



**KIMBOLTON ST JAMES' C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL
& ORLETON C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

HANDWRITING POLICY

Date signed off by Full Governing Body: 7th July 2026

Our vision is rooted in 1 Corinthians 16:13-14: 'Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.'

At Kimbolton and Orleton Primary Schools, we place a high value on the teaching and development of handwriting as an essential element of literacy. We believe that every child should be supported to develop a fluent, legible and efficient handwriting style that enables them to communicate their ideas confidently and successfully.

We recognise that handwriting is a foundational skill which underpins effective written communication. The development of secure transcription skills, including handwriting and spelling, allows children to focus their cognitive energy on the composition of writing, vocabulary choices and the expression of ideas. Through high-quality teaching, consistent expectations and regular practice, pupils develop automaticity and confidence in handwriting, supporting achievement across the curriculum.

Our approach reflects the principles of the **Early Years Strong Foundations guidance**, the **DfE Writing Framework**, and the expectations of the **National Curriculum**, recognising that strong early motor development, language development and explicit teaching are vital to later success in writing.

Intent

At Kimbolton and Orleton, we aim to provide a consistent, progressive and inclusive approach to handwriting that enables all children to:

- Develop correct letter formation and orientation from the earliest stages of writing.
- Build the fine motor control, strength and coordination necessary for successful writing.
- Develop a fluent, joined handwriting style.
- Write with increasing speed, accuracy and automaticity.
- Present their work neatly and take pride in their achievements.
- Develop the transcription skills required to become confident and successful writers.
- Apply high standards of handwriting across the curriculum.
- Develop lifelong habits that support effective communication.

We recognise that handwriting is not a naturally acquired skill and therefore requires explicit teaching, modelling, practice and feedback throughout a child's primary education.

Our Handwriting Principles

Our handwriting curriculum is built upon the following principles:

Strong Foundations

Children's success in handwriting begins with the development of gross motor skills, fine motor control, core strength, posture and pencil grip. Opportunities to develop these skills are planned from the Early Years onwards.

Explicit Teaching

Handwriting is taught directly through modelling, guided practice and regular opportunities for independent application. Teachers demonstrate correct letter formation and joins so that children can clearly see the movements required.

Consistency

A whole-school approach ensures common expectations, language and progression across all year groups through the use of the **Nelson Handwriting Scheme**.

Practice and Automaticity

Frequent practice helps children develop fluent and automatic handwriting, enabling them to focus on spelling, grammar, vocabulary and composition.

High Expectations

High standards of handwriting and presentation are expected in all subjects and across all areas of learning.

Teaching and organisation

We seek to fulfil the handwriting requirements of the National Curriculum 2014 for Primary and EYFS Curriculum. At Kimbolton and Orleton we use the Nelson Handwriting Scheme throughout school, ensuring there is continuity and progression across classes.

Aims

Our handwriting curriculum aims to ensure that children:

- Write with a fluent, legible and increasingly automatic handwriting style.
- Develop confidence and pride in their written work.
- Form letters accurately and consistently.
- Understand and apply appropriate joins.
- Improve the speed and efficiency of their writing.
- Use handwriting to support spelling development and reduce letter reversals.
- Develop resilience and positive attitudes towards improving their handwriting.
- Transfer handwriting skills into all areas of the curriculum.

Curriculum implementation

Teaching and organisation

Handwriting is taught progressively from EYFS to Year 6 using the Nelson Handwriting Scheme, ensuring continuity and progression throughout the school.

Teaching includes:

- Direct teacher modelling.
- Explicit instruction in letter formation and joins.
- Guided practice.
- Independent application.
- Regular opportunities for repetition and consolidation.
- Immediate feedback and correction where required.
- Ongoing assessment of pupil progress.

Handwriting is taught through discrete lessons and reinforced across all curriculum areas. Children are expected to apply taught handwriting skills whenever they write.

Teachers closely monitor letter formation, grip, posture and presentation, providing support where necessary. Children demonstrating consistently high standards of handwriting and presentation may be awarded a Pen Licence, recognising their achievement and encouraging pride in their work.

Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, strong foundations for writing are prioritised through the development of communication and language, physical development and early literacy skills. We recognise that before children can

become successful writers, they must develop the physical skills, coordination and control required for accurate letter formation.

Children are provided with a rich range of activities to develop:

- Gross motor control
- Fine motor strength and dexterity
- Hand-eye coordination
- Core strength and posture
- Pencil control
- Mark making
- Early letter formation

Activities may include:

- Dough Disco
- Funky Fingers activities
- Large-scale mark making
- Painting and drawing
- Threading and peg activities
- Construction and malleable materials
- Sand, sensory and outdoor writing opportunities
- Pattern making and tracing activities
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Writing opportunities are embedded throughout continuous provision so that children understand the purpose and value of writing in meaningful contexts.

Letter Formation

Children are taught letter formation through the Read Write Inc. (RWI) Phonics Programme. The RWI mnemonics and formation rhymes are used consistently to teach correct letter formation from the outset. Teachers explicitly model correct letter formation, starting points and directionality, ensuring that children develop accurate habits from the beginning of their writing journey.

Letter formation is taught alongside daily phonics sessions to ensure that children make strong links between phonemes, graphemes and the physical process of writing. Staff provide immediate feedback and intervention where incorrect formation occurs to prevent misconceptions becoming embedded.

Children are supported to develop an effective pencil grip and are given frequent opportunities to practise letter formation through both adult-led and child-initiated activities.

By the end of Reception, children will be supported to:

- Hold a pencil effectively for writing.
- Form recognisable letters correctly using the RWI formation phrases.
- Write letters using the correct starting and finishing points.
- Develop increasing control, accuracy and fluency in letter formation.
- Apply their letter formation skills independently in purposeful writing activities.

These strong foundations prepare children for the transition to Nelson Handwriting and the development of joined handwriting as they move through Key Stage 1 and beyond.

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

In Key Stage 1, handwriting is taught explicitly and practised regularly through both discrete lessons and daily writing opportunities.

Children are taught to:

- Sit correctly at a table.
- Hold a pencil comfortably and effectively.
- Form lower-case and capital letters correctly.
- Form digits accurately.
- Develop consistent letter size and orientation.
- Understand letter families.
- Develop appropriate spacing between words.
- Begin joining letters when ready.

Handwriting skills are reinforced through phonics, spelling and English lessons, helping children develop increasing automaticity and confidence.

By the end of Year 2, children are encouraged to use joined handwriting consistently across their work.

Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6)

In Key Stage 2, children continue to develop fluency, consistency and speed in their handwriting.

Teaching focuses on:

- Securing joins accurately and consistently.
- Improving legibility and presentation.
- Developing writing stamina.
- Increasing writing speed without compromising quality.
- Making appropriate choices about handwriting style and presentation.

Regular handwriting practice continues alongside English, spelling and wider curriculum writing.

Children are expected to apply their handwriting skills consistently across all subjects and take increasing responsibility for the quality and presentation of their work.

Progression in Handwriting

EYFS

Children will:

- Develop gross and fine motor control.
- Strengthen hand muscles and coordination.
- Explore a range of mark-making experiences.
- Learn correct pencil grip.
- Begin forming letters correctly.
- Develop control when creating lines, patterns and shapes.
- Observe and imitate adults writing for purpose.

By the end of Reception, children will be introduced to:

- Effective pencil grip.
- Correct starting and finishing points for letters.
- Controlled letter formation.
- Pattern-making and pre-joining movements.

Year 1

Children will:

- Sit correctly and hold a pencil effectively.
- Form lower-case letters accurately.
- Form capital letters correctly.
- Form digits 0–9 correctly.
- Understand handwriting families and letter groups.

Year 2

Children will:

- 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

Years 3 - 4

Children will:

- secure joined handwriting
- Improve consistency in size and orientation.
- Increase legibility and presentation.
- Ensure ascenders and descenders are clear and appropriately spaced.
- Develop greater fluency and stamina

Years 5 - 6

Children will:

- Write fluently, legibly and efficiently.
- Adapt handwriting to suit different purposes.
- Make effective choices regarding handwriting style.
- Select appropriate writing implements.
- Produce sustained writing at speed whilst maintaining quality and presentation.

Presentation expectations

Children are encouraged to take pride in all aspects of presentation.

Across the school, pupils are expected to:

- Form letters correctly.
- Use consistent handwriting.
- Date and title work appropriately.
- Use lines effectively.
- Present work neatly and carefully.
- Apply handwriting expectations across all subjects.
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Teachers consistently reinforce these expectations so that high standards become habitual.

Inclusion

At Kimbolton and Orleton, we are committed to ensuring that all children can succeed.

Where pupils experience difficulties with handwriting, additional support may include:

- Adapted resources.
- Fine motor interventions.
- Additional practice opportunities.
- Specialist equipment such as pencil grips.
- Individual or small-group support.
- Advice from the SENDCo and external professionals where appropriate.
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Children with SEND and those with higher levels of attainment are supported and challenged appropriately to ensure continued progress.

Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation

Handwriting is monitored through:

- Ongoing teacher assessment.
- Work scrutiny.
- Lesson observations.
- Pupil discussions.
- Review of handwriting progression across year groups.
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Leaders monitor the quality of handwriting provision to ensure consistency, progression and high expectations throughout the school.

Monitoring outcomes are used to:

- Celebrate strengths.
- Identify areas for development.
- Inform professional development.
- Further improve outcomes for all pupils.

Subject Leadership

The English Subject Leader, supported by the Senior Leadership Team, is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the quality of handwriting teaching and learning across the school.

This includes:

- Monitoring standards and progression.
- Supporting staff development.
- Ensuring consistency of approach.
- Reviewing resources.
- Evaluating pupil outcomes.
- Keeping up to date with national guidance and research.

Through effective leadership and a shared commitment to high standards, we aim to ensure that every child leaves Kimbolton and Orleton Primary Schools with the handwriting skills needed to communicate confidently, effectively and successfully in the next stage of their education and beyond.