



# Clare Community Primary School

## Handwriting Policy

Date agreed: Feb 2025

Review Date: Feb 2026

### Outline

At Clare Community Primary School, we use ELS and Letter-join as the basis of our handwriting teaching that covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum.

In EYFS, children start with fine motor activities and pencil control skills to then encourage basic mark making and an interest in writing. Basic letter formation is taught alongside phonics using the ELS scheme. As new graphemes are introduced within phonics sessions, an element of teaching focusses on forming the letters correctly. Children also learn to sit letters on the line and numbers within boxes in numeracy sessions.

In Key Stage One, lines and squares in exercise books become gradually smaller and triple lined handwriting books are introduced to help develop the formation of letters further and the distinction of ascenders and descenders. Children continue to learn handwriting through the ELS scheme and, for children who are ready, letters in digraphs are joined together. As children progress through Key Stage One, the focus in handwriting shifts from individual letters to letter strings, words and finally sentences, in order to understand capital and lowercase letters, finger spaces and to introduce tricky joins.

In Key Stage Two, handwriting is explicitly taught using interactive and written resources from the letter-join scheme of learning. Worksheets and resources across the curriculum, where necessary, are edited to use the letter-join font for consistency, as are classroom displays and resources.

At the end of Key Stage Two, all pupils should have the ability to produce fluent, legible and, eventually, stamina that comes with joined-up handwriting. Children should also understand the different forms of handwriting used for different purposes. The act of handwriting should be attractive and accessible to all children. We aim to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.

For those children that are not consistently joining and need further practice, small intervention groups will focus on key letter formations and joins to accelerate their progress, and angled writing aids a pencil grips are used to support children with their handwriting if needed.

As a catalyst to speedy handwriting, we encourage parents and carers to use the Letter-join website and the resources within the Home Edition of Letter-join.

## Aim

- ✓ To develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style using continuous cursive letters, which leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing.
- ✓ To establish and maintain high expectations for the presentation of written work.
- ✓ For pupils to understand, by the end of Year 6, the importance of neat presentation and the need for different letterforms (cursive, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly.

## Expectations

All teaching staff are encouraged to model the printed or cursive style of handwriting chosen for each year group in our school in all their handwriting, whether on whiteboards, displays or in pupils' books.

### *Consistency throughout the school*

Pupils should experience coherence and continuity in the learning and teaching of handwriting across all school years and are encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work. Our objective is to help pupils enjoy learning and developing their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride.

### *Frequency*

Handwriting is a cross-curricular task and will be taken into consideration during all lessons. Formal teaching of handwriting will be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure Key Stage targets are met. Children should be given the opportunity to practice their handwriting regularly and should be given targeted feedback, either written or verbal.

### *Pens or pencils?*

Children will start handwriting using a soft pencil. When fine motor skills have been established, a handwriting pen can be used in Key Stage 2. In Year 3, 'Pen Licences' are awarded weekly to those children who consistently demonstrate good handwriting. At the start of Year 4, all pupils will use a handwriting pen, so as not to damage some children's self-esteem and ensure consistency across the school.

### *Handwriting at home*

Pupils are encouraged to practise their handwriting at home by using a variety of resources and/or the Pupil login for Letter-join. Teachers can set 'Home Learning Tasks' as necessary.

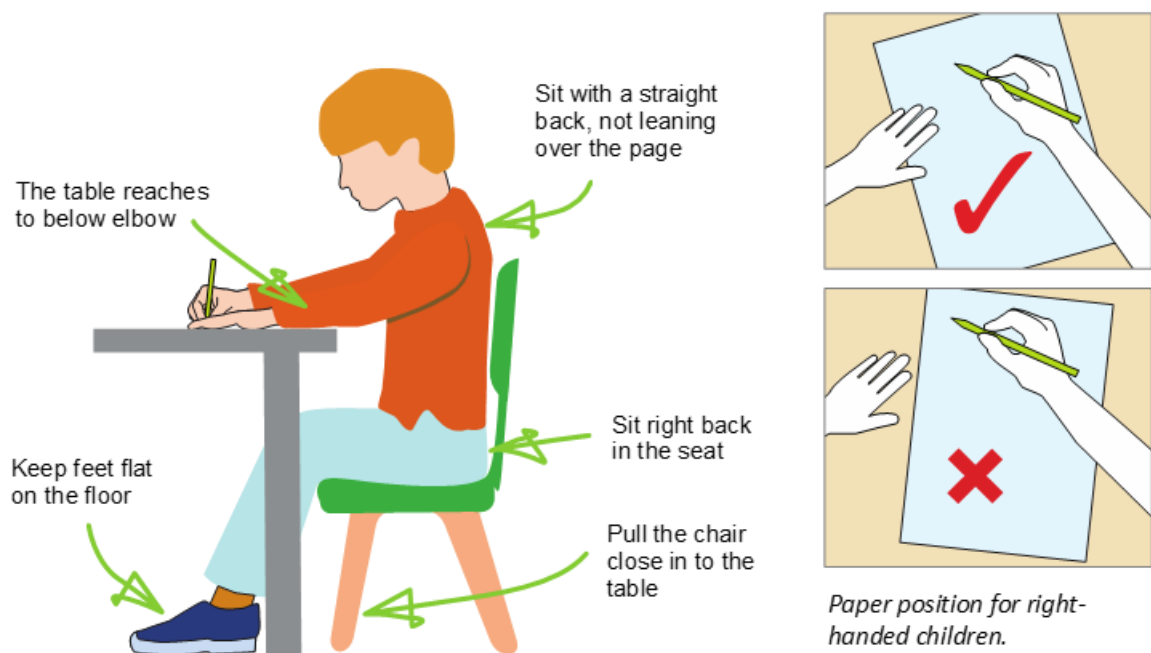
## Inclusion

For children who experience handwriting difficulties due to fine motor development, including those who are left-handed and those with special educational needs, the appropriate additional support will be put into place through targeted interventions and working with parents/carers by providing additional practice at home.

## Correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting.

Pupils are taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

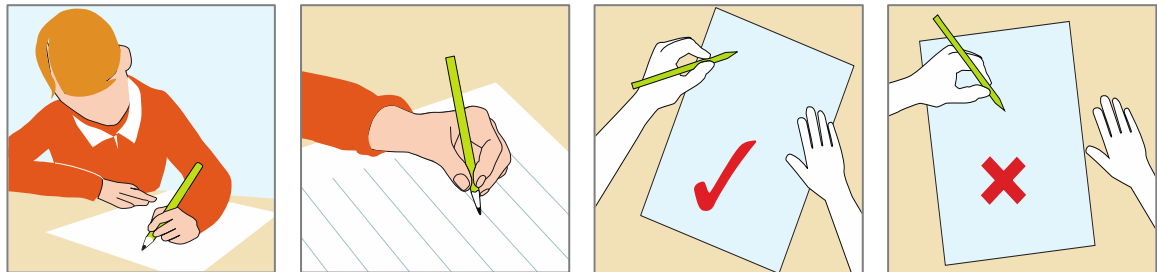
### *Sitting position*



## Left-handed children

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

- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.

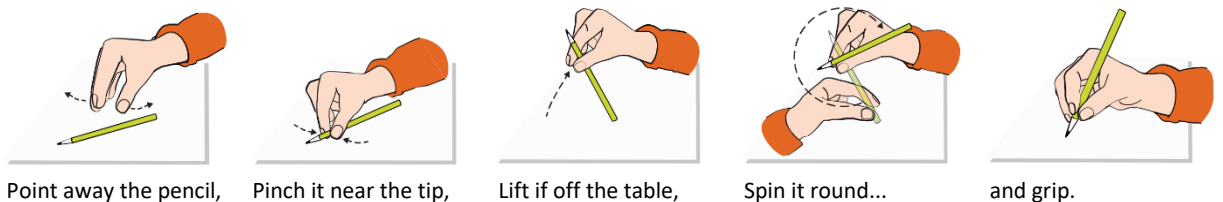


*Paper position for left-handed children.*

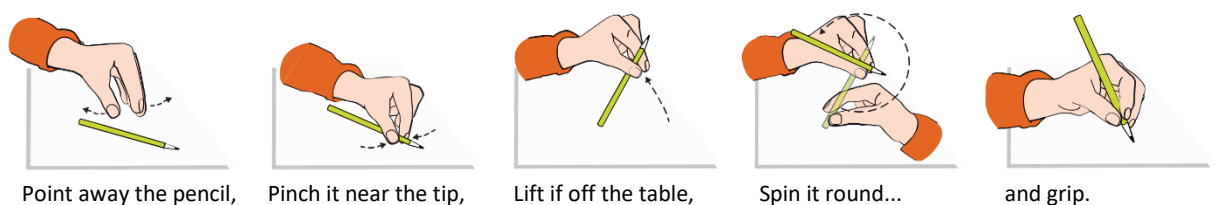
## Tripod Pencil Grip

Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib. We use the Tripod Grip Rhyme:

### **Right-handed pencil grip**



### **Left-handed pencil grip**



## Key Stage Teaching

### Foundation Stage

Sit in the correct position and hold a pencil correctly to allow fluid movement of the nib.

Improve fine and gross motor skills by enjoying drawing pre-cursive patterns in a variety of writing materials such as modelling clay, air writing, sand trays, felt pens, crayons, pencils, IWB, iPads/tablets.

Understand the language need to describe pencil movements in preparation of letter formation.

### Reception

Hold a pencil in an effective manner for writing and be encouraged to correct any errors in grip or stature.

Understand that letters are written on a base line and that all cursive letters 'start on the line' and 'end with a flick'.

Begin to form some recognisable letters, capital letters and numerals.

Have an understanding of writing their own name.

Understanding different shaped letter families.



Trace the new grapheme.

m	s	p
a	t	m
m	p	t

Trace the word. Write the word.

no no no no no no no no no no

Write the grapheme.

mmmmmmssss

ppppppatt

a

10.12.24

## Key Stage Teaching

### Key Stage 1

Write legibly using upper and lower case letters with correct joins.

Ensure that letters sit on the base line and are consistent in size with ascenders and descenders that are the correct length and formation.

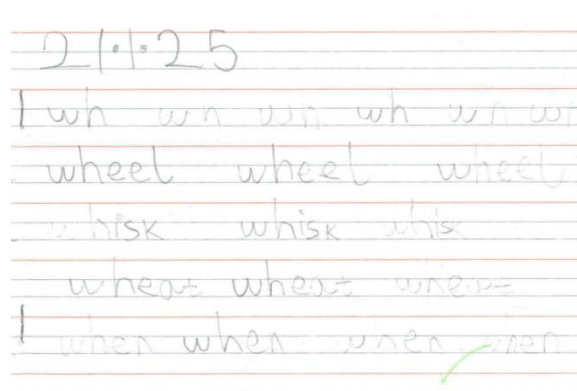
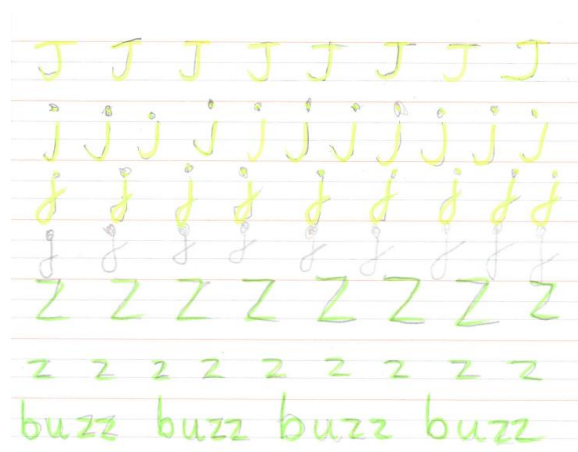
Leave the correct space between words.

Form capital letters and use where appropriate.

Form numerals that are consistent in size and sit on the base line.

Begin to form printed letters and understand when they are to be used.

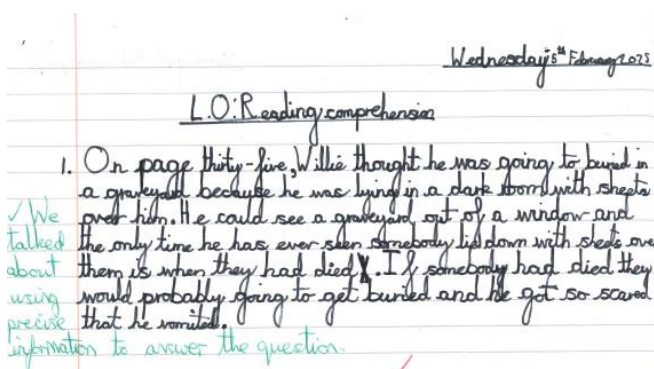
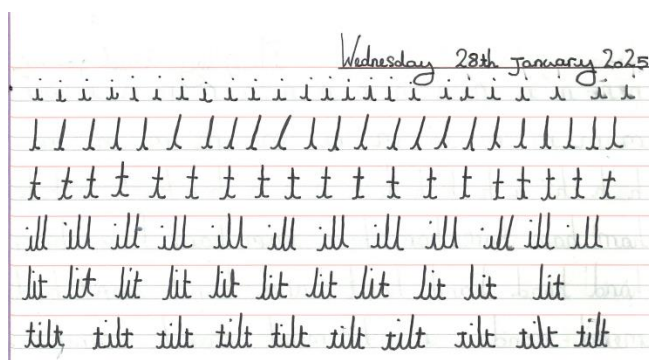
Improve the speed of writing and begin to write automatically so promoting creativity in independent writing.



### Key Stage 2

Improve quality, speed and stamina of handwriting.

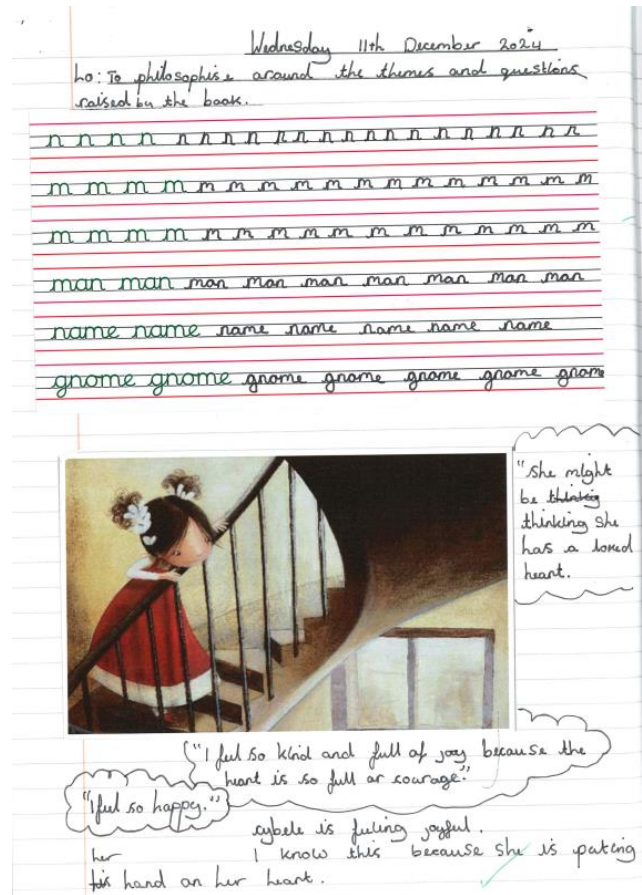
- ✓ Quality: Ensure letters are consistently sized with equal word spacing and that ascenders and descenders are parallel and do not touch words on the lines above and below.
- ✓ Speed: Improve speed of handwriting to allow creative writing to take precedence over the task of handwriting and be able to take 'quick notes' at a faster pace.
- ✓ Stamina: Have the strength and mobility to be able to write for longer periods of time without fatigue.



## Key Stage 2

Have full knowledge and ability of the different forms of handwriting for different purposes:

- ✓ Neat, joined, cursive letters for writing passages and large amounts of text, lists and letters.
- ✓ Printed or capital letters for posters, notices, headings, labelling, and form filling.
- ✓ Speedy handwriting for note-taking and dictation where neatness is not as important and shortcuts, such as + instead of 'and', can be used.



## Links for Teachers.

Lesson Planners

[https://www.letterjoin.co.uk/desktop\\_edition/info/cursive-lesson-planner.html](https://www.letterjoin.co.uk/desktop_edition/info/cursive-lesson-planner.html)

Worksheet Generator

[https://www.letterjoin.co.uk/desktop\\_edition/worksheet/index](https://www.letterjoin.co.uk/desktop_edition/worksheet/index)

Home Learning Packs

[https://www.letterjoin.co.uk/desktop\\_edition/info/hlpacks.html](https://www.letterjoin.co.uk/desktop_edition/info/hlpacks.html)

Word Animator

[https://www.letterjoin.co.uk/desktop\\_edition/mywords/mywords](https://www.letterjoin.co.uk/desktop_edition/mywords/mywords)

Worksheets, Printouts and templates

[https://www.letterjoin.co.uk/desktop\\_edition/extras/printouts.html](https://www.letterjoin.co.uk/desktop_edition/extras/printouts.html)

## **Fine Motor Skills**

A selection of fine motor skills activities to use before each handwriting session.

### *Finger and Hand Exercises*

Here are some warm up exercises used to wake up children's fingers and hand muscles before they start to write.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Finger Stretches</b>	Put the tips of your fingers together and straighten your fingers by pushing your fingertips against each other. Repeat 5 times.
<b>Play the Piano</b>	Touch the table with one finger at a time from each hand like you are playing the piano. Start slowly and get faster
<b>Fishing Hooks</b>	Put your elbows on the table, keep your hands apart, squeeze your fingers together on each hand and point them to the sky. Now make a hook with your fingers. Hold, then straighten five times.
<b>Fireworks</b>	Make a fist with both hands and hold them tight. Then let your fingers go like exploding fireworks! Repeat five times.
<b>Take a Bow</b>	Put your elbows on the table, keep your hands apart, squeeze your fingers together on each hand and point them to the sky. Bend your fingers inwards so your fingers bow to each other. Repeat 5 times.



### *Pencil Activities*

Here are some warm up exercises, including a pencil, used to wake up children's fingers and hand muscles before they start to write.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Quack, Quack Fingers</b>	Start your warm-up by making a beak with your thumb and first finger on both hands. Make them quack twice, then do the same with your other fingers.
<b>Roly-poly Pencil</b>	With the palm of your hand facing upwards, lay your pencil flat across your fingers. Use your thumb to roll it backwards and forwards. Now try it with your other hand.
<b>Crawling Caterpillar</b>	Hold your pencil ready to write. Move the pencil through your three fingers to the top like a crawling caterpillar. When you get to the top, make your caterpillar crawl back down again!
<b>Helicopter Twirls</b>	Hold your pencil in the middle with your three correct fingers. Make a twirling helicopter by moving your fingers one at a time from one side of the pencil to the other.

## Verbal path for cursive letters with lead-in lines

a	Start on the line, go round in a curve, back down, up down and flick.
b	Start on the line, go right to the top, back down, up and over, join up and flick.
c	Start on the line, go round in a curve, back down, around and flick.
d	Start on the line, go round in a curve, back round, up to the top, back down and flick.
e	Start on the line, go up in a loop, back down and around and flick.
f	Start on the line, go nearly to the top, hook over, back down and under, loop and flick.
g	Start on the line, go round in a curve, back round, up, down under, loop and flick.
h	Start on the line, go right to the top, back down, up and over and flick.
i	Start on the line, go up down, hook, and dot.
j	Start on the line, go up down and under, loop, hook, and dot.
k	Start on the line, go right to the top, back down, back up, loop, kick and flick.
l	Start on the line, go right to the top, all the way back down and flick.
m	Start on the line, go up, down, up and over, up and over and flick.
n	Start on the line, go up, down, up and over and flick.

σ	Start on the line, go round in a curve, back all the way round, and flick.
ρ	Start on the line, go up, down under, back up and over, join up and flick.
q	Start on the line, go round in a curve, back round, up, down under and flick.
r	Start on the line, go up, down, up, a little way over and flick.
ς	Start on the line, go round in a curve, back round, curve back and flick.
τ	Start on the line, go nearly to the top, back down, hook, and then flick.
υ	Start on the line, go up, down and round, up again, down and flick.
ϖ	Start on the line, go up, down, up and flick.
ϗ	Start on the line, go up, down, up, down, up and flick.
Ϙ	Start on the line, go up, slope down, hook, and lift. Go to the top, slope back down.
ϙ	Start on the line, go up, down and round, up, down, loop and flick.
Ϛ	Start on the line, go up, across, slope down, across and flick.

# Letter-join Pupil log-in

Dear Parents,

Our school is now part of the Letter-join handwriting scheme and our pupils can log in to the Letter-join website at home on iPads, tablets and computers.

There you will find the same, easy-to-use handwriting resources that we use at school.



## PC DESKTOP AND LAPTOP LOG-IN

Log in at [www.letterjoin.co.uk](http://www.letterjoin.co.uk) and use the Desktop log-in option with these details:

Username: ak9388

Password: home

### PC Browsers:

Letter-join will work on the following browsers on PCs/Macs:

- Google Chrome

- Safari

Do not use Internet Explorer.

## IPAD AND TABLET LOG-IN

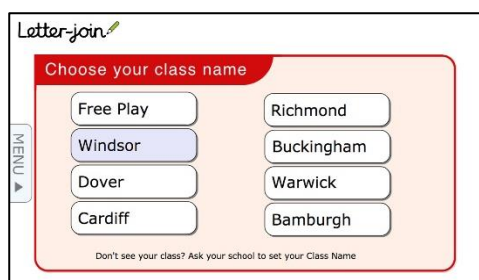
Go to [www.letterjoin.co.uk](http://www.letterjoin.co.uk) and use the Tablet log-in option with these details:

Username:

Swipe code  
(starting at top left):



## Choose a Classroom



Once logged-in, choose your child's classroom and you can use Letter-join's resources and fun activities to reinforce the handwriting we teach at school. You can trace over the letters and words and play the games on your tablet. We are limited to the number of users who can log in to this account, so please do not share these log-in details.

