

# Thorn Primary School

## The Teaching of Handwriting



At Thorn Primary School we are very proud of our pupil's handwriting and take particular care in our cursive handwriting style. We follow Letter-join's on-line handwriting resource and progressive lesson planners the basis of our handwriting policy as it covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum.

### **Intent**

Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum. By the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils should have the ability to produce fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy joined-up handwriting, and to understand the different forms of handwriting used for different purposes.

Our intention is to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.

### **Aims:**

- To develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style using continuous cursive letters, which leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing.
- To establish and maintain high expectations for the presentation of written work.
- For pupils to understand, by the end of Year 6, the importance of neat presentation and the need for different letterforms (cursive, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly.

### **Expectations**

All teaching staff are encouraged to model the cursive style in all their handwriting, whether on whiteboards, displays or in pupils' books.

#### *Consistency throughout the school*

Pupils should experience coherence and continuity in the learning and teaching of handwriting across all school years and be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work. Our objective is to help pupils enjoy learning and developing their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride.

### **Handwriting frequency**

Handwriting is a cross-curricular task and will be taken into consideration during all lessons. Formal teaching of handwriting will be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure Key Stage targets are met.

### **Pens and pencils**

Children will start handwriting using a soft pencil. When fine motor skills have been established a handwriting pen can be used.

## **Inclusion**

For children who experience handwriting difficulties due to fine motor development, including those who are left-handed and those with special educational needs, the appropriate additional support will be put into place through small group work and 1:1 IPP sessions. Lessons include differentiation activities for extra practice/challenge.

## **Implementation & Impact**

### **Early Years**

For our youngest pupils we teach short handwriting lessons on a daily basis, which will include the following:

- enhancing gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern-making and physical activities
- exercises to develop fine motor skills such as mark-making on paper, whiteboards, sensory trays, iPads, tablets, etc.
- becoming familiar with letter shapes, their sounds, formation and vocabulary
- correct sitting position and pencil grip for handwriting

Children are taught pre-cursive patterns and cursive, lower case letters. It starts with Getting Ready for Handwriting including fine and gross motor skills warm-up exercises, correct sitting position and tripod pencil grip. The sessions build to cover three key areas:

- pre-cursive patterns
- easy letters and words
- harder letters and words

At the end of this year, children should be able to recognise and form all the cursive, lowercase letters of the alphabet and write words using the correct joining techniques.

### **Key Stage 1: Years 1 and 2**

Teaching progresses from five short, to two - three longer lessons per week:

- continuing with gross and fine motor skills exercises
- strengthening cursive handwriting, learning and practice
- numerals, capitals and printed letters; where and when to use, learning and practice
- KS1 SATs SPaG exercises

In Year 1 learning will focus on how to write capital letters, printed letters, numbers and symbols, whilst reinforcing cursive handwriting using Letter-join's on-line and printed resources. It is divided into three sections covering:

- capital letters
- printed letters
- numbers and symbols

On leaving Year 1, children should be confident in writing all the capital and printed letters, numbers and symbols and start to become familiar with their use.

Year 2 content includes lessons to improve letter formation and orientation of letters through regular practice and to support spelling, grammar and punctuation in readiness for KS1 SATs. The sections in this module cover:

- letter families

- high frequency words
- joining techniques
- sequencing sentences
- dictation exercises
- times table facts
- SPaG practice for KS1 SATs

With the regular handwriting practice throughout this module, children should have developed fluency and speed in their writing.

## **Lower Key Stage 2: Years 3 and 4**

Handwriting lessons will continue twice a week in Lower Key Stage 2.

By Year 3, children should be using a cursive style throughout their independent writing in all subjects, helping to refine their handwriting in line with the requirements of each lesson. This module covers topics such as dictation, double letters, number vocabulary, palindromes, tongue twisters, MFL (French), onomatopoeia, simile and statutory spellings.

By the end of Year 3, children will have improved the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting through a variety of resources which link handwriting to other areas of the curriculum.

Year 4 learning focuses on using handwriting practice to support other subjects in the curriculum and, at the same time, builds on fluency and consistency. Promoting meaningful links with other subjects such as English, maths, science, geography and French. Making such links enables children to apply the skills they are learning in context and also provides depth to the curriculum.

Learners will continue to build on producing fluent, consistent and legible handwriting through the regular practice offered in this module's lessons.

On leaving Year 4, children will have practised applying size-appropriate handwriting to all areas of the curriculum whilst maintaining fluency and legibility.

## **Upper Key Stage 2: Years 5 and 6**

More advanced handwriting techniques will be taught during two weekly lessons:

- reinforcing cursive handwriting across the curriculum
- form-filling/labelling using printed and capital letters
- dictation exercises promoting quick note-taking and speedy handwriting writing skills
- KS2 SATs SPaG practice

Work in Year 5 continues to build on combining fluent handwriting with other subjects across the curriculum.

In this module, learners will have plenty of opportunity to develop the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation. With Letter-join's wide range of resources they will be able to work towards producing consistently neat and well-presented handwriting in all curriculum subjects.

At the end of Year 5, children will be producing cursive writing automatically, enabling them to focus on the content of their work rather than the process of writing.

By Year 6 children are presented with a range of tasks where they have to decide on an appropriate style of handwriting. Promoting speedy, fluent writing continues to be a strong feature. Challenging dictation exercises will refine pupils' revising and checking skills as well as boosting their handwriting speed, stamina and fluency. A range of curriculum-based activities will give pupils the opportunity to practise writing at length.

Year 6 teaching and learning also contains a series of activities to aid KS2 SATs SPaG revision. They are designed to support year 6 pupils in meeting expected standards for spelling, punctuation and grammar, with lots of SPaG preparation and plenty of handwriting practice.

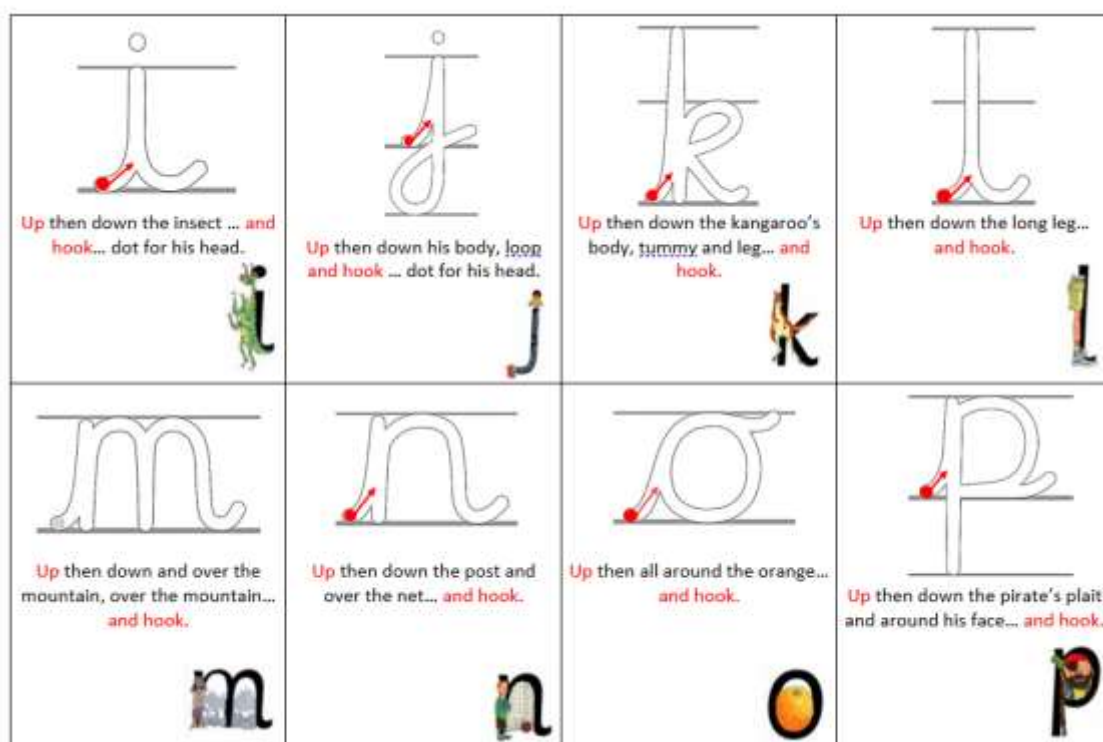
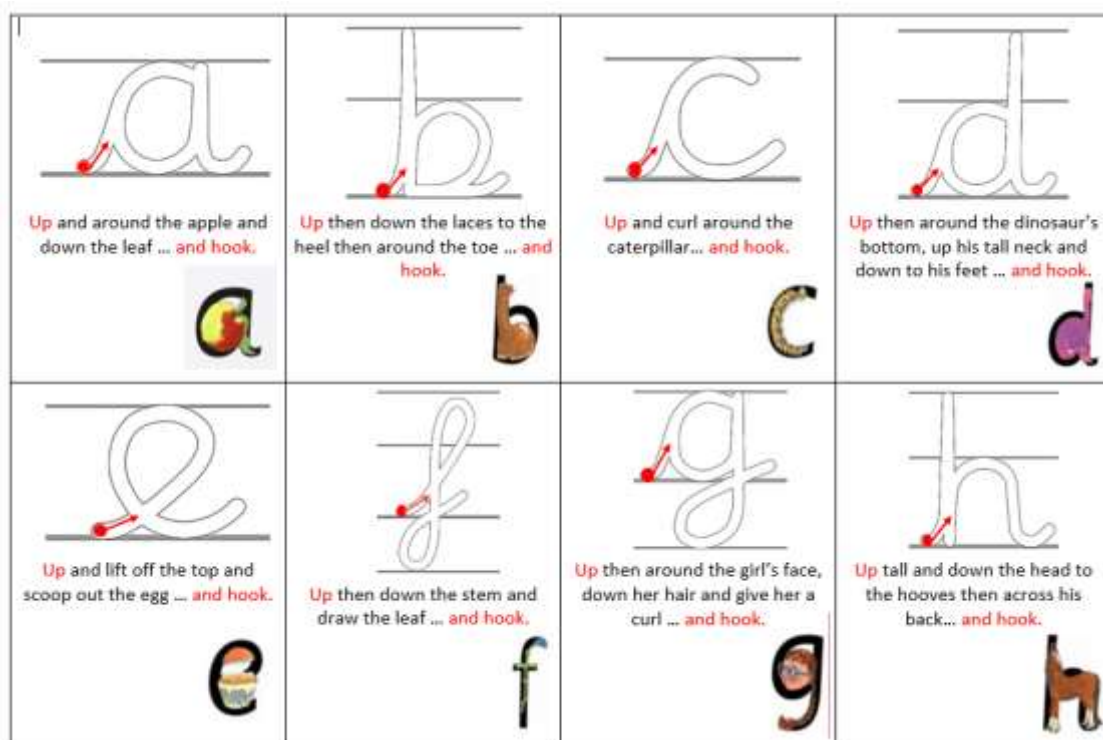
Upon leaving Thorn Primary School, children will be able to adapt their handwriting for a range of tasks and purposes and to create different effects. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes, a final handwritten version, an un-joined style or capital letters.



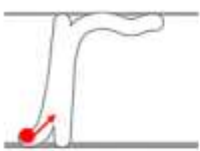







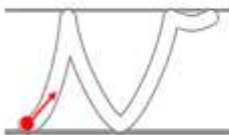









### **Thorn Primary School's agreed cursive letter style (lowercase)**

Cursive Lower Case Letters

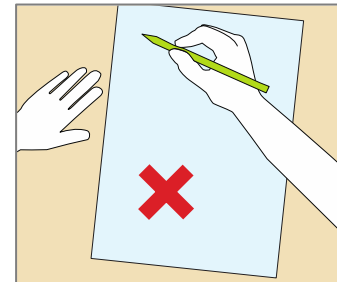
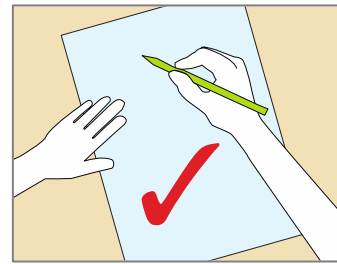
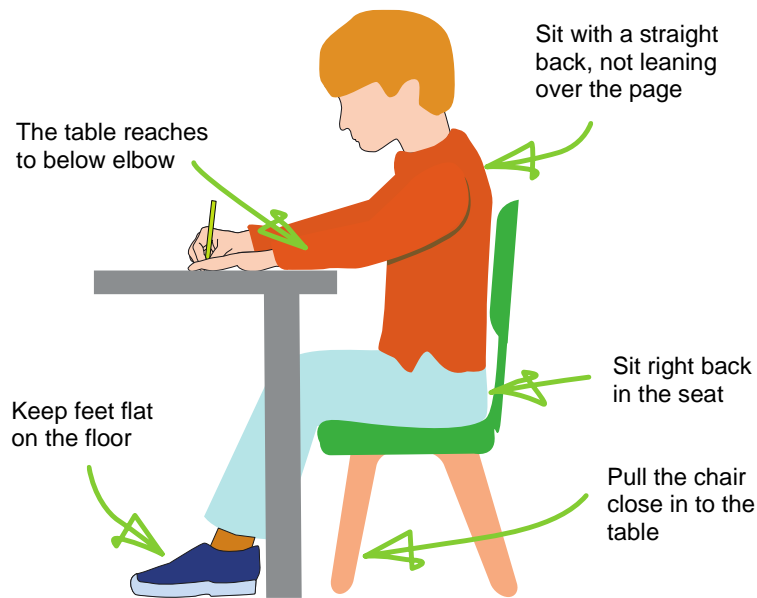


To support our children in remembering the correct formation of the lowercase letters, we use the following letter patterns from EYFS into KS1



 <p>Up and around her head, up past her earring, down her hair... and hook.</p> 	 <p>Up then down the robot's back and curl over his arm... and hook.</p> 	 <p>Up then slither down the snake... and hook.</p> 	 <p>Up then down the tower ... and hook... across the tower.</p> 
 <p>Up then down and under, up to the top... and hook.</p> 	 <p>Up then down the wing, up the wing... and hook.</p> 	 <p>Up then down, up, down, up... and hook.</p> 	 <p>Up we go... down the arm and leg, repeat the other side... and hook.</p> 
 <p>Up and down a horn, up a horn and under the head... and hook.</p> 	 <p>Up and zig, zag, zig, curl ... and hook.</p> 		

## SITTING POSITION

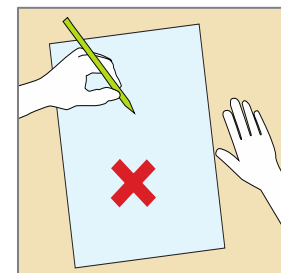
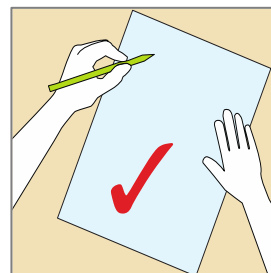
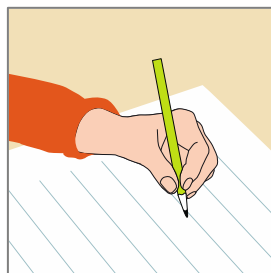
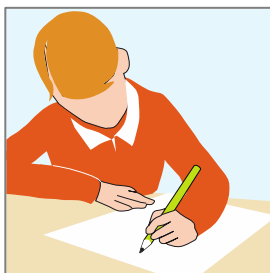


*Paper position for right-handed children.*

## 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.

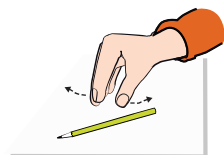


*Paper position for left-handed children.*

## The Tripod Pencil Grip

Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib. We use the Tripod Grip Rhyme:

### Right-handed pencil grip



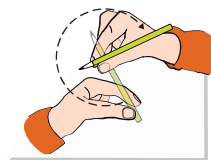
Point away the pencil,



Pinch it near the tip,



Lift it off the table,

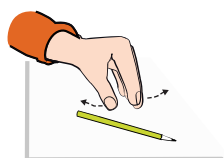


Spin it round...



and grip.

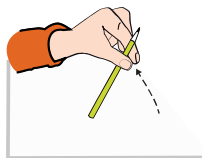
### Left-handed pencil grip



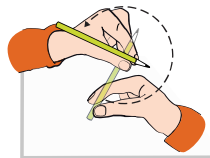
Point away the pencil,



Pinch it near the tip,



Lift it off the table,



Spin it round...



and grip.