



Park Grove Primary Academy **Handwriting Policy**

1. Our Intent: Why Handwriting Matters

Learning to write is a complex task that places high demands on a child's working memory. As guided by the DfE's 2025 Writing Framework, our primary goal at Park Grove is to teach handwriting and spelling explicitly and systematically from the moment children start school.

By making the physical process of writing (known as transcription) fast and automatic, we free up a child's mind to focus on their ideas, vocabulary, and composition. This is essential for all children to become confident, fluent, and effective writers across the entire curriculum.

2. Policy Aims

- To develop a neat, legible, and eventually speedy handwriting style using continuous cursive letters.
- To ensure pupils develop the ability to produce letters and words automatically in their independent writing.
- To maintain high and consistent expectations for the presentation of all written work across the school.
- To ensure all pupils understand the importance of choosing the correct writing style, including digital literacy (e.g., typing on Chromebooks), by the end of Year 6.

3. The Park Grove Approach:

In Early Years, we teach daily handwriting sessions using Little Wandle Handwriting. We use this scheme due to the consistency it offers with our phonics teaching — it shares the same letter formation phrases and mnemonics as the Little Wandle phonics programme, so children learn each letter's sound and its formation together. The programme also builds the fine and gross motor skills children need to write with confidence, through dedicated strength and coordination activities alongside explicit letter formation teaching.

From Year 1, children move on to the Letter-join online resource and lesson planners, which form the basis of our whole-school approach thereafter. This scheme provides a clearly sequenced progression to build on children's secure single-letter formation and take them through to a fluent, joined style by the end of Key Stage 2. At Park Grove, we follow the Letter Join 'Print Letters' progression from Year 1.

Year Group	Time Commitment	Key Focus (What We Teach)	Autumn	Spring	Summer	DfE 2025 Framework Link
Reception	Short, daily lessons (10-15 minutes).	Foundations for writing: Focus on gross and fine motor skills (air-writing), correct sitting posture and pencil grip (tripod grip), and learning the shape and formation of all printed, lowercase letters. Learning formation of capital letters.	In Autumn 1, children complete the Patterns book, building the pre-writing strokes and pencil control that underpin letter formation. This deliberately happens ahead of the letter-specific teaching — because phonics teaching is already underway from week two of Reception, by the time children come to learn a letter's formation later in the term, they've already met and know that letter's sound, so they're never learning a new sound and a new formation simultaneously. In Autumn 2, children move into lower-case letters, taught in letter families using the same mnemonics as phonics.	Spring: Children complete the lower-case letter families and move on to capital letters, revising lower-case formation alongside learning correct capital formation.	Summer: Children apply their formation skills to digraphs and trigraphs, writing the letter combinations and words they are meeting in phonics.	Teach transcription daily from reception to build foundations and prevent later difficulties.
Year 1 (KS1) (Module 2 Print to Cursive)	Short, daily lessons (10-15 minutes).	Mastering Print: Continuing daily practice of correct printed letter formation, moving from wide-lined to narrower lined paper when ready. Introduction of basic pre-cursive 'lead-in' strokes.	<u>Printing Script</u> Consolidation of letter formation of all lower-case letters in print. Curly caterpillar letters: c, a, o, d, g, q, e, s Long ladder letters: l, i, t, u One-armed robot letters: r, b, n, h, m, k, p Zigzag letters: v, w, x, z More complex letters: f, j, y	<u>Pre-cursive Script</u> Curly caterpillar letters: c, a, o, d, g, q, e, s Long ladder letters: l, i, t, u All capital letters.	<u>Pre-cursive Script</u> One-armed robot letters: r, b, n, h, m, k, p Zigzag letters: v, w, x, z More complex letters: f, j, y All capital letters.	Focus on quality and accuracy of individual letter formation before introducing joins.

Year 2 (KS1) <i>(Module 3 Starting Cursive)</i>	Short, daily lessons (10-15 minutes).	Introducing Joins: Children begin to learn diagonal and horizontal joins only after they can form unjoined (printed) letters consistently. Focus on relative letter size and correct spacing.	Explicit instruction on joining only occurs when printed forms are secure, preventing the reinforcement of incorrect habits.
Years 3 & 4 (LKS2) <i>(Module 4/5)</i>	Two dedicated lessons per week (20-30 minutes).	Fluency & Consistency: Practice focuses on developing continuous cursive style, ensuring legibility and consistency. Practice is often linked to spelling and vocabulary work. Chromebooks are introduced as a writing tool but are used infrequently to ensure the children have	Building writing speed and fluency so working memory is free for composition.
Years 5 & 6 (UKS2) <i>(Module 6/7)</i>	One dedicated lessons per week (20-30 minutes).	Speed, Adaptation & Digital Skills: We focus on maintaining high quality and increasing fluency and speed. Handwriting is revisited where specific needs are identified. Chromebooks are introduced for extended writing once children have mastered legible and joined writing at speed to promote digital literacy.	Preparing pupils to manage the writing demands of the secondary curriculum and modern communication across all subjects.

4. Key Principles for Effective Practice

We maintain consistency across the school by ensuring the following elements are taught and reinforced daily:

A. Posture and Grip



Sitting Position: Pupils are taught to sit squarely, with their back against the chair, feet flat on the floor, and the table at a comfortable height (below elbow height). See Appendix B for additional information.

All pupils are taught and encouraged to use the Tripod Grip (see Appendix A), which is the most efficient and least tiring way to hold a pencil or pen. This involves pinching the writing implement near the tip with the thumb and index finger, with the middle finger providing support.

B. Tools and Resources

Reception/KS1: We use sharp pencils and writing tools appropriate for the task. We also teach and monitor 'ready to write' routines to ensure pencils are sharpened, and pupils are comfortable and focused before starting to write.

KS2: Pupils use pencils until they have achieved their Pen Licence. Once the children have got a pen, they will use black handwriting pens for all written work. Chromebooks are used for composition tasks once pupils have achieved handwriting fluency, ensuring they develop both physical and digital transcription skills.

5. Handwriting Pens

We adopt an individualised approach to the transition from pencils to handwriting pens. This decision will be made for each child based on their readiness from Year 3. The main consideration will be when a child's handwriting is joined and legible, or when they have achieved their personal best handwriting ability for their stage of development. The aim is for all children to use a pen by the end of Year 5 to support transition to secondary school.

6. Inclusion

We are committed to high expectations for all pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), to achieve legible and fluent handwriting. Teachers will proactively identify and address physical barriers to writing, such as inefficient pencil grip or poor posture, through high-quality first teaching and targeted in-class support. For pupils where handwriting is a significant barrier to composition, technology may be considered in consultation with the SENCO. These provisions ensure pupils receive the tailored instruction and practice needed to develop this essential transcription skill.



7. Handwriting Books

REVISED BY: B.Rogers and Megan Gartland

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NEXT REVIEW: July 2027

Appendix A: Tripod Grip:

The 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



Point away the pencil,



Pinch it near the tip,



Lift it off the table,



Spin it round...



and grip.

Left-handed pencil grip



Point away the pencil,



Pinch it near the tip,



Lift it off the table,



Spin it round...



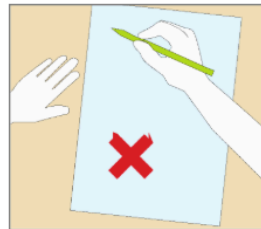
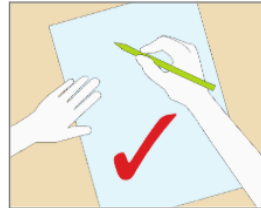
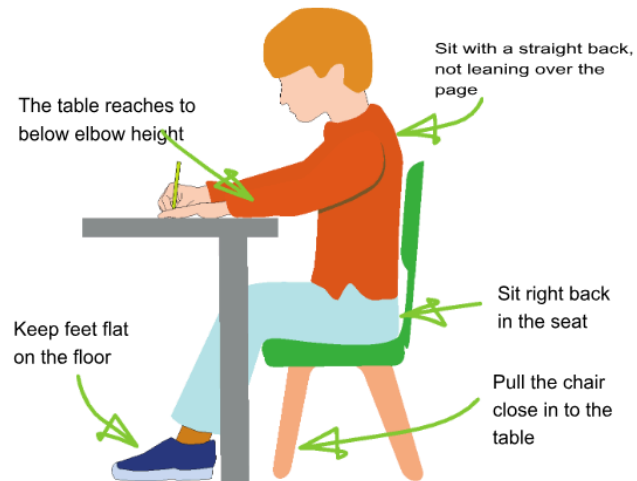
and grip.

Appendix B: Correct Posture

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