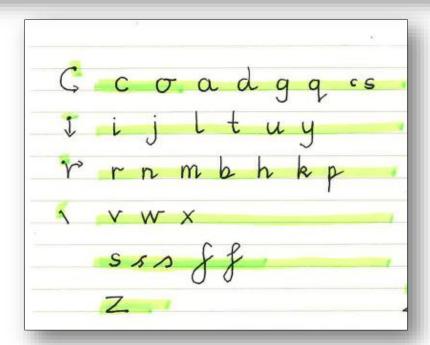


Hill View Primary

Handwriting guidelines.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk II Mm Nn Oo Pp Qg Rr Ss Tt Uu Vr Ww Xx Yy Zz



September 2023

PRINCIPLES

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. Research shows that when letter formation and handwriting become automatic, this transcription frees up working memory so that other aspects of the writing process can be managed within the cognitive load available.

A fluent joined handwriting script enables pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns and also aids other aspects of transcription such as spelling and executive function.

Handwriting skills should be taught regularly and systematically and may require targeted intervention. Children quickly pick up poor habits and incorrect grips and letter formation that become habits which are very difficult to undo. All staff that work with children in the school have a responsibility to be vigilant, intervene to correct and have the highest of expectations for handwriting and presentation from all pupils appropriate to their age.

AIMS

At Hill View Primary Academy our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will:

- Correctly form all their letters correctly including with the correct muscle movements and grips of tools such as pencils and pens.
- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in accordance with our joined script.
- Develop flow and speed.
- Eventually produce the letters automatically and in their independent writing.

Teaching and Learning

- Children should experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across the school.
- Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line and be given support in finding the correct comfortable grip.
- Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly. Expect to be provided with and/ or ensure pencils are sharp and other tools such as rulers are available to them.
- Be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work and with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- Have WAGOLL both through modelled writing and in feedback in their books models and adult writing that reflects these high expectations
- Be supported in developing strategies for proof-reading and editing to redraft to ensure correct spelling so that they are satisfied with the production of work of quality that is accurate and legible.
- Be encouraged to use their skills with confidence and pride in real life situations.

Implications.

All adults that work with children have a responsibility to ensure that when they are writing in front of pupils or in pupil books or for displays, that their own handwriting reflects the expectations outlined in this policy. This has implications for the adults that work in the school to take the effort to ensure that their own writing is compliant with the guidelines and expectations in this policy as all adult writing is a model for the pupils.

Additionally, adults that are involved in directly instructing pupils how to form letters or teach handwriting have a responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with this policy and the principles behind effective handwriting and transcription instruction.

Young children need to be taught to correctly form letters, hold mark-making tools and connect graphemes as the starting point of words that are written. There is no benefit in letting young children develop their own way to hold mark-making tools, **vigilant observation and persistent intervention and practise** are the only ways to ensure the correct tripod grip is developed. This mantra needs to run through, with appropriate sensitivity, every occasion that a pupil holds a mark-making or writing tool from Reception to Year 3.

Finally all staff involved in working with pupils in any aspect of the curriculum must familiarise themselves with the expectations for spelling, proofreading and editing to ensure that spelling is accurate in writing.

Part 1: Handwriting

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

Early Years

Children take part in activities to develop their fine and gross motor-skills and recognition of patterns, for example, to form letters using their index finger in sand or using paint. Children should begin to learn how to correctly hold a pencil. Then how to use a pencil, and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters most of which are correctly formed. They should be given the opportunities to develop their handwriting, using the pre joined style- without leading lines, to their full potential at that age. This should use the Read, Write Inc scheme which in turn supports their reading.

Key Stage 1

Children will continue to develop fine and gross motor-skills with a range of multi-sensory activities. Handwriting should be discussed within and continue to be linked to phonics sessions. Teachers and support staff continue to guide children on how to write letters correctly, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip. Children should now be leaving spaces between words accurately. By the end of Key Stage 1 children will be able to write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and correct spacing between words using a joined style. They should be taught to join when they are ready.

Key Stage 2

During this stage the children continue to have direct teaching and regular practice of handwriting. We aim for them to develop a clear, fluent style and by the end of Year 6, be able to adapt their handwriting for the different purposes, such as: neat, legible joined hand for finished, presented work, a faster script for note making and the ability to print for labelling diagrams etc.

The three P's

Posture

Poor posture can be a root cause of common handwriting difficulties such as pain or fatigue and will present as a reluctance to write, poor presentation or legibility, slow writing speed and reduced output.

POSTURE GUIDELINES

- Feet flat on the floor or on a wide based raised surface
- Knees at a right angle with 2-fingers space behind the knee to avoid compression
- Sit on the chair so hips are positioned at approximately 90° with the back supported
- Sit approximately a fist-distance away from the table

AND

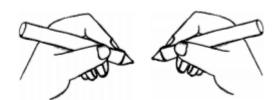
- Table height adjusted so that forearms rest on the top without leaning forward (too low) or raising the shoulders/arms (too high)
- Surface clean, smooth and uncluttered

Pencil

Children and adults can be seen to use a wide range of different pencil grasps, often because they have not learnt differently

or as compensation for postural instability elsewhere. An inefficient pen/cil grasp can cause discomfort, impacting motivation, fluency and legibility and create difficulty in sustaining speed.

A dynamic tripod grasp, with the pencil held between thumb and index finger with the middle finger supporting is considered optimal as it provides stability, but allows the precise movements needed to form letters.



To be effective, this grasp must be supported by a stable wrist resting on the writing surface and positioned below the writing line.

PENCIL GRASP GUIDELINES:

- Check the child is developmentally ready before asking them to write.
- A dynamic tripod pencil grasp is the most efficient and is expected by end of Year 1.
- Address an inappropriate grasp in the early learning stages and later if it is causing discomfort or impacting speed.
- Consider corrective action using adaptive grips or specialist writing tools, but always trial several options to find the most appropriate.
- Encourage a 2 cm gap between finger tip and pencil point and slightly greater for left-handers.

Paper

Correct paper position is vitally important during the early years of handwriting development as bad practice can lead to compensatory strategies, such as a hooked-wrist in left-handers, that are difficult to remedy in later years.

Paper

PAPER GUIDELINES:

- Tilt and offset the paper according to the writing hand.
- Move the paper up or down to facilitate a comfortable reach and keep it in place with the non-writing hand.
- Consider glare from paper and overhead lighting.
- Consider a specialist vision assessment if visual stress continues.

Provision for left-handed children

At least 10% of the population are left-handed, the majority of whom are boys. All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- paper should be positioned to the left for right handed pupils and to the right for left handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case;
- pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision;
- pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space;

Teachers are aware of the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

TILT

When writing, the wrist and hand will naturally step along a path across the paper, but at an angle to the body. The writing paper should ideally be positioned so that the hand follows this natural path. For a right hander the top left corner of the paper is angled down to the left.

For a left-hander, the opposite is best, having the top right corner angled down to the right.



Capital letters

Capital letters stand alone and are not joined to the next letter. Children must practice starting sentences and writing names using a capital letter and not joining the subsequent letter. This should be modelled by the teacher during Writing and Phonics sessions.

The Learning Environment

In all classes, pencil pots with suitable materials are available for pupils to work at their own tables. Classrooms are equipped with a range of writing implements, line guides, word lists and dictionaries. Both print and joined writing models are used throughout displays and working walls.

- Pencils must be sharp
- Pens must have appropriate nib and not be ragged or deformed.

Year teams should decide how they will keep tools, such as pencils sharp.

Erasers should not be used apart from art lessons as all pupils should be taught to cross out neatly should they make an error.

Handwriting difficulties

Visual stress-Ocular motor (eye movement) difficulties tend to be fatiguing, especially when having to be focussed on an extended writing task. If a child rubs their eyes frequently or complains of headaches when writing, it can be a sign of visual acuity or ocular motor difficulties. An eye test will

detect visual acuity difficulties, but other factors can make the eyes work harder than they need to, causing fatigue.

The teacher will be able to identify the best measures for each child, but ocular motor difficulties or other literacy difficulties such as Dyslexia should not be ignored, as left unaddressed will tend to demotivate children to writing regardless of lighting levels.

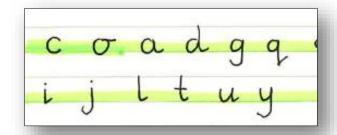
Recommendations:

- Over-emphasize spaces between words (Make the spaces large enough so that they
- can't go unnoticed).
- Have the student read the words out loud when writing and say the word "space" when there is a space.
- Consider width of writing area: Some students will have greater success with intermediate versus primary paper based on development of hand skills. It is often easier to produce smaller movements when writing than larger movements.
- Consider highlighting lines or using single/double/triple lined paper.
- If the student has trouble starting on the left side of the paper, place a piece of green tape
 along the left side of the desk and a piece of red tape along the right side of the design to
 signal GO and STOP. Similarly, marker lines on the left and right side of each paper can be
 used.
- Use a physical spacer such as a lolly stick, finger, eraser, or small post-it note.
- Have the student use a slant board to raise his visual field.
- Try a pencil grip or triangular pencil aide to change pressure.
- Provide a model for the child to copy from rather than from the board.
- Try a variety of writing paper which includes extra blank space between lines or have the student skip lines.
- Place a model of the letters typically reversed on the table for easy reference.

Resources

Resources are available in Staff Only folder 'Handwriting.' Our handwriting style should be displayed in every classroom and available on tables for children to refer to.

As most children are writing in lined, rather than tram lined, books those children that find it hard to judge sizing and positioning should be supported through strategies such as highlighted guides either in books or on line guided paper.



The Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are made aware of our agreed handwriting style and encouraged to practice this with their children at home. This will be on our website with resources to support.

Order to teach (see also Appendix 1 for break down from progression of knowledge and skills.

For accurate information on what should be taught and mastered year by year refer to the progression of skills in the appendix.

Progession of the teaching of handwriting is based on RWI, Handwriting Stages; see additional guidance for examples of each step for foundation stage and KS1.

n.b. As we seek to move towards consistency across the school in the school year 2023-24, there will be a greater focus on Handwriting and presentation including intervention as we work to address ingrained habits.

Year R learn the letters in print and then Year 1 are teaching the lead out lines such as adding the loop to a 'y' and a 'g'. It is important for Year R to focus on getting the formation correct in print so then it easier for Y1 to teach the lead out.

Step 1

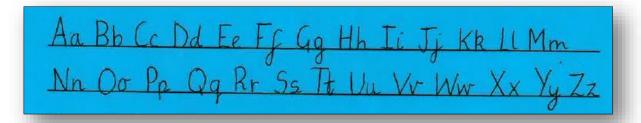
- In RWI lessons and in other learning opportunities, pupils are introduced to each letter shape through the use of a mnemonic.
- These are used to help pupils visualize the letter before the pupils begin to write it.
- The letter shape is modelled by the adult while saying the pure sound and mnemonic. Following this, the letter shape is modelled while saying the pure sound.
- Adults should model and allow children to practise letters without leading lines.
- The adult ensures, all pupils have the correct 'tripod grip' before they practise forming the letter shape with a pencil. This should initially be on plain paper until the letter shape is recognisable. Pupils should be supported to develop a strong 'mind' picture of the letter formation.
- N.b. K must be taught looped R and f as below

Step 2

- In lessons, pupils should learn how to place their letters on the line appropriately. Pupils should use wide-lines paper or books with wide lines.
- It is important that the adult now models the letter formation on the line so that they can demonstrate and explain how the letter should be placed on the line correctly Note: the size of the letters may vary from letter to letter.
- Mnemonics should continue to be used to help pupils visualize the letter.

Step 3

 Pupils should develop their letter formation by now focusing controlling the size of the letters and therefore additional lines and visual prompts.



Year 1 (Step 4)

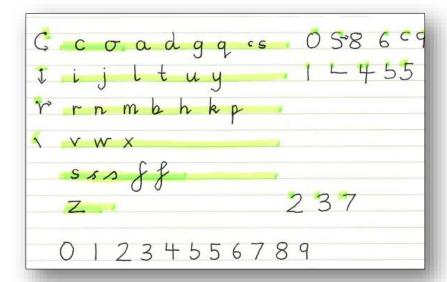
- In addition to RWI lessons, in Year 1, pupils have weekly handwriting lessons.
- In handwriting lessons, pupils will continue to develop their understanding of the different size of letters in relation to one another by practising them in letter groups rather than by letter size;
 - C family
 - o L family
 - r family
 - o x family
 - S family
 - Z family
 - Number digits

Important note:

Teachers must ensure correct directionality and formation of the family letters. Particularly o, a & d.

• Pupils practise the individual letter shape in the order listed below.

These are the families of letters and they underpin handwriting teaching across the school.



In the model above, the number digit models are placed near the closest letter family for formation purposes. All have a down or across stroke and some have both.

- In handwriting lessons, pupils are taught capital letters and the difference between capital letters and their matcher lower case letter.
- Correct terminology, such as ascenders and descenders should be used to ensure correct sizing and positioning.

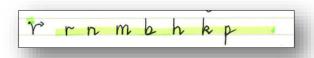
Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vr Ww Xx Yy Zz

Year 2 (Step 5)

In Year 2, pupils continue to have weekly handwriting lessons.

- In handwriting lessons, pupils will be introduced/recap the two basic joins: the arm join (diagonal) and the washing line join (horizontal).
- In lessons, adults continue to model the letter shapes using the schools adopted joined letter shapes, starting at the top with the lead out lines (individual letters), and when writing more than one letter, teachers model using the adopted joined script.
- Pupils are expected to begin to join the letters, following the introduction of the joins. Note: This may have already begun in Year 1.

Pupils should practice joining letters in words and sentences including spacing and positioning. Handwriting can be practiced at the back of the writing book and should be on the lined paper therein. Where appropriate use a highlighted to indicated the half line spacing to support children that are having difficulties sizing and/ or siting there letters.



• Introduce the flick joins out, if they have not been introduced, and focus on di and trigraphs as well as 'red words':

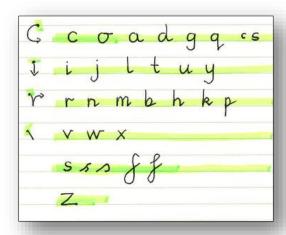
Aí ie igh ee ou ow ue night fright sight kite The was and there their

• In further handwriting lessons, it is advised that handwriting and spelling are taught alongside one another to promote this being a transferable skill. All handwriting skills should be modelled during the writing of spelling words.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 there is guidance about handwriting and presentation in the skill appendix.

- · Pupils should practice joining letters in words and sentences including spacing and positioning.
- Handwriting can be practiced at the back of the writing book and should be on the lined paper therein.
- Where appropriate use a highlighted to indicated the half line spacing to support children that
 are having difficulties sizing and/ or siting there letters.



- In KS2 it is not appropriate at class level to focus on the formation of single letters.
- In further handwriting lessons, it is advised that handwriting and spelling are taught alongside one another to promote this being a transferable skill. All handwriting skills should be modelled during the writing of spelling words.
- Spelling words are available from the list of spellings for that year group.

If adults identify pupils needing additional practise of a specific handwriting skills, teacher re-model, explain and teach as necessary.

Note: This might take the form of 1:1 practise, group or whole class practise to ensure pupils expectation of handwriting remains consistent.

When pupils achieve a neat, legible and joined script with lead in and lead outs this can be acknowledge in appropriate class and/year group celebrations including certificates.

Presentation

Once handwriting has been mastered and, indeed alongside it, there is an expectation that pupils learn how to present their work to its best. The progression of skills descriptors in the appendix detail the expectation for each year group.

Below are the descriptors from the school book monitoring proforma.

Subject	Book labelled correctly with Year group	Is the presentation of a high	Daily acknowledgement
	marked and name written clearly .Are the	standard- pupil?	of work?
	books in good order (not defaced, ripped etc)	Does H/w require addressing?	LI slip marked.
Pink & green marking.	Use of marking codes	Feedback marking	Pupils responding to
Evidenced?		On the go	feedback marking
		Legible adult H/W	
Is it impactful?			
Self / peer evaluation (yellow	Is learning embedded in further work?	Is there evidence of application of	Is work adapted where
highlight)		literacy, numeracy & ICT skills?	appropriate?
		Spelling correction/ punctuation?	
Is there sufficient quantity of	Is there evidence of assessment?	Is there clear evidence of progress	Is follow up/ action
work overtime? Is it		over time?	required?
recorded?			

Presentation will include an element of proof reading and purple-pen corrections.

Key points:

- Pupils should always try their best and ensure that writing is legible and carefully presented.
- Writing should be positioned on the line with appropriate consistency to letter shapes and positioning, including ascenders and descenders.
- No erasers- pupils should be taught to cross out neatly including, where appropriate, with a purple pen.
- Rulers should be used to underline.
- Where there are margins pupils should be taught how to use them appropriately.

When to teach

EYFS and Year 1 – taught explicitly every day and practiced through practical and fine motor activities.

Year 2 – Taught 3 times a week and practiced daily e.g. during morning tasks

KS2 – Weekly taught lesson approx. 20 minutes linked to spellings. Refer to the **additional guidance at Appendix.**

Assessment

This is an effective way of giving students the knowledge of elements of good handwriting and so enable them to make improvements in their own writing. At the end of every half term students should write a few lines or a pangram (a sentence that contains all 26 letters) e.g.

The five boxing wizards jump quickly. The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

This will also allow staff to identify successes and areas for development.

All students are expected to record an assessment sentence every half term, in the back of their books. The outcomes of the assessment pieces should inform future handwriting practice lessons and possible targets for individuals or 1;1 or small group interventions, this will be regularly monitored by the writing team and the senior leadership team.

Achievements

In Year 1, when children are writing all letters accurately, where all ascenders and descenders are consistent and sizing is accurate with capital letters being distinguished, they will achieve their perfect pencil – this should be awarded in Wizard assembly alongside a certificate of achievement.

During the final year of KS1 when children are writing all above letters accurately and joined or have been doing it consistently for a period of time with their perfect pencil, where all ascenders and descenders are consistent and sizing is accurate with capital letters being distinguished, they will achieve an award of a pen. This will give them their first perfect pen—this should be awarded in Wizard assembly alongside a certificate of achievement.

In KS2 children are encouraged to take a pride in their presentation. If you feel a child is showing success in their handwriting then please send them to a Senior Leader for acknowledgement and feedback to celebrate consistently high quality presentation.

The aim is for all children to achieve success in their handwriting and be writing at a consistently high standard in black ink as they progress through to KS2. Where there are concerns in a child's progress in their handwriting practice please seek advice from the writing team or a member of the SEND team.

Appendix 1: Progression Transcription- Spelling and Handwriting

Text in blue boxes forms the non-negotiable assessment criteria for this Year group that teachers will be making a termly judgement on in the writing Ready to Progress criteria in Otrack.

Reception and KS1

YR Transcription

YR Handwriting

Tweezers and FMS opportunities

Independently makes marks and understand that these symbols represent writing and can be read back. Across the setting.

Introduce: Finger spaces

Introduce letter formation and h/w part of RWI sessions see Unit 4.5 H/ W Introduce RWI handwriting posture:

- -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

Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are formed correctly.

To use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are formed correctly

Y1 Handwriting/ Presentation Y1 Writing assessment criteria:

Form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.

Form capital letters and digits 0-9.

Separate words with spaces.

- 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 and simple appropriate maths symbols and notation.

-Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

Writes with letters sitting on the line, edge to edge with increasing consistency in size, shape and formation.

Will only select sharp pencil to write with.

No erasers- errors crossed out with single line- no scribbles.

Sticks in own LI slips and sheets.

Writes short date.

Taught how to use a ruler.

Ensures key vocabulary is corrected with purple pen if it is indicated that there is an error spelling key vocab or red word- uses a purple pen.

Evidence of pride in presentation, including drawing.

National Curriculum Expectations-

- To sit correctly at a table, feet flat on the floor, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.
- To begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- To form capital letters
- To form digits 0-9
- To understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

Y2 Handwriting/ Presentation

Y2 Writing assessment criteria:

WTS: Form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place

WTS: Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another in some of their writing.

WTS: Use spacing between words.

EXS: Form capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters.

EXS: Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

GDS: Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join some letters.

- 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.

Always uses ruler where appropriate and takes care to take pride in writing.

Black pens are introduced for writing during Year 2.

National Curriculum Expectations-

- To be able to form individual letters correctly, so establishing good handwriting habits from the beginning.
- To revise and practise correct letter formation frequently.
- To write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

By the end of Year 2 all children will be writing in pen.

Transcription- Handwriting and presentation- Lower Key Stage 2

Y3 Handwriting

Handwriting- Use joined up writing consistently and independently.

In Year 3 the majority of pupils will:

- continue to use joined handwriting throughout their independent writing
 - develop writing fluency, speed and stamina
 - produce writing that sit appropriately on the line.

Begin to use joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. 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 [for example, by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

National Curriculum-

- 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
- > To increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting

All children using narrow-lined books with, where appropriate margins.

Y4 Handwriting

Handwriting- Use joined up writing consistently, independently and fluently.

In Year 4 the majority of pupils will:

- use joined script
- write ascenders and descenders in the correct place and on the lines.
 - have automaticity (e.g. not having to think about formation)

Use a joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. 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 [for example, by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

National Curriculum-

- > 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
- > To increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting

Transcription- Handwriting and presentation- Upper Key Stage 2

Year Five and Six

In Year 5 and 6 the majority of pupils will:

- use a consistent size and spacing
- write with a joined, legible, accurate style
- have an awareness of the following three speeds of writing:
 - 1. Speed one: slower, neat writing for letters and presentation.
 - 2. Speed two: Fast and legible everyday writing that others can read. (This is the style that is used most regularly).
 - 3. Speed three: Very fast note writing not very tidy but can be read by the writer.
- Pupils choose the writing implement that is best suited for the task

(e.g. a pencil for quick notes, a pen for letter.)

Y5 Handwriting	
Maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed.	
Use a consistent joined handwriting style throughout their independent writing. Choose which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters. Choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task.	National Curriculum- To write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.
Y6 Handwriting	
WTS: Write legibly. EXS: Maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed.	
Use a consistent and fluent handwriting style with greater speed throughout their independent writing. Choose which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters. Choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task.	National Curriculum- To write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.