



Addison Gardens
Blythe Road
London W14 0DT

Addison Primary School



Handwriting Policy

Approved
Summer 2026



Purpose

This policy is intended to ensure consistency across the school in terms of presentation of children's work and how handwriting is taught.

The Handwriting policy should enhance children's learning through:

- pupils demonstrating good handwriting skills in all independent writing, not just in handwriting lessons, and using pen in Year 4-6
- pupils forming letters correctly according to the handwriting policy
- identifying clear progression in handwriting from Foundation Stage to Phase 2
- enabling children to form a clear, legible, cursive handwriting style

Agreed Procedure

- Handwriting needs to be regularly modelled, by the class teacher, for children and they should have the opportunity to receive individual feedback in order to prevent bad habits becoming ingrained
- Handwriting lessons take place within the learning for Reception and for 5 minutes every day within KS1, three times per week for at least five minutes in Years 3 and 4 and at least once a week in Years 5 and 6
- Children should have access to a range of fine motor activities
- Children should practise joined handwriting patterns using the four handwriting families
- Teach letter formation in letter families (with uplifts to enable transition to cursive script)
- Encourage and insist on correct hold, posture and letter formation. Children find it very difficult to "unlearn" incorrect habits
- Use a range of activities to develop and refine gross and fine motor control
- Encourage and insist on joined, cursive script as soon as the children are secure in the movements of each letter e.g. child's name, high frequency words, common letter strings
- Provide good quality writing equipment suitable to children's ability and needs
- Teach and develop the four basic joins, and develop fluency and consistency
- Teach different forms of handwriting for different purposes e.g. print, script, notes etc...
- Make provision for left-handed children
- Transfer children from pencil to pen only when they are producing clear and correctly formed joined writing consistently
- Adults should be exemplars of good practice themselves i.e. in written feedback or for classroom displays etc...

Handwriting letter 'Families'

Teach children about letter 'families' (c, r, l & v))

One-armed Robot - Down and retrace upwards e.g. r - n m b h k

Curly Caterpillar - Anti-clockwise round e.g. c - a d e g o q

Long Ladder - Down and off in another direction e.g. i - j l t

Zig-zag v - w y z



Joining

- most letters join diagonally from the bottom e.g. man
- some letters join from the top e.g. o v w
- children should not be encouraged to join until they have internalised the correct movements of basic letters
- do not join break letters, b, g, j, p, q, y
- all children in Years 4 – 6 who have consistent joined handwriting must use a pen (black). It can be presented to them as an acknowledgement for good presentation

'Patter'

'Patter' helps fix patterns in children's memory. Patter should be used consistently and not change. In Foundation Stage and Year 1 the Ruth Miskin's 'patter' is followed. Examples:

t - all the way down, flick, pencil off and cross

r - down, back up and over

c - back over and round

w - down the slide, up the slope, down the slide, up the slide, flick

s - up the slope, hook, back over, down and round

Coverage

- In all curriculum areas children should be expected to keep up to the standard of fluency they have practised in their handwriting sessions
- Children should be able to differentiate between note-taking, rough working and final drafts

Expectations and Progression - By the end of Nursery, children should be taught to:

- Identify their preferred writing hand
- Hold the pencil in a comfortable hand position (although the grip may not yet be correct)
- Begin to use anti-clockwise movement and trace vertical shapes
- To write letters from their own name (although they might mix upper and lower case)
- Have experience of activities that strengthen fine motor control
- Form some alphabetical letters correctly

By the end of Reception, children should be taught to:

- Hold a pencil effectively
- Use fingers effectively to grip pencils
- Not mix upper and lower case letters when writing their own name or when writing learnt spellings e.g. from the first 100 words
- Form most alphabetical letters correctly
- Form the four basic handwriting patterns
- Orientate writing left to right
- Begin to leave spaces appearing between words
- Begin to understand where to place full stops



By the end of Year 1:

Pupils should be taught 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
- form capital letters
- form digits 0-9
- presentation should be neat in order to communicate meaning
- regular spaces should appear between words
- tails should be used as a lead into joined handwriting
- basic handwriting patterns should be used to practise fluency and control from left to right as a lead into joined handwriting
- correctly form full stops, question marks and exclamation marks
- practise typing on a keyboard using their index fingers

By the end of Year 2:

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
- numbers should be neat and of an even size and fit into the format provided
- they should learn to join up their handwriting in order to gain greater fluency and speed
- joined handwriting should be used neatly to produce final drafts of work
- work should be presented neatly and communicate meaning clearly
- letters should fit evenly into the lines spaces provided
- form and place full stops, question marks, exclamation marks and commas correctly

By the end of Year 3:

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, e.g. by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch
- use joined handwriting all pieces of writing
- use pen to write in a neat and joined style for handwriting sessions and for final pieces of work
- use pen for all pieces of writing if confidently using pen
- consistently join and writing is legible



By the end of Year 4:

Pupils should be taught to:

- use pen for all pieces of writing
- consistently join and writing is legible
- use different styles of writing for rough draft and final draft
- use lines-guides to write neatly on plain paper

By the end of Year 5:

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, as part of their personal style, whether or not to join specific letters
- choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters)
- form and place full stops, question marks, exclamation marks, commas and speech marks correctly

By the end of Year 6:

Pupils should be taught to:

- adapt their handwriting for the task in hand, e.g. can write using italics or in bold to show emphasis
- form and place full stops, question marks, exclamation marks, commas, speech marks, brackets and dashes correctly
- be confident in using their own developed handwriting style
- write with speed and accuracy, within a time constraint

Training in Physical Learning:

Children need to be given the opportunity to trace letters in the air with large arm movements, using both arms with one hand placed on top of the other. They can also make better shapes with their bodies or in pairs. This contributes to the memorisation of letter shapes.

Posture in Handwriting:

It is important to always encourage children to maintain the right posture when writing, as this sets good patterns for the future.

When working on handwriting children should always be sat on a chair at a desk with the handwriting paper at an appropriate angle. Children should be reminded to tuck their chairs in and sit up straight. The desk and chair should be an appropriate size for the child.

Glasses:

Identify children who wear glasses and make sure they wear them for handwriting at all times.



Left-handed children:

Left-handed children will need special consideration in handwriting. Their pencil grip may be different and they will need individual training.

Left-handed children should be identified at an early stage.

Where appropriate sit left handed children together or sit a left-handed child on the left-hand side of a right-handed pupil.

Left-handed children will benefit from sitting together, as they are effective role-models for each other. Some left-handed children may need to hold the pencil further away from the point.

Reversals:

Children in the early stages of writing often reverse their letters. It is not always appropriate to correct these as this could interfere with a child’s developing fluency. However, reversals should not become ingrained into a habit. Correct reversals only up to the current letter shapes learnt and practised.

Dyslexic Children:

Some children may continue to reverse letters despite regular training in handwriting sessions. They may be falling behind their expected standards. In this case a child may be referred to the SENCo. There may be a variety of reasons why a child is delayed, one of which may be dyslexia.

Gross motor control

Establish balance and coordination through:

- Control in walking, jumping and throwing activities
- Sequencing movements
- Sky-writing

P.E is an essential element of this process particularly for those children experiencing difficulties.

Fine motor skills practise - examples:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction • Threading • Playdough • Dressing up • Drawing in wet sand • Painting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cutting out shapes • Jigsaw puzzles • Sewing • Repeating decorative patterns • Giant paintings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tiny drawings • Clay • Plaiting • K-nex and Lego construction
--	--	--

Record in Books

Handwriting practice in handwriting books and evidence of progression in all exercise books.

Display

Handwriting families should be clearly displayed.

Learning walls should have examples of children’s and teacher’s handwriting displayed.



Monitoring

Handwriting is monitored by the English Subject Leader and the Senior Leadership Team through scrutiny of books and discussions with the children.

Is this policy working?

- Is handwriting being taught regularly?
- Is the Addison 'style' of handwriting being taught?
- Is handwriting being taught in families?
- Are special needs being met?
- Is there evidence of clear progression in books?
- Are handwriting pens being used by all children in Phase 2?

Updated: Summer 2026

Next review: Summer 2028

Appendices

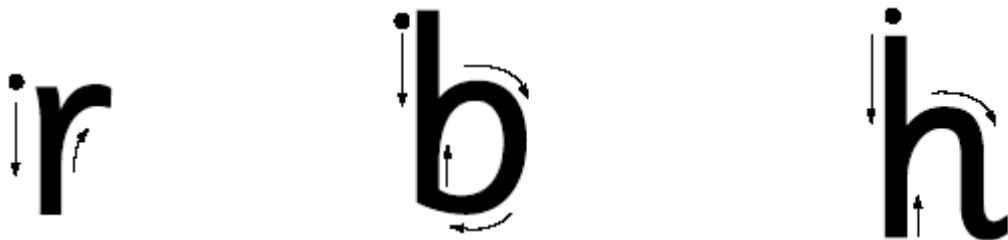
Long ladder

Down and off in another
direction

The letter 'l' is shown with a dot above it and a vertical arrow pointing downwards, indicating the stroke direction.The letter 'i' is shown with a dot above it and a vertical arrow pointing downwards, indicating the stroke direction.The letter 't' is shown with a dot above it, a vertical arrow pointing downwards, and a horizontal arrow pointing to the right, indicating the stroke directions.The letter 'u' is shown with a dot above it, a vertical arrow pointing downwards, and a curved arrow indicating the direction of the bottom curve.The letter 'j' is shown with a dot above it and a vertical arrow pointing downwards, indicating the stroke direction.

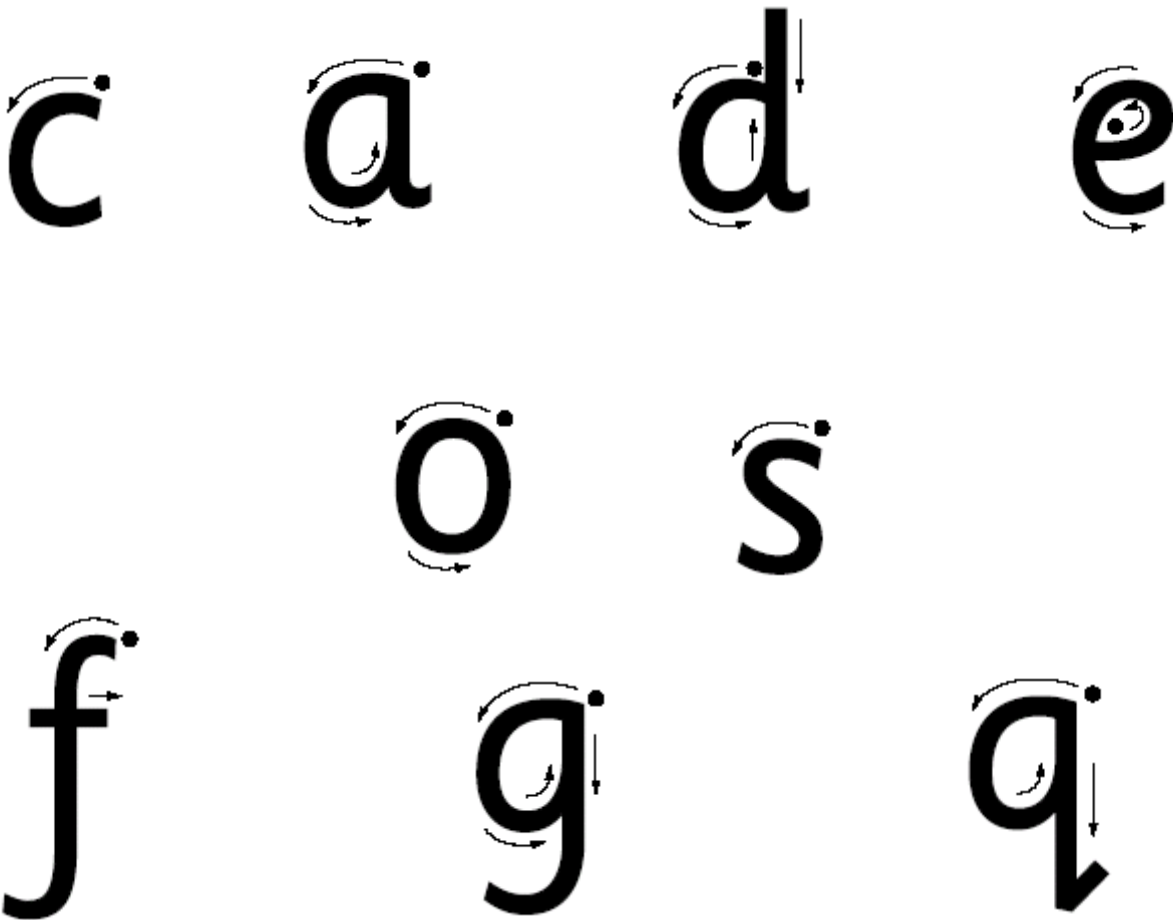
One-armed robot

Down and retrace upwards



Curly caterpillar

Anti-clockwise round



Zig-zag letters

Sharp corners!



Alphabet showing starting point and direction of each letter

