps to improve fluency and speed. (See 'Slant' in Part 2)

**7** **Speed**  
NC: Y5+

**Students in KS2 & 3 need to be able to write legibly and quickly.**

Students need help in understanding that increasing speed changes writing: it can improve rhythm and fluency but can cause illegibility if allowed out of control. It will help students if they are encouraged to gradually build up the speed of legible writing by repeating words, then phrases, sentences & paragraphs in short regular periods of practice. (See *Tips for Teaching: Speeding up*)

**8** **Style**  
NC: Y5+

**Students should be encouraged to develop a style of writing that works for them.**

Students can consider changes to their writing style that could increase speed and/or fluency, e.g.

- Adding loops to g,y,j and possibly f to increase speed and flow.
- Consider if there are any joins that do not flow well and would be better left unjoined.
- Be aware that different qualities and speeds of writing are required for different tasks: personal notes, exams, course work, job applications - and adapt accordingly.

N.B. They should also be aware of occasions when an unjoined style is appropriate: for labelling diagrams/data, e-mail addresses etc. and be able to use capital letters for form-filling.

The squid brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. When she had reached the

These children are developing personal styles

For further information download the free toolkit  
<https://nhahandwriting.org.uk/shop/good-practice-for-handwriting/> Appendix Two: How to Hold a Pencil

