POLICY

For

HANDWRITING

April 2019	September 2023	
April 2021	September 2024	
September 2021	September 2025	
September 2022		

Striving for excellence, caring for all
Within a loving and caring Christian environment.

UNICEF articles:
Article 28: Every child has the right to an education
Article 29: Every child has the right to be the best they can.

Our Vision

At our Academies, our aim is to teach every child to write legibly, fluently, and at a reasonable speed. Fluent handwriting reduces cognitive demand on working memory, enabling focus on composition and creativity

Handwriting is taught using the *Nelson Handwriting Scheme*, which is introduced from the earliest stages of schooling. This style supports the natural development of children's early attempts at writing.

All teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) are expected to model the Nelson handwriting style in their own writing.



Aims

Each of the following aims is considered equally important:

- To ensure children use a consistently neat standard of handwriting across the curriculum, not just in handwriting sessions
- To develop automatic pencil grip and automatic letter formation
- To reduce and eliminate letter reversals
- To develop a comfortable and effective pencil grip and writing posture
- To ensure that children of all abilities are set appropriate and achievable handwriting goals
- To support accurate spelling through handwriting practice
- To encourage pride in the presentation of all written work
- To display excellent examples of 'take care' handwriting in every classroom and across the school environment

Teaching and Progression

From Reception, we begin systematic transcription instruction (handwriting and spelling) to build automaticity, freeing working memory for composition.

- **Explicit handwriting teaching starts in Reception**, integrated with phonics, continuing through KS1 to build fluency and reduce cognitive load
- Instruction is incremental, cumulative, and precisely modelled, with each step built on secure prior learning
- Pre-writing tasks are embedded in Early Years before formal writing begins. Children have the opportunity to develop the gross and fine motor skills needed to support writing fluency, such as air-writing, tracing in sand, or using large arm movements.
- Letter formation is taught in developmental letter families using multi-sensory methods such as chalking, water painting, or sky writing.
- Ready to write routines (correct posture, pencil grip, paper position, left-hand adaptations) are used to ensure for physical readiness for handwriting

- From Reception to Year 2 RWI Handwriting is used to structure handwriting instruction.
- In KS2, the *Nelson Handwriting Guidebooks* provide structured progression. This ensures consistency across year groups within KS2.
- Teachers and TAs in KS2 are expected to use the Nelson Guidebooks to inform planning and teaching.
- Where necessary, handwriting intervention should be provided to enable children to keep up, not catch up.
- Handwriting will be taught in discrete sessions and high expectations will be maintained across all curriculum areas.

Resources and Support

- Correct posture for handwriting must be promoted: feet flat on the floor, knees and hips at 90°, table at forearm height, and paper stabilised by the non-writing hand.
- Paper should be appropriately lined and positioned at a comfortable angle (about 45° tilt).
- Left-handed writers needs should be carefully considered
- Children should be encouraged to leave clear, consistent spaces between words (about the size of one to two 'o's). Lolly sticks or spacers may help early writers develop this skill.
- Where appropriate, the following resources may be provided to support correct posture/wrist positioning/reduce visual stress/pressure:
    - Writing slopes
    - Pencil grips
    - Light-up pens
    - Mechanical pencils
    - Coloured overlays or paper
    - Alphabet strips and visual prompts
    - Alternative writing tools such as triangle pencils
    - Breaks, warm-ups, and rest sessions for children who experience pain or fatigue
    - ICT access (where appropriate) for children who struggle to record their ideas manually

Feedback and Presentation

- Teachers and support staff should consistently model high standards of handwriting in all written communication with pupils.
- Children are expected to write in sharp pencils across the school.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils who consistently demonstrate excellent presentation can earn a Pen Licence. These pupils may then use a handwriting pen in English and topic lessons, provided they maintain their presentation standards.

Display

- All handwritten elements on displays — including both children's work and learning prompts — should model high-quality handwriting, aligned with the *Nelson Handwriting Scheme*.

Additional documentation:

- AAT handwriting teacher reference booklet
- https://nha-handwriting.org.uk/shop/good-practice-for-handwriting/
- The Writing Framework July 2025