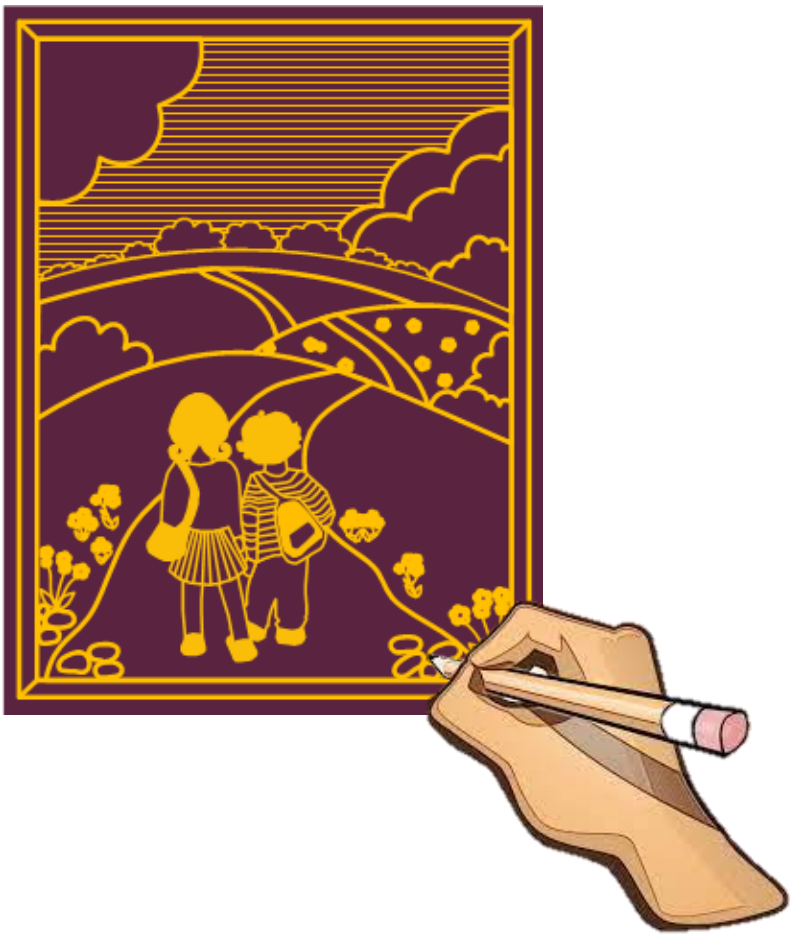
Glen Hills' Handwriting Scheme



Aims

- This scheme is designed to create a consistent approach across the whole school
- All children should develop a fluent, joined and legible handwriting style by the end of KS2
- All staff use a clearly structured framework for the development of handwriting throughout the school.

Seating and position

- There should be "6 feet on the floor" – 4 from the chair and 2 from pupil
- "Bottoms at the back of your seat"
- When writing, the 'spare' hand should be supporting the paper
- No elbows on tables, no chins on hand
- If children are wriggling, consider the size of their body – they may need support under their feet such as a box/drawer
- Ensure reminders are given throughout lessons for children to sit correctly
- Check left handed children are positioned on the left of a pair or together.

Grip (for right-handed pupils)

- See Appendix D for information on grip
- Instruct children to place pencil on their table, with the tip pointing to them
- "Pinch finger action" – forefinger and thumb action
- Pinch pencil over the top of the pencil
- Flip pencil into 'tripod position'
- Encourage children to hold pencil with their tripod grip at the point where the outer casing of the pencil meets the sharpened section
- At certain points during the lesson, ask children to put pencils down and pick up again
- Remind children that they shouldn't grip their pencil too hard or their fingers will hurt
- Consider children with long nails/hypermobility – they may struggle with this
- This is vital to correct in earlier years – by UKS2 it is almost impossible. Keep reminding children to try, explain it will feel different and give plenty of 'breaks' in lesson to reposition fingers.
- Tripod grips can be used for children struggling
- Where a child is unable to hold a pencil/pen for long periods of time, an alternative idea will be sought with appropriate advice (such as scribes/use of technology).

** See Appendix C for information on working with left-handers.*

Lessons

- Initially, or for poor cohorts/children, start at the very beginning of the lessons each year. This may be the case for the first few years of handwriting in this way at Glen Hills. Once the scheme has run for a few cycles, you may find that you can start further on through the lessons
- Older children who have an expected level, neat and consistent handwriting style will not easily be changed – and they should take part in handwriting lessons as usual – but not be 'forced' to change their letter formation when writing

- Lessons should take place at least 3 times a week as a whole class from Year 1 onwards (for the duration of the Autumn term)
- After the Autumn term, handwriting lessons should still take place as a whole class lesson at least once a week to maintain focus on handwriting skills. Interventions for those pupils who require it should also be added into the timetable if they are not taking place already – and could involve other intervention activities such as bubble handwriting
- A lesson should last no longer than 15 minutes
- Aim to complete up to 3 letters or joins per lesson (but this may change depending on the children). Any more and you are rushing
- Letters may need to be repeated from lesson to lesson – or recap a group of letters every so often
- Continue cycle.

Letters and Joins

- Form the letters following the Little Wandle Handwriting rhymes – *see Appendices A and B*
- Work through the letters in the order they are in the guide – similar patterns of letter have been grouped purposefully (known as Letter Families)
- Ensure children are writing on their lines correctly for ascenders and descenders
- Be specific about where the letters start and stop to ensure consistency
- Aim to complete up to 3 letters or joins per lesson (but this may change depending on the children)
- EYFS children are not expected to join letters (in EYFS guidance) or in Year 1
- **Teach capital letters independently of their lower case letter, once all the lower case letters have been taught.**

Structure of a handwriting lesson

- Pupils to complete Handwriting practice in the back of English books (EYFS to use and Year 1 to use Handwriting booklets)
- Make the rules for handwriting clear and remind children about sitting position and grip
- Introduce the letters/joins being learnt
- Teacher model clearly to class – insist on them watching you thoroughly and only starting when you have finished the demonstration
- Demonstrate what you don't want to see
- If possible, use a writing repeater to demonstrate the correct letter formation on a loop
- Children write a line of the letter/join, working for short 30 second bursts (in this time, adults to move around to give Verbal Feedback)
- If children complete this line correctly and consistently – and are waiting - as they progress, encourage them to independently go back and 'finish' other lines of letters in their handwriting work
- Stop and take regular breaks – for finger exercises, mini plenary, self/peer assessment on how they are doing
- Continue cycle.

Finger and Body Exercises

- Start lessons with finger exercises. Consider using YouTube videos. Channels such as 'OT Closet' have lots of short videos for this
- Take regular short breaks for finger exercises
- Involve arms/hand/finger stretches
- Use exercises – finger walks, finger claps, prayer hands and tapping digits, brain gym, finger exercises, piano on the desk (loud/quiet)
- *Dough Disco, Mark Making, the teaching of colouring* and *Pen Disco* can be used to support fine motor control activities
- *Squiggle whilst you Wiggle* using 'flipper flappers' are used in EYFS
- These allow times to refocus posture/pencil grip.

The teaching of colouring

It is important that pupils at Glen Hills are taught essential colouring skills to help develop fine motor control.

- **Encourage Proper Grip:** Encourage the correct grip to build dexterity
- **Control Pressure:** Teach children to use varied pressure, explaining that they can colour softly or firmly to change the intensity of the colour
- **Consistent Direction:** Encourage colouring in one consistent direction—such as small circular motions or long, parallel strokes—to produce a tidy look, rather than scribbling in all directions
- **Use Hand-over-Hand:** Gently guide a young child's hand over the paper to show them how to control the crayon, particularly in navigating borders
- **Set Boundaries:** If a child struggles with borders, use physical boundaries like pipe cleaners, straws, or lolly sticks to create a raised edge they can feel
- **Encourage Patience:** Colouring helps build focus and patience, so encourage pupils to complete the picture rather than rushing through.

Be mindful of the designs of resources that need some form of colouring. They should reflect the need of the learning and not be too time consuming to colour neatly in line with expectations of presentation. For example, fractions of shapes should allow focus on the maths objective and not take too long for pupils to colour neatly (i.e. not too big).

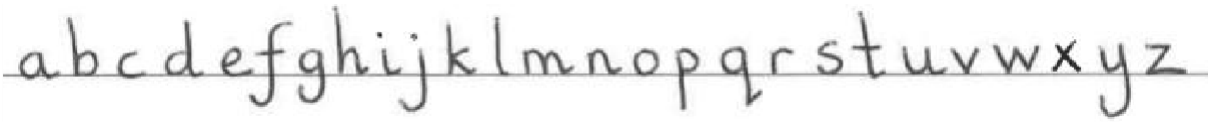
Assessment and feedback

- Remember, within the lesson, adults can give regular Verbal Feedback, write the letter/join in the child's book and ask them to try again or tick good examples
- Children will constantly peer review and self-assess. If a child has made a mistake, encourage them to mark a tiny cross above it. No rubbing out or crossing out. It wastes valuable handwriting time
- Pupils can self-assess with a smiley face at the end of their neatest line of letters or tick their best join/letter on the line

- Letters should be corrected if incorrect within marking of all work in red pen
- Handwriting should be marked with a tick (if correct), with VF for Verbal Feedback – or corrections added as needed
- **Staff are expected to model handwriting appropriately themselves at all times** (including on whiteboards in classroom, on displays, when showing modelled answer on a sheet and when marking books)
- **Writing grips** should be corrected throughout Handwriting lessons (see Appendix D).

Non-negotiable card letter examples

This alphabet can be used on non-negotiable cards as examples of letters.





Scaffolds and worksheets

Any **scaffolds** given to children to use should follow our **GH scheme** and not be used unless the same letter forms are followed (as above). **Provide lines** on **worksheets** for children to write on or on text boxes – which are the same sized as their usual 'writing lines'. This supports handwriting by preventing handwriting becoming overly large or scruffy. Scaffolding also comes via starting dots, yellow scribed lines to trace and lollipop sticks for word gaps.

High Expectations / Best handwriting examples

At the start of each term, every child is to produce an **example of their best handwriting**. In Year 1, this could be done around the Autumn half term. This is then to be photocopied and used as a reference to ensure all their work remains at this standard. It can be copied onto card as a bookmark or attached to their desk. All staff are to then regularly use these to remind individual pupils of handwriting expectations in every lesson (including across all written work in other books such as History, PSHE and Science). There is no difference in handwriting expectation from one subject to another and staff are to give constant reminders about handwriting rules in all lessons. Once a child is joining, this should occur in all books.

New pupils

New pupils who join Glen Hills with a joined, fluent handwriting style of their own should continue with this style. Those who have not mastered a joined style should learn via the Glen Hills' scheme and/or appropriate intervention sessions.

End of EYFS and Key Stage Expectations

EYFS

In EYFS, the main emphasis should be on **correct letter shape, size, formation and placement on lines** with consistent reference to the **Little Wandle letter formation rhymes** (see Appendices). This includes **lower case (introduced first)** and **capital letters** that are written on a **single line**. The letters are introduced to children are letters are introduced in phonics sessions. Pupils should develop core strength, sit correctly and become comfortable with an efficient pencil grip. EYFS children use dots to show where letters start, yellow scribed letters to copy and lollipop sticks to support word spaces.

KS1

In Key Stage 1, the main emphasis should remain on **correct letter shape, size, formation and placement on lines** with consistent reference to the Little Wandle letter formation rhymes (see Appendices). Children should continue with EYFS expectations and use spacing between words that reflects letter size. Children who need support should continue to use dots to show where letters start, yellow scribed letters to trace and lollipop sticks to support word spaces. During Year 2, greater depth pupils should join some letters however **letter formation is imperative**. Any children in KS1 who form **all** letters **consistently** and **correctly** can then be moved on with their handwriting progress.

The "Department of Education; The writing framework: July 2025; page 33; https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-writing-framework , for Year 2 states: *"Joined handwriting should not be taught until pupils can form these unjoined letters (print forms) correctly and consistently."*

The following is taken directly from exemplification materials for KS1.

KS1 – Working towards expected standard

- *form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place*
- *form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another in some of their writing*
- *use spacing between words.*

KS1 – Working at the expected standard

- *form 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.*

KS1 – Working at greater depth

- *use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join some letters.*

KS2

The letters have been grouped according to how they are formed into '**formation families'**. This is because letters within the families have similar features, including starting positions and orientation. This supports motor development and reduces cognitive load.

In the lessons on letter joins, there are examples for each letter on how to join from the preceding letter. For all letters which do join the following letter, examples are given. No more than three new letters or joins should be taught per lesson.

The joins include just two letters. Following the intensive programme of lessons, three-letter joins could be worked on in handwriting lessons.

See Appendix F for a further breakdown of the expected standards for Key Stage 1 and 2

SEND pupils

For children unable to access the mainstream curriculum, a variety of additional inclusive strategies may be used as alternative resources:

- Specialist writing implements
- Large motor control activities (such as writing with chalk, paint, pen on large paper, water, sand, air writing)
- Using yellow paper or yellow scribed writing
- Squiggle while you wiggle activities
- Handwriting intervention activities
- Little Wandle videos.

Pencils and Pen Licences

EYFS children and Year 1 children should use '**fatter' triangular** grip pencils for **all writing**. This is to improve control/grip, develop muscle strength, reduce fatigue as they are easier to handle. As children develop stronger muscles and better control, they can eventually transition to standard-sized pencils. This is when:

- writing has become more coordinated
- learners are beginning to write on lines successfully
- learners are able to write without tiredness or pain for a sustained period, probably at least ten minutes

See Appendix D for support on pencil grip.

When writing in pencil, this should be **sharp** and **long enough** to be held comfortably in the hand. Pencils that are too short should be changed. Maths work is always in pencil.

Only pupils who are joining neatly and consistently should use pen. This is worked towards in Year 3 when children aim for a **Pen Licence**. If a child is NOT reaching this expectation with their handwriting in pen, they should be moved to writing in pencil again.

School pens ONLY are to be used when writing in pen (unless special circumstances have been arranged with the SENDCo).

GH letters vs Little Wandle letters

All letters are formed in the same way as Little Wandle phonics letters apart from the following:

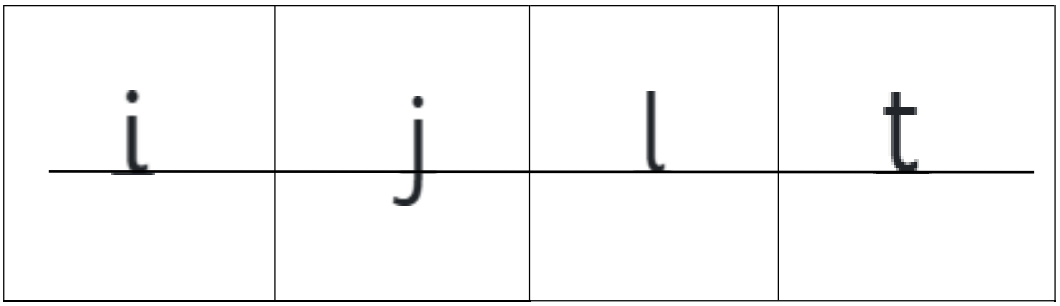
Little Wandle Letter	Glen Hills Letter	Justification
I (capital letter)	I	To prevent confusion with letter l (lower case L)
k (lower case letter)	When un-joined – k When joined – a looped letter 	DfE has stated that validated SSPs should not teach cursive, but print. The 'k' matches all the grapheme cards, displays and is how the children will read 'k' in books. Once the children have clear letter formation for each letter, schools can follow their handwriting policy/programme and teach the 'k' with a loop
Descenders	When un-joined the descenders will follow Little Wandle formations. As pupils learn to join these letters, they will become looped	By looping the descender letters, this will aid fluency of handwriting for pupils

LESSONS ON INDIVIDUAL LETTERS ORGANISED INTO FORMATION FAMILIES

Children in EYFS are introduced to each letter as it appears in their phonics learning. Once all letters have been introduced, children move onto Formation Families of letters in their handwriting.

Lower Case Letters -These are taught in Formation Families.

Formation Family 1



Formation Family 2

r	n	m	
h	b	p	k

Re-enforcement lessons for Formation Family 1 and 2 and CVC spellings linked to letters

Formation Family 3

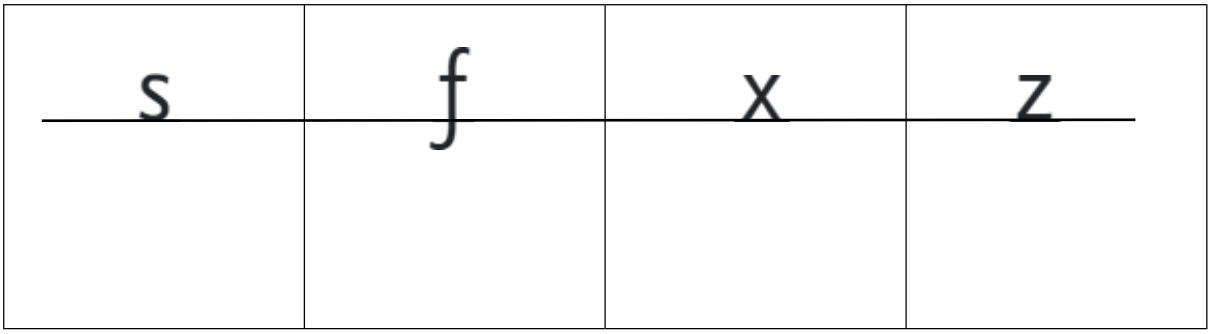
c	o	a	d
e	g	q	

Formation Family 4

v	w	u	y

Re-enforcement lessons for Formation Family 1, 2, 3 and 4 and CVC spellings linked to letters

Formation Family 5



Re-enforcement of all Formation Family letters and linked spellings

Capital Letters

Move onto capital letters once all lower case letters have been learnt.

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

Re-enforcement of capital letters

Glen Hills' Programme of Lessons:

EYFS – Lower case letters are introduced following the **LW phonics scheme**. Once all lower case letters have been introduced, **capital letters** are learnt and consolidated.

EYFS and Year 1 - **Formation Families** are then used to work on lower case letters and reinforcement of capital letters takes place in handwriting lessons. CVC words of learned letters and High Frequency Words can also be added in when appropriate.

Year 2 – Children continue to work on correct letter formation using Formation Families. When this is **consistently** in place, children begin to learn diagonal and horizontal joins **from 1** onwards. It is imperative that letter formation should be consistent and correct by this point.

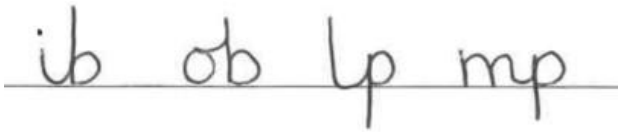
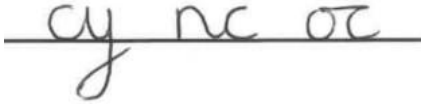
Year 3 – **Restart at 1** and work through the lessons. If letters are not consistent and correct from Year 3 onwards, revision of letter formation should take place.

Year 4 – **Restart at 15** (Year 3 may have passed this) – as retrieval sessions. By the end of Year 4, all the joins within the scheme should have been introduced in lessons.

By Year 5 – By the start of Year 5, all joins in the scheme should have been learnt and must continue to be practiced to increase consistency and speed.

Challenge: During all lessons, spellings linked to letters and joins can be interspersed within learning

GH SEQUENCE FOR LEARNING JOINS

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

6	fo fa uf of As GH scheme is filtered throughout the school, we should expect to see a reduction in letter f variation. Accept variations if the letter is neat, consistent and legible.
7	ng dg iq oq
8	ht ha wh th
9	mi ci wi
10	am ny en
11	us os is as
12	lt it au up
13	ev nv wo we
14	vy zi ze iz
15	ac aw da oa ib ob

16	ec vc du dg
17	en ef me te fr fo As GH scheme is filtered throughout the school, we should expect to see a reduction in letter f variation.
18	if af ng og hs hu
19	lh ch ib ip vi
20	ej nj ky kl mk ok Learners will need additional support with the printed unjoined k moving to a looped k for joining at this point. 
21	U lw cl al mb mp
22	om im mf ms ng nt
23	un wn or od vo ho
24	op rp ng oq rl

25	rs vr tr vs fs ns
26	tl ty ut ot ug uz
27	du fu va ve ov iv
28	wg we ow ew ex ix
29	xe vy cy oz ez
30	go yo qu ja

Appendix A – How to write LW letters

(2025 rhymes)

These rhymes are to be used throughout **all** handwriting work at Glen Hills where staff are **teaching letter formation**.



Appendix B – Letter formation phrases

(2025 Little Wandle Learning Trust)

Note that when pupils move to joining letters, descenders will be looped to support fluency when handwriting

How to write letters

Use this document to ensure correct letter formation.

Letter	Letter formation phrase
a	Around the astronaut's helmet and down into space.
b	Down the bear's back, up and around its tummy.
c	Curl around the cat.
d	Around the duck's body, up to its head and down to its feet.
e	Around the elephant's eye and curl down its trunk.
f	Down the flamingo to its foot and across its wings.
g	Around the goat's face and curl under its chin.
h	Down, up and over the helicopter.
i	Down the iguana and dot the leaf.
j	Down the jellyfish and dot its head.
k	Down the kite, up to the top corner and down to the bottom corner.
l	Down the lollipop stick.
m	Down, up and over the mouse's ears.
n	Down, up and over the net.
o	All around the octopus.
p	Down the penguin's back, up and around its head.
q	Around the queen's face, down her robe and a flick at the end.
r	From the cloud to the ground and over the rainbow.
s	Down the snake from head to tail.
t	Down the tiger and across its neck.
u	Down and around the umbrella and back to the ground.
v	Down to the bottom of the volcano and back up to the top.
w	Down and up and down and up the waves.
x	From the top, across the box to the bottom. From the top again, across the box to the bottom.
y	Down, around the yo-yo and curl around the string.
z	Across the top of the zebra's head, zig-zag down its neck and along.

See 'looped k' information once pupils are moving onto joining.

ck	**c** Curl around the heel of the sock. **k** Down the sock, up and back down to the toe.

How to write capital letters

Use this document to ensure correct letter formation when you are teaching children to form capital letters.

Letter	Capital letter formation phrase
A	From the top, diagonally down to the left, up to the top, diagonally down to the right. Lift up and across.
B	From the top, down, back to the top. Round to the middle, round to the bottom.
C	From the top, curl around to the left to sit on the line.
D	From the top, down, back to the top. Curve right, down to the bottom.
E	From the top, down, back to the top. Across, back. Lift up and across the middle. Lift up and across the bottom line.
F	From the top, down, back to the top. Across, back. Lift up and across the middle.
G	From the top, curl around to the line, carry on up, then straight down. Lift up and across.
H	From the top and down. Space. From the top and down. Lift up and join the lines across the middle.
I	Letter I – see GH letters vs LW letters section
J	From the top, all the way down, then short curl to the left.
K	From the top, down, up to the middle. Diagonally up, back and diagonally down to the line.
L	From the top, down and across the line.
M	From the top, down, back to the top. Diagonally down, diagonally up. Straight down to the line.
N	From the top, down, back to the top. Diagonally down, then straight up to the top.
O	From the top – all around the o.
P	From the top, down then back up. Curve right to halfway down.
Q	From the top – all around the o. Lift off. Short line diagonally down.
R	From the top, down, then back up. Curve right to halfway down. Diagonally down to the line.
S	From the top, under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail.
T	From the top, down and stop. Lift up and from the left, make a line across the top.
U	From the top, down and curve right, then straight up to the top.
V	From the top diagonally right to the bottom, then diagonally up to the top.
W	From the top diagonally right to the bottom, diagonally up to the top, diagonally down to the line, then diagonally up again.
X	From the top, diagonally right to the bottom. Space. Start at the top, then diagonally left to the bottom.
Y	From the top diagonally right to the middle. Space. From the top diagonally left to the middle. Straight down to the bottom.
Z	From the top go across, diagonally down to the left and across the bottom.

Tips for Left-Handed Writers

Appendix C

From M.K.Holder http://www.handedness.org/action/leftwrite.html



Teaching a child to write with his or her left hand is not just the opposite from teaching how to write right-handed. Languages that are written left-to-right, like English, are more difficult to write with the left hand -- a right-hander writes away from his body and pulls the pencil, while a left-hander must write toward his body and push the pencil.

If a left-handed child is only permitted to write with the left hand but not taught how to write, the child may develop a needlessly uncomfortable, inefficient, slow, messy way of writing that will be a lifelong hardship. Therefore, it is especially important for parents and teachers to understand how to teach left-handed children to write correctly.

The most important factors are: the position of the writing paper, the position of the arm and wrist, and the grip on the writing instrument.

Position of Paper

For a left-handed child, the paper should be positioned left of the child's midline, and tilted so that the top right corner of the paper is closer to the child than the top left corner (see diagram). The paper is placed so that the child's hand is to the left of, and away from, the body at the start of the writing line, and ends the line with the hand closer and in front of the body or slightly to the left of midline. The angle that the paper is tilted will vary according to individual children - the important thing for the child to remember is to keep the arm perpendicular to the bottom of the page or slate writing tablet (see below). The wrist should be straight (not bent) and the writing hand should be below the writing line.

Teach left-handed children to remember three things as they learn to write:

- Write with the hand below the writing line and the wrist straight.
- Grip the pencil ~ 2.5 cm (1 inch) to 3.8 cm (1.5 inches) from the point.
- Tilt paper so that arm is at right-angle to bottom edge of paper (and the top right corner of page is toward writer).

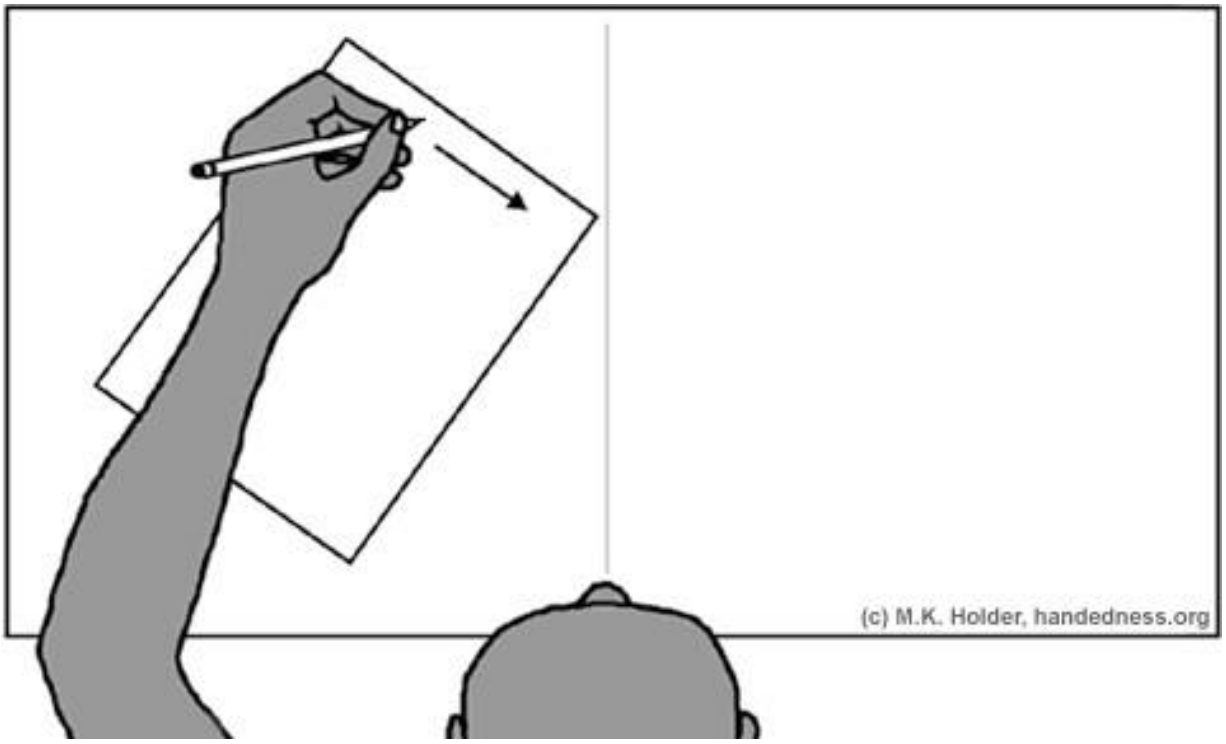


Diagram: proper posture, paper position, and grip for left-handed writing

Because the act of writing involves the whole arm, tilting the paper allows a writer the most efficient and comfortable position for the wrist, elbow, and shoulder. Some teachers have found it helpful to let the left-handed child start writing, or practise writing, on a board or piece of paper mounted on the wall (or on the ground, using a stick in soft, smooth soil). This allows the child to move the entire arm freely, keep the wrist straight, and not worry about seeing or smudging the writing, making it easier for the child to concentrate on learning to form the letters.

Pencil / Pen Grip

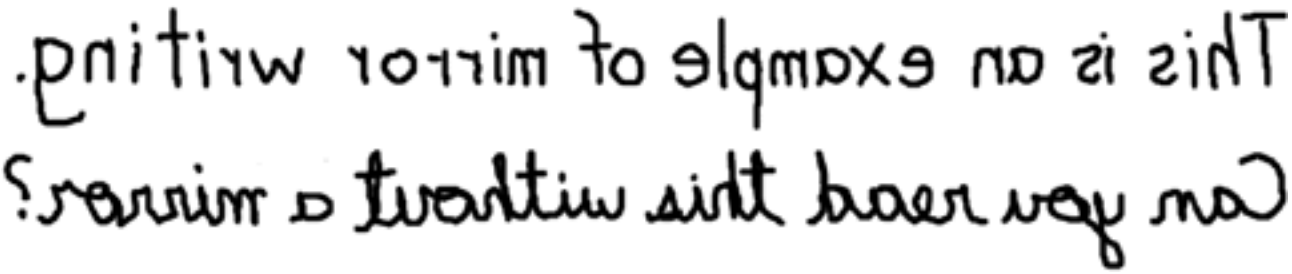
Left-handed writers need to grip the writing instrument far enough back from the point to be able to see what is being written, and also to not smear what has just been written. Teachers and researchers recommend the child grip the pencil around 2.5 cm (1 inch) to 3.8 cm (1.5 inches) from the point.

If the child tends to hold the pencil too close to the point, the teacher can make a mark on the pencil at the right distance, to remind the student where to grip the pencil. The wrist should be fairly straight, not bent sharply. A common problem for all young children learning to write is gripping the pencil too tightly, making writing tense and tiresome. Usually the child learns to relax their grip as writing develops, but teachers can remind students to hold the instrument gently. Frequent practise and letting the child write large letters, also helps children learn to relax their grip. The child will tend to naturally reduce the size of the writing

as they attains better motor control.

Mirror Writing

Mirror writing is writing left-to-write languages (like English) backwards AND also reversing the letters so that the writing only appears normal when held up to a mirror and the reflection viewed.



Above: an example of Mirror Writing

Some people are able to write quite easily and naturally this way (for instance, the Italian inventor and artist Leonardo da Vinci famously kept his notebooks in mirror script). If a left-handed child has a tendency to mirror write, the teacher can help him or her overcome this by making sure the child always begins writing on the left side of the page. This can be done by placing a mark on the left side of child's paper showing which side to start writing from. If the mirror-writing persists, the teacher can try other strategies to help the child establish the correct direction and orientation of the letters. For instance, the child can be instructed to slowly and carefully copy text from a correctly written page. If the child has trouble even copying text, the teacher can have the child trace over correctly written words (in either case, remember to mark the starting point on the left side).

Tips for supporting grip

Appendix D

(taken from Teach Handwriting guidance)

Every child is different, developing the skills needed to hold a pencil at a different time to their peers.

There are **5 developmental stages**, which a child needs to go through, before they can successfully use a mature tripod grip. They need to work through each stage and as their hand, shoulder and arm strength and mobility increases so does the ability to move to the next developmental stage of the grip.

Stage 1 - Palmer-supinate grasp

Holds the crayon/pencil in fist (whole hand) like a dagger. They use whole arm movements from the shoulder to mark-make. Due to this whole arm movement they prefer to work on a vertical surface.



Stage 2 - Palmer or digital-pronate grasp

Holds a crayon/pencil with the palm of the hand facing down towards the paper. The crayon/pencil is held by all the fingers and the thumb. The movement comes from the shoulder and elbow. Again due to the way the arm moves a vertical surface is preferred.



Stage 3 - Four finger and thumb grip

Holding the crayon/pencil between the thumb and four fingers with the crayon/pencil in a nearly vertical, upright position. Movement comes from the elbow and wrist.



Stage 4 - Static quadruped or tripod grip

Holding the pencil in very nearly in the correct position however the web space is narrower than it would be if held in a mature tripod grip. This means that the movement is coming from the wrist and large finger movements.



Stage 5 - Mature / Dynamic tripod grip

This is traditionally considered the most appropriate handwriting pencil grip for both left and right-handed writers. Holding the pencil between the thumb and index finger with pencil supported on the middle finger. The ring and little fingers are gently curled inwards. This gives an open wide web space which means the movement comes from the fingers.

Right handed



Left handed



Age	Grip
2 to 4 ½ years	Stage 1 to 3
3 ½ to 5 years	Stage 3 to 4
4 to 6 years	Stage 4 to 5

A child may not develop a three-finger tripod pencil grip until they are 5 - 6 years old. This is considered the most appropriate pencil grip, for right and left-handed writers, as it allows the fingers and wrist to work together to provide a more free-flowing movement.

If a child is age 6+ years old and is using a stage 1 to 4 grip then work through the stages one at a time to stage 5. Allow the child to spend at least **3 or 4 weeks at one stage** before moving to the next.

Young children need thicker drawing tools, as they can grip them more easily. If the pencil is too thin, they find it difficult to grasp and control, making the drawing experience unsuccessful, which can lead to frustration and discourage them from trying again.

Hand Dominance and Swapping

Appendix E

(taken from Teach Handwriting)

Hand Dominance

Hand dominance is where one hand has more influence or control than the other. This is sometimes referred to as hand preference, where one hand is preferred or chosen over the other, as it is more reliable in performing a range of skilled activities (handedness).

Children tend to develop hand dominance between the ages of 3-5 years old, for some it may be slightly later and for a few it does not become a subconscious decision until they are 8 or 9 years old. Many children will naturally develop a clear right or left-hand dominance.

Some can develop a mixed dominance (they are not ambidextrous), this is where a child finds they have more control and greater skills for handwriting with their left hand but prefer and display more precise skills with the right hand in tasks such as using scissors.

Hand Swapping

Hand swapping is a natural developmental stage that we expect toddlers and young children to go through.

Initially this is seen in toddlers when a child uses their left hand to pick up or do activities that are on the left-hand side of the body and then they swap to use the right hand for those on the right-hand side of the body. Once a child has developed their bilateral coordination skill for crossing the mid-line (the imaginary line that could be drawn down the centre of their body running down their face, chest and navel) this type of hand swapping decreases as they start to develop a hand dominance for tasks.

However, if a child does not develop the bilateral coordination skill of subconsciously crossing their mid-line point hand swapping may continue.

Hand swapping throughout a task is not necessarily a sign that a child is uncertain of their dominant hand. You may find some children will swap hands through a writing task, especially as the amount of time required for the task is longer than they have been used to. As they naturally develop the required hand strength for longer handwritten tasks the hand swapping will diminish.

Appendix F

The expected standard	Key Stage 1			Key Stage 2		
'Pupil is' statement	Working towards	Working at	Working at greater depth	Working towards	Working at	Working at greater depth
Forming lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place	All	All	All	All	All	All
Forming lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another	Some*	All	All	All	All	All
Forming capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters	Some* capitals All numbers	All	All	All	All	All
Using spacing between words	All	All	All	All	All	All
Using spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.		All	All	All	All	All
Using the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters			Some*	Some*	All	All
Producing legible joined handwriting				All	All	All
Maintaining legibility, fluency and speed in handwriting through choosing whether or not to join specific letters.					All	All

Policy/Scheme	Handwriting
Reviewed by	R Wesley
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