



Belvedere Infant and Junior School

Handwriting Policy



Intent

It is our aim to encourage the progression and development of each child's handwriting throughout the schools into a fluent, legible and individual style that can be adapted for a range of purposes and will support their spelling and composition. We want children to take pride in the presentation of their work and develop automaticity with handwriting to allow children to apply their energy into the content of their writing as opposed to the formation of the letters themselves.

Implementation

Belvedere Infant and Junior schools follow the Letterjoin handwriting scheme. As a school we recognise the benefits of the cursive handwriting style but also the need for a 'phonics first' approach to reading and the need for fidelity to our chosen systematic synthetic phonics programme. Little Wandle has its own letter formation which is supported by formation phrases. The cursive handwriting style teaches children to join with fluency. It enables them to develop a neat style with the added benefit of encouraging accurate spelling.

Fully joined cursive handwriting encourages:

- Natural movement
- Correct letter formation
- Less load on memory, aiding movement from left to right
- Clearer spacing
- Increased speed
- The development of a personal style
- Less focus on the mechanics and more on the product of writing
- Improved spelling

We have planned our handwriting progression to incorporate both the Little Wandle letter formation and the cursive handwriting style as follows:



























	To be taught	End of year expectation (impact)
Nursery	Children to be taught how to hold a pencil correctly and the correct posture for writing – see appendix 7. Fine motor skills (FMS) to be taught - see appendix 8.	All children are familiar with holding a pencil and how to do this correctly.
Reception	Children to be taught how to hold a pencil correctly and the correct posture for writing – see appendix 7. Use Letterjoin Module 1 (Print) to teach pre-handwriting patterns. Correct letter formation to be taught alongside phonics following the Little Wandle letter formation phrases (lower-case and capital letters to be taught) – see appendix 1 and 2.	By the end of Reception all children hold a pencil correctly, sit in the correct posture and form MANY lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
Year 1	Autumn term – review correct letter formation following Little Wandle – see appendix 1 and 2.	By the end of Year 1 all children form MOST letters and numbers correctly, letters are of a consistent size and children can consistently write on a line. All children hold a pencil correctly, sit in the correct posture.
Year 2	Continue to teach and model the pre-cursive style (single letters, not joining) really focusing on letter size, orientation and relationship to one another. Some select children (on track for GDS) to be taught to join some letters but only when letter sizing and formation is really secure.	Year 2 children will form capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters.
Year 3/ 4	Explicitly teach horizontal and diagonal letter joins (see appendix 4).	Year 3 children use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join MANY letters. Year 4 children use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join MOST letters.
Year 5/ 6	Explicitly teach horizontal and diagonal letter joins with a focus on increasing fluency and speed.	Year 5 children join consistently and legibly with increasing fluency and speed. In Year 6 children maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed.

Impact

Handwriting is a skill which affects written communication across the curriculum. Our aim is that children are able to write with ease, speed and legibility. By year 6 children will use cursive handwriting using flowing movements and patterns. This handwriting should be demonstrated in all writing across the curriculum. Writing should be fluid in style to allow children to apply their energy into the content of their writing as opposed to the formation of the letters themselves.

Appendix 1 - Little Wandle Letter Formation

Children should be taught to form letters using the formation phrases below:

						
Around the astronaut's helmet and down into space.	Down bear's back, up and round his big tummy.	Curl around the cat.	Round the duck's body, up to its head and down to its feet.	Around the elephant's eye and down its trunk.	Down the flamingo's neck, all the way to its foot, then across its wings.	Round the goat's face, up to his ear; down and curl under his chin.
						
Down, up and over the helicopter.	Down the iguana's body, then draw a dot (on the leaf) at the top.	All the way down the jellyfish. Dot on its head.	Down the kite, up and round, down to the corner.	All the way down the lollipop.	Down, up and over the mouse's ears, then add a flick on the nose.	Down the stick, up and over the net.
						
All around the octopus.	Down the penguin's back, up and around its head.	Round the queen's face, up to her crown, down her robe with a flick at the end. <i>qu</i> Quick, it's the queen!	From the cloud to the ground, up the arch and over the rainbow.	Under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail.	From the tiger's nose to its tail, then follow the stripe across the tiger.	Down and around the umbrella, stop at the top and down to the bottom and flick.
						
Down to the bottom of the volcano and back up to the top.	From the top of the wave to the bottom, up the wave, down the wave, then up again.	Start at the top, then across to the bottom of the box. Start at the top, then across to the bottom of the box.	Down and round the yo-yo, then follow the string round.	Zip across, zag down and across the zebra.		

Appendix 2 - Capital Letter Formation

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	From the top to the bottom and stop.
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.

Capital letter formation should be taught alongside lower-case letter formation from Reception onwards.

Appendix 3 – single letters in a cursive style (pre-cursive writing)

Letters are initially taught in the order detailed below as the letters are grouped according to the pen's route from the line:

Single letters

c, o, a, d, g, q, s

e, f

n, m, l, h, b, p, r

i, j, k, t

u, y, v, w

x, z

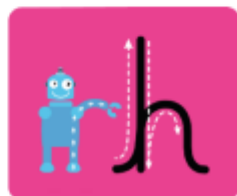
The following letter families can be used as reminders for children after the letters have been taught initially:

Long Ladder Letters



i l t u j y

One-armed Robot Letters



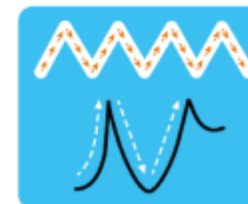
b h k m n p r

Curly Caterpillar Letters



a d c o f e s g q

Zig-zag Letters



v w x z

Appendix 4 - Letter joins

Children should be taught horizontal and diagonal joins. Children should be taught to join two letters at a time before then practicing them in the context of words and sentences.

Horizontal joins:

These letters join horizontally to the next letter:

o w o r



Practise these common horizontal joins:

wo wo ru wa oc or wn we re oe

Diagonal joins:

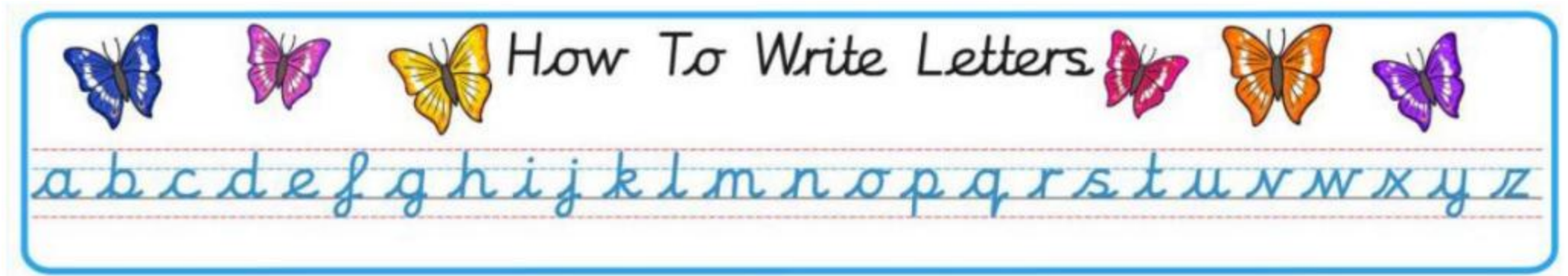
These letters join diagonally to the next letter:

a c d e h i k l m n u



Practise these common diagonal joins:

an co di ei hu im ka li ma np ui



Appendix 6 – Terminology to be used when teaching handwriting

Cursive: Joined-up handwriting style

Pre-cursive: Single letters with entry and exit strokes

Capital and lowercase: The names of capital and lowercase letters (rather than 'big and small').

Ascenders and Descenders: Letters that go above the usual letter line and below the base line

Letter bodies: The main body of letters, which are neither ascenders or descenders (e.g. the rounded parts of 'b', 'd' and 'a' and the arches of 'm' and 'n')

Entry (lead in) and exit strokes (lead out): Entry stroke starts on the line and exit strokes generally end on the line (with the exception of 'o', 'v', 'w', 'r' and 'x').

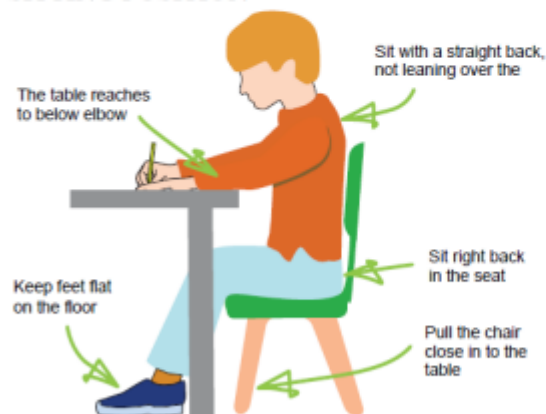
Appendix 7 – Pencil grip and posture

Children should be encouraged to use a tripod pencil grip, where the pencil is gripped between the index finger and the thumb. The middle finger is then used to support the underside of the pencil as shown below.



Children should be encouraged to adopt the correct writing position as shown below:

SITTING POSITION

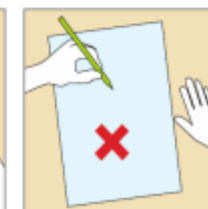
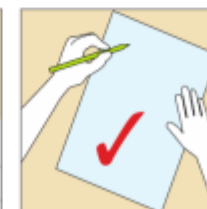
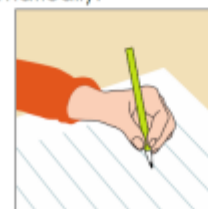


Paper position for right-handed children

Left-handed children

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow the movements of right-handed teachers as they model letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.

- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.



Paper position for left-handed children.

Fine Motor Skills (FMS)

A selection of fine motor skills activities to use before each handwriting lesson.

Finger and Hand Exercises

Here are some fun warm up exercises to wake up your fingers and hand muscles before you start to write.

Action	Description
Finger Stretches	Put the tips of your fingers together and straighten your fingers by pushing your fingertips against each other. Repeat 5 times.
Play the Piano	Touch the table with one finger at a time from each hand like you are playing the piano. Start slowly and get faster.
Fishing Hooks	Put your elbows on the table, keep your hands apart, squeeze your fingers together on each hand and point them to the sky. Now make a hook with your fingers. Hold, then straighten five times.
Fireworks	Make a fist with both hands and hold them tight. Then let your fingers go like exploding fireworks! Repeat five times.
Take a Bow	Put your elbows on the table, keep your hands apart, squeeze your fingers together on each hand and point them to the sky. Bend your fingers inwards so your fingers bow to each other. Repeat 5 times.

Pencil Activities

Practice holding your pencil correctly by using our tripod grip rhyme (see page 8).

*Point away the pencil,
Pinch it near the tip,
Lift it off the table,
Spin it round and grip.*



Action	Description
Quack, Quack Fingers	Start your warm-up by making a beak with your thumb and first finger on both hands. Make them quack twice, then do the same with your other fingers.
Roly-poly Pencil	With the palm of your hand facing upwards, lay your pencil flat across your fingers. Use your thumb to roll it backwards and forwards. Now try it with your other hand.
Crawling Caterpillar	Hold your pencil ready to write. Move the pencil through your three fingers to the top like a crawling caterpillar. When you get to the top, make your caterpillar crawl back down again!
Helicopter Twirls	Hold your pencil in the middle with your three correct fingers. Make a twirling helicopter by moving your fingers one at a time from one side of the pencil to the other.