

Stanley Crook Primary School



Handwriting Policy 2026

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Vision Statement

Stanley Crook Primary School is committed to improving outcomes for all pupils through delivering a book-led, reading-rich curriculum which is dynamic, engaging and meaningful within a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment with high standards and expectations.

We are passionate about developing lifelong skills which enable all pupils to become resilient, respectful, independent and successful citizens of the future.

Our Mission

To try our best, to tell the truth, to look after each other and our community.

Handwriting Policy

Intent

At Stanley Crook Primary School, we recognise that handwriting is a fundamental life skill which supports communication, learning and achievement across the curriculum. Handwriting is a complex process involving fine and gross motor control, visual discrimination, hand-eye coordination and muscle memory. Children require consistent teaching and regular practice to develop fluent, legible and efficient handwriting.

This policy reflects the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum for English and supports children in developing handwriting that is clear, correctly formed, joined where appropriate and increasingly automatic. Handwriting is taught as part of the transcription elements of writing alongside spelling, enabling pupils to communicate their ideas effectively whilst reducing the cognitive demands associated with letter formation.

Through explicit teaching, regular practice and consistent expectations, pupils will develop handwriting that is:

- Legible and well formed
- Consistent in size and orientation
- Fluent and increasingly automatic
- Appropriately joined
- Presented to a high standard across the curriculum

Teachers are expected to maintain high expectations for presentation in all subjects and ensure that incorrect letter formation, pencil grip or posture are addressed promptly.

The school follows a semi-cursive handwriting style and uses the Penpals for Handwriting programme from Reception to Year 6.

Aims and Objectives

We aim for all pupils to:

- Develop an effective pencil grip and good writing posture.
 - Write from left to right and from top to bottom.
 - Form all letters and numbers correctly.
 - Use a consistent semi-cursive handwriting style.
 - Form letters of regular size and shape.
 - Use appropriate spacing between words.
 - Join letters accurately and fluently where appropriate.
 - Take pride in the presentation of their work.
 - Develop handwriting that is fluent, efficient and legible across the curriculum.
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Inclusion

Stanley Crook Primary School is committed to ensuring that all pupils can access handwriting learning successfully.

Some pupils, including those with SEND, developmental coordination difficulties, physical disabilities, sensory needs or specific learning difficulties, may require additional support and adaptations.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- Pencil grips
- Specialist writing equipment
- Alternative writing tools
- Sloping boards
- Adapted seating arrangements
- Additional adult support
- Small-group or individual interventions
- Assistive technology where appropriate

Expectations remain ambitious for all pupils whilst recognising individual needs and ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice.

Letter Formation

Children are taught letters through grouped letter families to encourage consistent formation patterns.

Straight line family – letters based on a single vertical line:

i l t j

The Coathanger family – letters based on a c shape:

c o a d g q e

The Bridge family - letters that have a vertical down stroke followed by a diagonal movement to the right:

n h m r b p k

Zig –Zag family – both start on the top solid line and have diagonal downward stroke:

v w

The Smile family – Both start on the top solid line, begin with a downward stroke and curve back up to the top solid line then down to the solid bottom line.

u y

The Misfits – Letters that are unique and individual that do not fit with any other letter group:

s f x z

Capital letters

Capital letters should be taught as tall letters. They do not join on to the letter which follows.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Implementation

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Children are taught correct letter formation alongside their phonics programme using Twinkl Phonics mnemonics and guidance. Letter formation is explicitly modelled and practised regularly.

Particular emphasis is placed on:

- Correct pencil grip
- Good posture
- Hand-eye coordination
- Formation of letters and numerals
- Developing fine motor control

Initially, children may use unlined paper to focus on correct letter formation before progressing to appropriately lined paper.

Our aim is that by the end of EYFS, children:

- Hold a pencil correctly.
- Form most letters accurately.
- Form numbers correctly.
- Begin to write with increasing confidence and control.

Errors in letter formation and pencil grip are addressed immediately through modelling and feedback.

Year 1

Children continue to develop correct letter formation and begin to learn diagonal joins. Handwriting teaching remains closely linked to phonics and early spelling development.

Pupils are encouraged to:

- Form letters consistently.
- Develop accurate orientation and size.
- Apply simple joins correctly.
- Use appropriate spacing between words.

Year 2

Adults model cursive handwriting consistently across lessons. Children develop fluency and confidence with joins and apply these skills increasingly independently.

By the end of Year 2, our aim is that pupils:

- Form letters accurately.
- Use a consistent handwriting style.
- Join letters appropriately.
- Demonstrate legible and increasingly fluent handwriting.

Years 3 and 4

Pupils continue to refine and improve their cursive handwriting, focusing on:

- Consistent joins
- Improved fluency
- Letter sizing
- Presentation
- Application across subjects

Pupils are expected to use cursive handwriting in extended writing and across the wider curriculum.

Years 5 and 6

Pupils are expected to use fluent, legible cursive handwriting consistently across all subjects.

Teaching focuses on:

- Developing automaticity
- Writing efficiently at an appropriate speed
- Maintaining presentation standards
- Applying handwriting skills independently across the curriculum

By Year 6, pupils should demonstrate fluent handwriting that enables them to focus on the composition and content of their writing.

Handwriting Sessions

Penpals for Handwriting is used throughout the school and handwriting is taught explicitly at least once each week. Additional opportunities for practice are provided through curriculum learning and intervention support where required.

Children are taught to:

- Sit correctly at a table.
- Hold a pencil comfortably and efficiently.
- Position paper appropriately.
- Write from left to right and top to bottom.
- Start and finish letters correctly.
- Form regularly sized letters.
- Use appropriate spacing between words.
- Take pride in the presentation of their work.

For left-handed pupils, staff will ensure that seating, paper position and modelling support successful handwriting development.

Children will be taught to:

- hold a pencil correctly

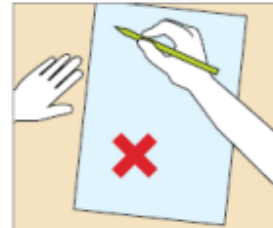
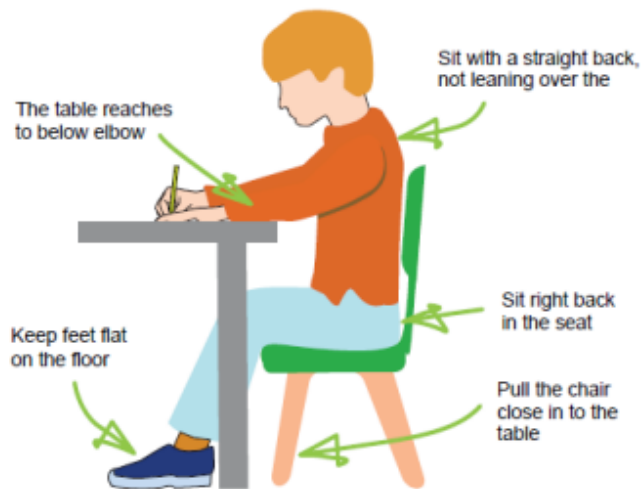
Children should be encouraged to use a tripod pencil grip, where the pencil is gripped between the index finger and the thumb. The middle finger is then used to support the underside of the pencil as shown below.



- and adopt the correct posture when writing

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

SITTING POSITION



Paper position for right-handed children

Handwriting Equipment

Children will use line sizes appropriate to their stage of development. Penpals handwriting books and supporting resources will be used during teaching sessions.

Initially, pupils use sharp HB pencils.

When pupils in Key Stage 2 demonstrate consistently fluent, legible and accurately joined handwriting, they may be awarded a pen licence and use a black handwriting pen or biro.

Where required, pupils may use adaptive equipment, including pencil grips and specialist writing tools, to support successful handwriting development.

Assessment and Monitoring

Handwriting is assessed through:

- Ongoing teacher assessment
- Daily classroom observations
- Work scrutiny
- Presentation monitoring across the curriculum

- Leadership monitoring
- Curriculum reviews
- Moderation activities where appropriate

A consistent handwriting style should be evident throughout the school, including within classroom displays, books and published work.

Pupils who are not on track to meet age-related expectations will receive targeted support through intervention and additional practice opportunities.

Feedback

Staff provide constructive feedback in line with the school's Feedback Policy.

Incorrect letter formation, pencil grip, handwriting posture and joins should be addressed at the point of learning wherever possible to prevent misconceptions becoming embedded.

Verbal feedback, modelling and guided practice form an important part of handwriting teaching.

Impact

The impact of this policy will be seen through the development of fluent, legible and efficient handwriting across the school.

Successful implementation will ensure that pupils:

- Demonstrate pride in presentation.
- Produce consistently legible handwriting.
- Apply handwriting skills across the curriculum.
- Write with increasing speed and fluency.
- Focus more fully on composition, vocabulary and content because transcription skills have become increasingly automatic.

By the end of Year 6, pupils should be able to communicate effectively through fluent cursive handwriting that is appropriate for secondary education and adult life.

