

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Oxford Road Kidlington OX5 1EA



Tel: 01865 373 674

Email: office@stthomas-more.org.uk

Website: www.st-thomas-more.oxon.sch.uk

Handwriting Policy

Aims

- To have a consistent approach across the whole school to ensure high levels of presentation
- To have a clear progression of handwriting across the school
- To enable children to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed using a cursive joined style of handwriting throughout their independent work
- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays/resources according to the children's age and stage of development *

Implementation

Posture and Position

When children are taught handwriting, good habits of posture and position are established.

- Chair and table of appropriate height
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface
 - Sit up straight
- Feet flat on the floor
- Chair pushed in but not so far that the tummy touches the edge of the table
 - Hand not holding the pencil rests on the work keeping it stable

* As per DFE guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-teaching-materials-core-criteria-and-self-assessment/validation-of-systematic-synthetic-phonics-programmes-supporting-documentation>

At first, children should **not** be taught to join letters [\[footnote 3\]](#) or to start every letter 'on the line' with a 'lead-in', because these practices cause unnecessary difficulty for beginners. Children may be taught to join the letters in digraphs, but this is optional. (All resources designed for children to read should be in print).

Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery)

In order to perform the mechanics of writing confidently, children must develop good hand control. To this end, we promote the development of both gross and fine motor control through a variety of multi-sensory ongoing opportunities.

Through play and cross-curricular opportunities, we allow the children to pick up the writing implement themselves and decide which hand they prefer. Implements such as chunky triangular pencils, large chinks and chunky pens etc. are used by pupils to rehearse skills on paper, chalk boards, whiteboards, pavement etc. Once they are confidently using flowing movements, the children are introduced to smaller, more controlled activities such as left to right, top to bottom and anti-clockwise movements.

Reception

Children continue to develop their gross and fine motor skills through learning opportunities during the day. Children are taught to form letters when they are developmentally ready. They are taught to use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters using the formation phrases from

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>

Children are taught to form lower case letters first. A child's first major achievement is to write their name, so whilst concentrating on lower-case letters, they are taught how to form the capital letter of their name. As they master the lower-case letters, children are introduced to the remainder of the capital letters.

Spacing

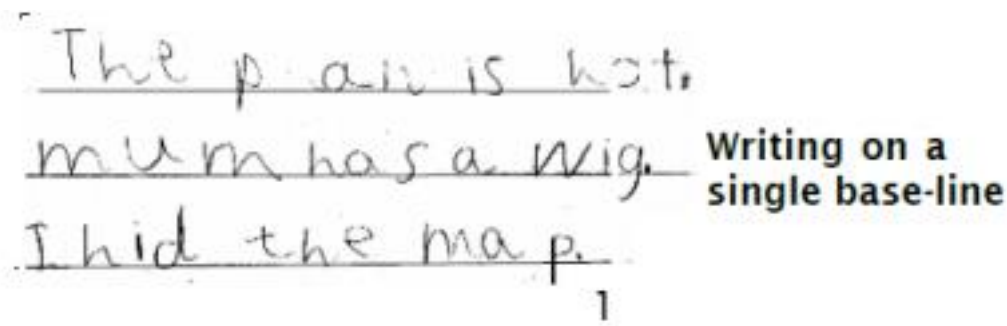
Once a child can form individual letters they are encouraged to write individual words using their Phonics skills. Children are taught to leave spaces between words.

* As per DFE guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-teaching-materials-core-criteria-and-self-assessment/validation-of-systematic-synthetic-phonics-programmes-supporting-documentation>

At first, children should **not** be taught to join letters [\[footnote 3\]](#) or to start every letter 'on the line' with a 'lead-in', because these practices cause unnecessary difficulty for beginners. Children may be taught to join the letters in digraphs, but this is optional. (All resources designed for children to read should be in print).

Writing on a single base-line

The next step is for children to position letters and words in relation to the base line.



Year 1 to Year 6

*Children that struggle to master basic letter print formation including those with Special Educational Needs **should not move on to joining letters** until they have mastered the correct formation of all letters in **printed style**, ensuring that letters sit on the line and are appropriately sized.*

Year 1

In Year 1, daily, discrete, direct teaching enables the children to consolidate their learning from the Reception Year in order to secure and embed good handwriting habits.

Children are **introduced to cursive print with exit strokes** in Year 1. Children are **not expected to join letters** in Year 1, although some children may have progressed further and may be taught the basic joins towards the end of the year. Teaching will continue to focus on ensuring that children have mastered the correct formation of all letters, ensuring that the letters sit on the line and are appropriately sized. The teacher models how to form the letters correctly and adults monitor and check children's writing during lessons to ensure that mistakes are identified and corrected immediately.

Children are also taught to form the digits 0 – 9.

* As per DFE guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-teaching-materials-core-criteria-and-self-assessment/validation-of-systematic-synthetic-phonics-programmes-supporting-documentation>

At first, children should **not** be taught to join letters [footnote 3] or to start every letter 'on the line' with a 'lead-in', because these practices cause unnecessary difficulty for beginners. Children may be taught to join the letters in digraphs, but this is optional. (All resources designed for children to read should be in print).

Children are introduced to a handwriting book with 4 lines.

<https://teachhandwriting.co.uk/cursive-letters-beginners-choice-2.html>

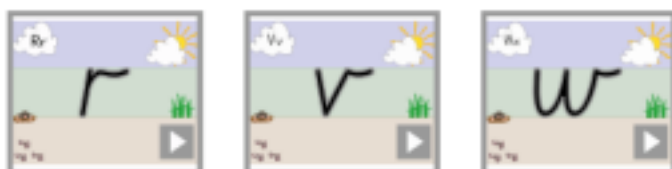
Straight line - Cursive Letters



Curves to start - Cursive Letters



Top exit - Cursive Letters



Tunnel - Cursive Letters



Hooks, loops & lines - Cursive Letters



* As per DFE guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-teaching-materials-core-criteria-and-self-assessment/validation-of-systematic-synthetic-phonics-programmes-supporting-documentation>

At first, children should **not** be taught to join letters [footnote 3] or to start every letter 'on the line' with a 'lead-in', because these practices cause unnecessary difficulty for beginners. Children may be taught to join the letters in digraphs, but this is optional. (All resources designed for children to read should be in print).

Number Formation

Number formation practice takes place in handwriting sessions to ensure that pupils form their number correctly, starting and finishing in the correct place. Pupils who do not form their numbers correctly in their maths work or across the curriculum will have daily interventions to ensure that this is corrected as soon as possible.

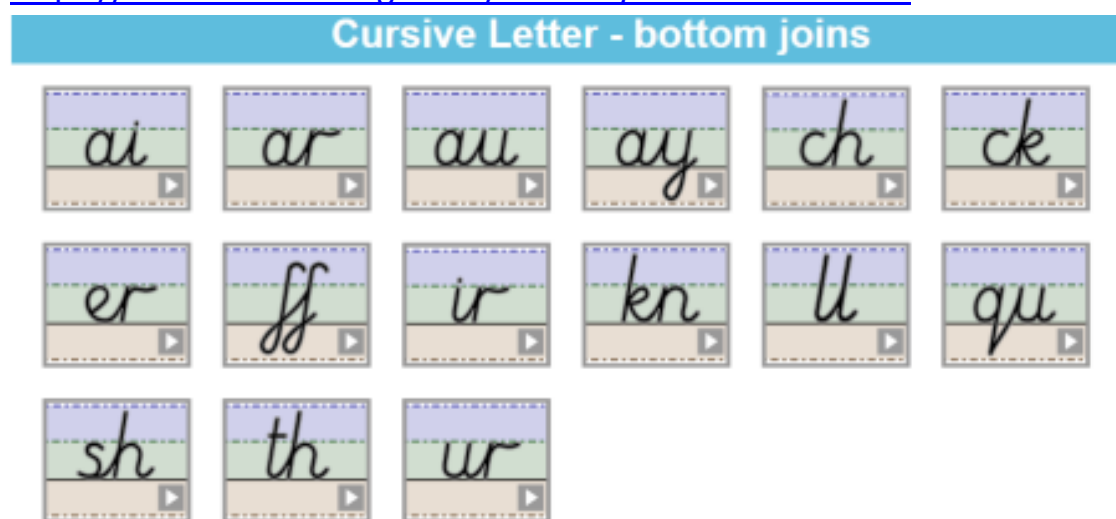
<https://teachhandwriting.co.uk/handwriting-numbers-beginners.html>



Year 2

In Year 2 (Age 6-7) pupils have daily handwriting lessons and start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters. The teacher carefully models how to do this and adults monitor and check the children's handwriting during lessons to ensure correct formation. Children use handwriting books with 4 lines to help them distinguish between ascenders and descenders.

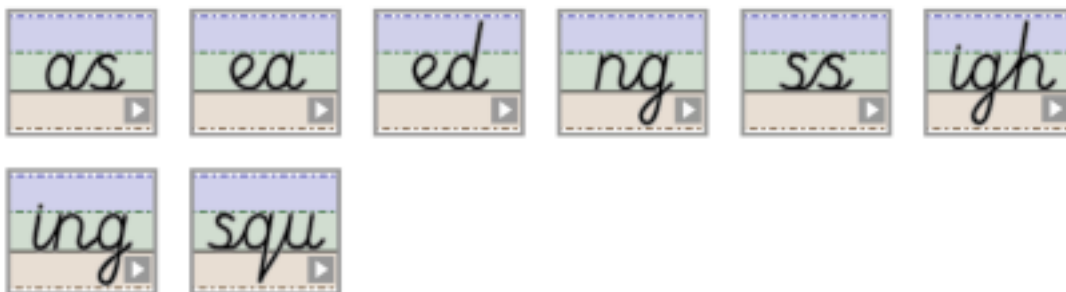
<https://teachhandwriting.co.uk/cursive-joins-choice-2.html>



* As per DFE guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-teaching-materials-core-criteria-and-self-assessment/validation-of-systematic-synthetic-phonics-programmes-supporting-documentation>

At first, children should **not** be taught to join letters [footnote 3] or to start every letter 'on the line' with a 'lead-in', because these practices cause unnecessary difficulty for beginners. Children may be taught to join the letters in digraphs, but this is optional. (All resources designed for children to read should be in print).

Cursive Letter - bottom to c shaped joins



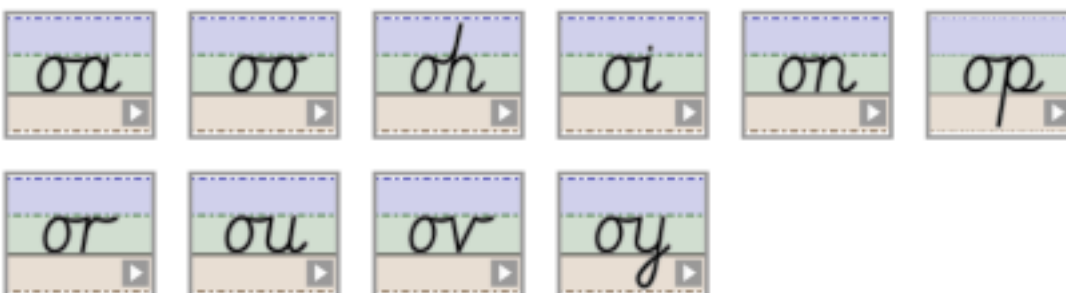
Cursive Letter - bottom to e joins



Cursive Letter - top e joins



Cursive Letter - top joins



Number Formation

Number formation practice continues in handwriting sessions in Year 2 to ensure that pupils form their number correctly, starting and finishing in the correct place. Pupils who do not form their numbers correctly in their maths work or across the curriculum will have daily interventions to ensure that this is corrected as soon as possible.

* As per DFE guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-teaching-materials-core-criteria-and-self-assessment/validation-of-systematic-synthetic-phonics-programmes-supporting-documentation>

At first, children should **not** be taught to join letters [footnote 3] or to start every letter 'on the line' with a 'lead-in', because these practices cause unnecessary difficulty for beginners. Children may be taught to join the letters in digraphs, but this is optional. (All resources designed for children to read should be in print).

Lower Key Stage Two

In **Years 3 and 4**, pupils continue with **daily handwriting practice**. They revise all of the cursive letter joins taught in Key Stage One to ensure that children are secure with using the correct letter formation and size. They are taught to increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting. They should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing with increasing fluency.

Number Formation

Number formation practice continues to take place in handwriting sessions in Key Stage Two to ensure that pupils form their number correctly, starting and finishing in the correct place. Pupils who do not form their numbers correctly in their maths work or across the curriculum will have daily interventions to ensure that this is corrected as soon as possible.



Upper Key Stage Two

In **Years 5 and 6**, pupils are taught to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed, choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

Children that have not mastered the correct letter or number formation or size will have additional handwriting practice.

Children use a handwriting pen in upper key stage two.

* As per DFE guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-teaching-materials-core-criteria-and-self-assessment/validation-of-systematic-synthetic-phonics-programmes-supporting-documentation>

At first, children should **not** be taught to join letters [\[footnote 3\]](#) or to start every letter 'on the line' with a 'lead-in', because these practices cause unnecessary difficulty for beginners. Children may be taught to join the letters in digraphs, but this is optional. (All resources designed for children to read should be in print).

Supporting activities for Key Stage Two

- Match and copy captions
- Copy sentences
- Write out menu
- Copy poems
- Practise capital letters
- Copy jokes
- Practising with punctuation ! ? – “ ” , ‘
- Copy tongue twisters

Next review of policy November 2025

* As per DFE guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-teaching-materials-core-criteria-and-self-assessment/validation-of-systematic-synthetic-phonics-programmes-supporting-documentation>

At first, children should **not** be taught to join letters [\[footnote 3\]](#) or to start every letter 'on the line' with a 'lead-in', because these practices cause unnecessary difficulty for beginners. Children may be taught to join the letters in digraphs, but this is optional. (All resources designed for children to read should be in print).