



BROADWATER
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rectory Gardens
Worthing
West Sussex
BN14 7TQ

TEL 01903 235389
FAX 01903 215047
EMAIL office@broadwaterce.org

Headteacher: Mr Aaron Morrissey

www.broadwater.w-sussex.sch.uk

Handwriting Policy 2024-2028

Turn your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding (Proverbs 2:2)

Broadwater is a Christian School. We will enable children to become wise, confident, successful learners with the motivation, skills and responsibility to make a positive difference in God's world. Our vision is underpinned by the values we live by.

The Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Galatians 5:22

It is this fruit that, in partnership with parents, we will instil in the children of our school.

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Intent

We believe that children should be *taught* to develop a neat, legible script through regular handwriting lessons from Reception to Year 6. It is our aim to provide a balanced and continuous teaching programme for handwriting, based on the Ruth Miskin Scheme, to enable the children to develop a neat, cursive handwriting style. Some children may be ready to learn to join in Early Years. For the majority of children, this will be in Year 1 or 2.

Formal handwriting lessons should identify:

- What is being taught (e.g. single letters, upstrokes, joins)
- The taught element (e.g. how to join, how to space words, how to size letters)
- Opportunities for the children to practise what they have been taught.

National Curriculum requirements:

Year 1

Pupils should be taught to:

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

Year 2

- 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.

Lower Key Stage 2

Pupils should be taught 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 un-joined
- 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 the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].

Upper Key Stage 2

Pupils should be taught 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.

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Implementation

We believe in the use of a multi-sensory approach to teaching and reinforcing handwriting when appropriate for groups or individuals. Such techniques may be used from Reception through to Year 6 as needed: (e.g. feely letters – plasticine, sandpaper etc. writing in the sand tray, writing on chalk boards, using wipe clean boards, tracing the letters in the air or on a child’s back, using large paper and felt pens/paints).

Agreed Teaching Style

- Staff use the agreed Ruth Miskin patter when teaching children how to form letters. (*The letter t and f are written slightly differently to the RM grapheme – see below for further information*)
- Handwriting will be practised regularly, but may be done through structured play activities, as well as the multi-sensory approach and formal lessons.
- Letter formation is taught using exit strokes only.
- Lower and upper-case letters are reinforced.
- Introduce capital letters alongside lower case letters where developmentally appropriate.
- Cursive joins are taught when letter formation is accurate and correct. This should be developmentally appropriate. (For most children joined handwriting lessons will start in Summer Term, Year One.) **No Patter used.**
- Practise single letters (lower case) then 2 or 3 letters (joined).
- Begin using and practising the four basic handwriting joins.
- Capital letters do not join, they stand alone.
- The letters ‘f’ and ‘t’ are three quarters the height of other ascending and descending letters. (See example in additional guidance.)

Teaching Handwriting in Early Years/Key Stage 1:

- Handwriting activities will be formal and informal. There is an expectation that formal handwriting should be taught more than twice a week. Other opportunities for handwriting practise may occur during personalised learning sessions, phonics, spelling patterns of week. There should be a focus on multi-sensory experiences in Early Years and Key Stage One.
- Before the children begin, teachers will refer to the following silent handwriting signals. See Appendix - silent handwriting signals
- The children are taught letters in groups of formation patterns. See Appendix - handwriting stages
- There will be opportunities to link handwriting practice to spelling patterns as appropriate.

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Teaching Handwriting in Lower Key Stage 2:

- Children will continue to practise their handwriting up to Yr6. This will be done in handwriting books.
- as a class lesson and will be practised at least weekly, in addition to this, individual children's handwriting needs will be addressed in personalised learning.
- Reinforcement of letter formation (upper and lower case).
- Reinforcement of letter groups, words, joins, handwriting patterns, letter strings.
- Use back of English books or individual Handwriting books for handwriting practice.
- Introduce pens to children, when appropriate in Year 3. Children in Year 3 are given a pen licence as an incentive for them to produce consistently well joined handwriting.
- Introduce the concept of varied scripts used for different tasks (e.g. fast, legible for drafting, abbreviations for note taking and standard, neat hand for majority of written work and print for map work/annotations).

Impact

By the end of Key Stage 1:

- The expectation is that all children will be forming letters correctly and will have begun to use the cursive joined script agreed by the school.

By the end of Upper Key Stage 2:

- Pupils will write in a neat, legible cursive script and be able to adjust handwriting styles to meet the requirement of different writing contexts.

Appendix

Silent Handwriting Signal*

Once children are sitting at their tables, hold up a pencil in a pencil grip with the non – writing hand flat.

This signal indicates that children sit with their:

- feet flat on the floor
- bottom at the back of the chair
- body one fist from the table
- shoulders down and relaxed
- back leaning forward slightly
- left/right hand holding the page
- left/right hand ready in a tripod grip.

Handwriting Stage 1a: Letter formation*

Children learn correct letter formation using the same picture mnemonics they have already learnt in the Speed Sounds Set 1 lessons.

These letters are now taught in handwriting groups:

- 'Around' letters: **c a o d g q**
- 'Down' letters: **l t b p k h l j m n r u y**
- 'Curly' letters: **e f s**
- 'Zig-zag' letters: **v w z x**

*Taken from *Read Write Inc. Phonics Online*

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Vocabulary used to teach Letter Formation (Early Years only)

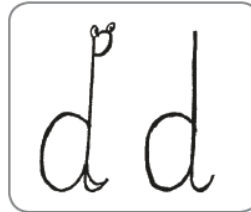
Examples taken from *Read Write Inc. Phonics Online*

'Around' letters



Checklist: caterpillar

- ✓ start at the caterpillar's head
- ✓ curl around the body



Checklist: dinosaur

- ✓ draw a big round bottom
- ✓ up the tall neck
- ✓ down the straight line to the feet
- ✓ draw a curl for the feet



Checklist: apple

- ✓ start at the stalk
- ✓ draw a nice round apple
- ✓ go back up to the stalk, then down
- ✓ curl the leaf at the bottom



Checklist: girl

- ✓ start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- ✓ draw a nice round face
- ✓ go back up to her bobble
- ✓ down her very straight hair
- ✓ draw a round curl to finish



Checklist: orange

- ✓ start at the stalk
- ✓ draw a nice round orange

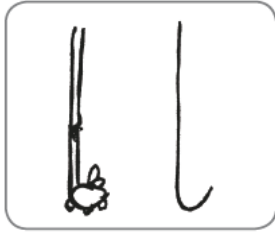


Checklist: queen

- ✓ start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- ✓ draw a nice round face
- ✓ go back up to her bobble
- ✓ down her very straight hair
- ✓ add a sharp flick to finish

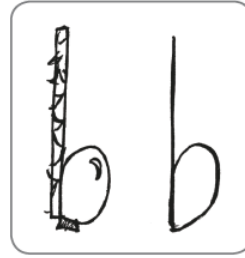
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'Down' letters



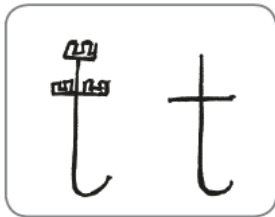
Checklist: Liam's leg

- ✓ start at the top of his leg
- ✓ go down his long leg
- ✓ add a curl for the shoe to kick the ball



Checklist: boot

- ✓ start at the top of the boot
- ✓ draw a straight line down the boot
- ✓ go round over the toe
- ✓ go back to the heel



Checklist: tower

- ✓ start at the top of the tower
- ✓ draw a straight line down the tower
- ✓ add a curl at the bottom – then lift the pencil off the page
- ✓ draw a straight line across the tower



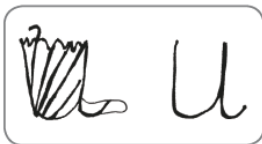
Checklist: Polly Pirate

- ✓ start at the top of her plait
- ✓ draw down her long straight plait
- ✓ go round over her face
- ✓ finish under her chin



Checklist: robot

- ✓ start at the robot's head
- ✓ go straight down its body
- ✓ go over the robot's arm – from its waist



Checklist: umbrella

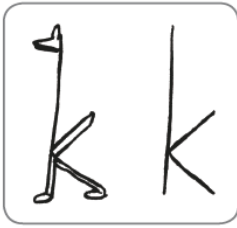
- ✓ start at the top of the handle
- ✓ draw down the straight line for the handle
- ✓ go round underneath the umbrella and back up the other side
- ✓ go down the umbrella
- ✓ add a little curl for the puddle



Checklist: yak

- ✓ start at the top of the first horn
- ✓ draw down the straight line for the first horn
- ✓ go round underneath the horns
- ✓ draw a straight line up for the second horn
- ✓ go down and curl under its head

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Checklist: kangaroo

- ✓ start at the kangaroo's head
- ✓ draw down the long straight body – then lift the pencil off the page
- ✓ draw a straight tail to the body – two-thirds of the way down
- ✓ draw a straight back leg from the body



Checklist: horse

- ✓ start at the horse's head
- ✓ draw down her long straight neck
- ✓ continue down to her feet
- ✓ go round her back
- ✓ draw a straight back leg
- ✓ add a little curl of dust as the horse runs away



Checklist: insect

- ✓ start at the top of the insect's neck
- ✓ draw down the short straight body
- ✓ draw a curl for a small round tail
- ✓ add a little dot for the head



Checklist: jack-in-a-box

- ✓ start at the top of the jack-in-a-box's neck
- ✓ draw down the long straight body
- ✓ draw a smooth curl for the legs
- ✓ add a dot for the head



Checklist: Maisie and the mountains

- ✓ start at Maisie's head
- ✓ draw a straight body for Maisie
- ✓ go over the mountains – from Maisie's waist
- ✓ check the mountains are the same height as Maisie
- ✓ add a small curl for the grass



Checklist: Nobby and his net

- ✓ start at Nobby's head
- ✓ go straight down Nobby
- ✓ go over the net – from Nobby's waist
- ✓ check the net is the same height as Nobby
- ✓ add a small curl for the grass

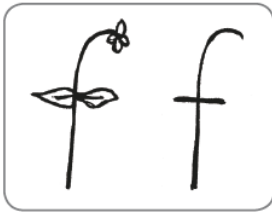
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'Curly' letters



Checklist: egg

- ✓ draw up around the shell that needs to be cut off the boiled egg
- ✓ go round underneath the egg



Checklist: flower

- ✓ start at the top of the flower
- ✓ draw around and down the flower stem – then lift the pencil off the page
- ✓ draw a straight line across the leaves



Checklist: snake

- ✓ start at the snake's head
- ✓ curl one way
- ✓ curl the other

'Zigzag' letters



Checklist: vulture

- ✓ draw two straight lines for the wings – down, up



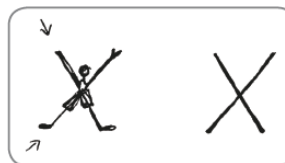
Checklist: worm

- ✓ draw four straight lines, all the same length – down, up, down, up



Checklist: zigzag

- ✓ draw three straight lines – across, diagonally back, across



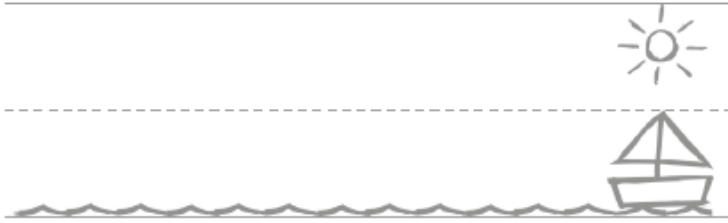
Checklist: exercise

- ✓ start at the top left
- ✓ draw one straight line diagonally down – lift the pencil off the page
- ✓ start at the bottom left
- ✓ go diagonally up

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Used in Year 1 and 2 to explain joins*:

Draw the sun, boat and water pictures in the correct position on the line.



- Show the children where to start **a** – level with the top of the boat.
- Show the children where to start **n** – level with the top of the boat.
- Show the children where to start **d** – level with the top of the boat.

Explain to the children that there are two basic joins:

- the arm join (diagonal)
- the washing line join (horizontal).

The arm join has three variations:

- arm to boat



- arm to sun

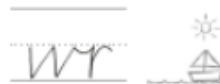


- arm to sister



The washing line join has three variations:

- washing line to boat



- washing line to sun



- washing line to sister



*Taken from *Read Write Inc. Phonics Online*

For further guidance, the full Ruth Miskin Handwriting Scheme is saved in Library Resources – handwriting.

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Examples of joined letters

- Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g.

ai ar an am un ir ie ea
ear ee ne nun man mess
je gi yi

- Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g.

ab ul it all ah ut cl pl
gl yt lk sl

- Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g.

ou ve vi wi fi fu or
ri ra

- Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g.

ol wh ot fl ft

Some examples:

was about dog goat Alice you
say castle trifle something know
joy which if said fox foxes fork
London quiz juggle

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Example of how to write the letters f and t on a line. (Year 2)

