Cuckney C of E Primary School
Handwriting Policy

Dream, Believe, Achieve

'Nothing will be impossible with God' Luke 1:37

Name of Publication	**Handwriting Policy**
Date of Issue	**September 2026**
Author	**Headteacher**
Responsibility for review	**Headteacher**
Copies of documents are kept	**In the Head Teacher's policy folder**
Review date	**September 2027**

Signed:

L C Crossland

L C Crossland
Head teacher

M Lovell

Margaret Lovell
Chair of Governors

The rational - Why do we teach Handwriting?

Teaching handwriting explicitly, systematically and progressively in line with the DfE Writing Framework, enables learners to acquire the automaticity in transcription necessary for effective written communication.

Teaching Handwriting from the beginning of reception facilitates the successful development of handwriting and physical skills. This frees up pupils' working memory, allowing them to focus on the composition of their ideas.

Cuckney C of E Primary School strives for all pupils to achieve a legible, consistent and fluent handwriting style, enabling them to express their knowledge and understanding confidently across the entire curriculum. This includes establishing consistent 'ready to write' routines and providing appropriate resources to support every learner's development.

Our Aims

- To establish a whole-school, systematic and progressive approach to teaching handwriting.
- To ensure learners develop the physical skills needed to achieve a comfortable, efficient and correct pencil grip.
- To ensure learners can form letters correctly and consistently, leading to clear legibility.
- To progress from discrete letter formation to a fluent, joined and automatic handwriting style.
- To enable learners to write at an appropriate speed for their age, freeing up their cognitive load for composition.
- To foster pride in the presentation of written work across all subjects.

What is handwriting?

Handwriting is a fundamental method of communication where learners control a writing instrument, typically a pen or pencil, to form letters, words and sentences. Being able to write clearly and legibly is a crucial skill that forms the foundation not only for a learner's education but also their journey through life.

Following a systematic and progressive handwriting approach from the beginning of reception ensures the physical act of forming letters becomes

increasingly automatic, a vital step in freeing up a learner's cognitive resources so they can focus on the composition of their ideas rather than the mechanics of writing.

Key aspects of handwriting include:

Formation: How individual letters and characters are shaped.

Legibility: How clear and readable the writing is to others.

Consistency: The uniformity of letter size and spacing.

Fluency: The smoothness and ease with which one writes, often related to speed.

Style: This can vary from printed letters to joined handwriting. Within print and joined styles, each learner develops a unique personal hand.

While modern technology offers many alternatives for written communication, handwriting remains an important skill for cognitive development, note-taking and various daily tasks.

How we deliver handwriting –

Our school uses the Twinkl Handwriting Scheme. The scheme has been developed by experts in handwriting, inclusion and English teaching and learning. It draws on key subject principles and enables us to deliver explicit handwriting instruction, using a range of teaching strategies to embed writing fluency skills.

Each lesson follows a 5-part teaching pattern:



Learners get ready to write by completing a gross and/or fine motor warm-up activity.

Teach

Letter formations are introduced through direct, explicit instruction that uses letter formation mnemonics and letter family characters. Videos can be used to demonstrate correct letter formation.

Practise

Each Lesson Presentation offers opportunities to model formations, strokes and joins. Learners are then encouraged to join in and practise these.

Apply

Learners apply their newly taught knowledge and understanding to complete a variety of independent writing tasks.

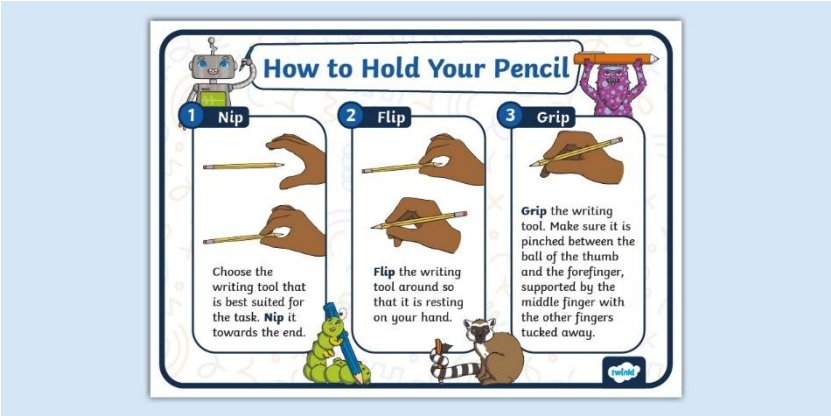
Assess

Each learner is closely observed and given high-quality feedback, with side-by-side modelling where appropriate.

Physical Skills

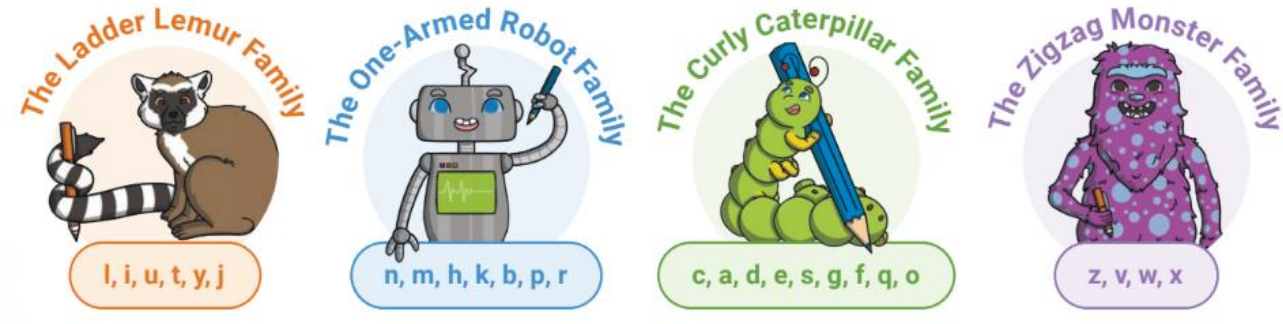
Cuckney C of E Primary school understands the importance of physical skills in the successful handwriting journey.

Physical skills for writing, including both gross and fine motor skills, will be taught explicitly within handwriting sessions. Each Twinkl Handwriting Scheme session will incorporate engaging warm-up exercises, video demonstrations and clear infographics to help learners develop strong foundations in their physical skills.



Letter Families

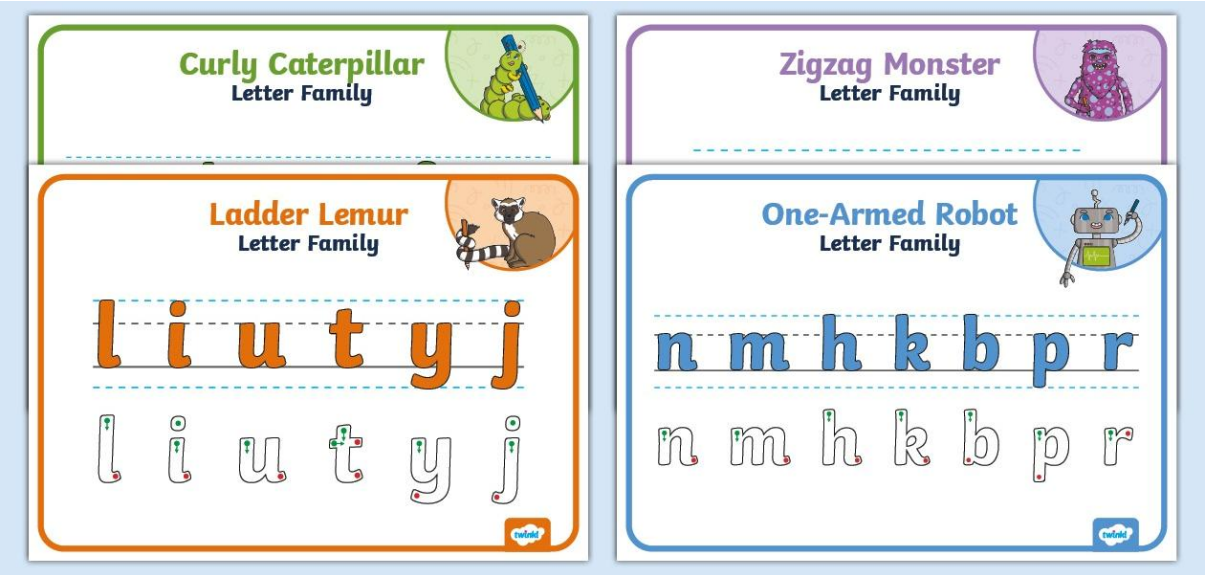
Letters are taught in a sequence according to the directional stroke required to form them. Each letter family is represented by a memorable character, which guides learners on their writing journey.



Embedding Letter Formation and Building Fluency

To establish strong foundations in print letter formations, learners are taught to use letter formation mnemonics to form letters correctly and confidently. As learners progress through the Twinkl Handwriting Scheme, they are taught to use horizontal and diagonal joining strokes to join letters within words. They continue to develop this skill, increasing fluency, consistency and speed in their writing.

Building on this, learners will deepen their mastery of handwriting by applying their handwriting skills across a range of contexts and purposes. They will take ownership of their written presentation and be encouraged to reflect on their handwriting as part of their independent learning.



Progression -

Using the Twinkl Handwriting Scheme, learners take a step-by-step journey from developing fine motor skills and mastering letter formation to joining letters with horizontal and diagonal strokes and writing fluently and legibly with speed, accuracy and confidence.

Early Handwriting

Within Early Handwriting, learners develop pre-writing skills, letter formation and the physical foundations needed for writing. Learners are encouraged to develop curiosity and purpose in making marks, exploring pre-writing shapes and forming letters through storytelling, songs, rhymes, play-based activities and purposeful writing.

Learners will:

- build a sense of curiosity, motivation and purpose around making marks and pre-writing strokes;
- develop gross motor skills and the foundational fine motor skills needed for writing;
- develop an awareness of directional vocabulary and use it to communicate about strokes, shapes and letters;
- manipulate a range of small tools and writing implements;
- be introduced to each letter family character and formation strokes through song verses;
- Nip, Flip and Grip a pencil to begin to develop a comfortable and successful pencil grip;
- use a range of writing implements to create horizontal, vertical, diagonal and circular strokes;
- identify each letter family and the letters that belong to each family;
- form letters using green and red dots and letter formation mnemonics for support.

Step 1: Getting Ready to Write

In Step 1, learners develop the foundational physical skills needed for writing and learn how to form letters correctly using mnemonics.

They will learn:

- to develop fine motor skills, ready for writing through warm-ups;
- to Nip, Grip, and Flip a pencil to hold it correctly;
- to prepare for writing by sitting correctly and recognising when they are ready to write;
- to identify each letter family and understand how letters are formed in similar ways;
- to form lower-case letters, upper-case letters and digits 0–9 correctly
- to use letter formation mnemonics to form letters correctly;
- to use green arrows and red dots to start and finish letter formations in the correct place.

Step 2: Mastering Letter Formation and Spacing

In Step 2, learners focus on the correct pencil grip and letter sizing, ensuring accurate placement and spacing of words.

They will learn:

- to hold a pencil correctly and comfortably and place letters correctly on the line;
- to form lower-case letters, upper-case letters and digits 0–9 with the correct size and position;
- to ensure lower-case letters are sized correctly in relation to each other and to upper-case letters;
- to add spaces between words that match the size of the letters;

- to recall each letter family and understand how letters are formed in similar ways.

Step 3: Introduction to Joined Handwriting

In Step 3, learners are introduced to joined handwriting as a way to build writing fluency. They will develop an understanding of how to use diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters.

They will learn:

- to recognise letters that can be joined using lead-out strokes and how this can help them to write with increasing speed;
- to write letters and words in a clear and legible way, maintaining accurate letter formation as joining is introduced;
- to use diagonal strokes and horizontal strokes to join letters;
- to identify which letters should be joined together and which should be left unjoined;
- to think about the size and orientation of letters when writing.

Step 4: Developing Clarity and Consistency in Joined Writing

In Step 4, learners build on their joined handwriting skills by focusing on clarity, consistency and quality through confident use of joining strokes.

They will learn:

- to write letters and words clearly and legibly, maintaining accurate letter formation as joining becomes more consistent;
- to use diagonal and horizontal strokes confidently to join letters in independent writing;
- to improve the clarity of their handwriting by ensuring the downstrokes of letters are parallel and evenly spaced;

- to space lines successfully so that ascending and descending letters do not touch;
- to suggest ways to improve their handwriting by recalling prior knowledge of letter formation, letter families and accurate ways to join.

Step 5: Applying Handwriting Skills in Context

In Step 5, learners begin to apply their knowledge of letter formation and joined handwriting in a variety of writing contexts.

They will learn:

- to write legibly and fluently with increasing speed;
- to confidently identify which letters should be joined and unjoined;
- to choose suitable writing implements for handwriting tasks;
- to develop a clear understanding of which handwriting standard is appropriate for a particular task. For example, using quick notes or a final handwritten version;
- to use their handwriting skills across the curriculum and maintain consistent handwriting in longer written tasks.

Step 6: Mastering Handwriting for Confident Communication

In Step 6, learners deepen their mastery of handwriting and become confident written communicators. They will apply their knowledge, developed across the scheme, to write for a variety of purposes.

They will learn:

- to write legibly, fluently and at an increased speed across a variety of genres and contexts;
- to develop the stamina to maintain handwriting quality over longer texts, using consistent joining strokes;

- to take ownership over their handwriting by selecting and recommending appropriate writing styles and presentation methods for different formats;
- to improve note-taking skills;

Inclusion and Intervention –

When Will We Make Adaptations to Handwriting Teaching and Learning?

Cuckney C of E primary School recognises that every learner is unique and develops handwriting skills at different rates.

To ensure learners successfully access the handwriting scheme and learning, we will make adaptations if learners:

- are meeting the learning demands but handwriting is the barrier;
- are exceeding the learning demands and require a challenge;
- are experiencing pain, fatigue or frustration during writing;
- write slowly, which limits how much they can produce;
- show inconsistent letter formation despite consistent teaching and practice;
- struggle with posture, paper positioning or grip that doesn't improve with reminders.

What Adaptations to Handwriting Teaching and Learning Look Like

Cuckney C of E Primary School ensures learners access Twinkl Handwriting Scheme steps at the correct learning level and ability, enabling them to build knowledge, skill and understanding to master handwriting.

Support –

Using the Twinkl Handwriting Scheme, we will follow a structured approach, ensuring learners receive the guidance and scaffolding needed to develop handwriting fluency and confidence.

This could be achieved through:

- the use of teaching tips;
- wide lined pages within Step 1;
- modelling and co-writing;
- activities that further develop physical strength and fine motor skills;
- large scale practice;
- securing comprehensions of positional and directional language;
- explicit, clear teaching instructions;
- supportive lesson structures;
- consolidation activities;
- skills development activities;
- early handwriting activity adaptations.

Extend -

Using the Twinkl Handwriting Scheme, we will select activities that challenge learners and provide support to help them develop mastery in handwriting.

This could be achieved through:

- the extended activities included in the Early Handwriting Lessons;
- independent writing activities for a range of tasks and genres;
- the option of joined activities within Step 2 for those ready to begin using joining strokes;
- the use of teaching tips included in lesson plans.

How We Support Left-Handed Learners

Using the Twinkl Handwriting Scheme, Cuckney C of E Primary School provides left-handed alternative resources. This allows left-handed learners to access materials in a way that suits their natural writing orientation and supports comfort, accuracy and fluency. Ensuring each learner is given the same opportunities for success.

How We Assess Handwriting

At Cuckney C of E Primary School, we use regular assessments to help understand a learner's skills and knowledge, identify areas for improvement and adapt teaching to support success.

Using the Twinkl Handwriting Scheme, we provide learners with immediate, individualised feedback in handwriting sessions. For summative assessments, we use the Twinkl Handwriting Scheme Assessments at the end of each teaching block.

The assessments used in handwriting are:

- assessment packs that include a Handwriting Progression Statements Tracker with a baseline and block assessments;
- Letter and Number Writing Trackers organised by letter family groups;
- self-assessment record sheets, used within Steps 5 and 6, encourage learners to reflect on their learning, track their progress and build self-assessment skills.

Creating Positive Learning Environments and Celebrating Success

Using the Twinkl Handwriting Scheme Step Certificates Cuckney C of E Primary School encourages learners to reflect on and celebrate the progress they achieve, enabling them to develop confidence and pride in their handwriting achievements.

Reviewing this Policy:

This policy was written September 2026. It will be reviewed annually. Its implementation is seen as the responsibility of all staff. Its use and effectiveness will be supported and monitored by the phonics / English subject leader, on behalf of the head teacher and governors.