

BENTLEY ST PAUL'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY FOR HANDWRITING



'Growing together in faith, love and trust, we will succeed.'

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

Romans 8 v28

At Bentley St Paul's, we encourage and support children in achieving their full intellectual, spiritual, physical, social and emotional potential. In a welcoming and caring community founded upon Christian values, we strive to develop happy, confident and independent children, inspiring them to be life-long learners.

Date: September 2025

Review date: September 2027

1. Intent: Vision and Rationale

The aim of this policy is to ensure all pupils develop a legible, fluent, and efficient handwriting style that enables them to write effectively across the curriculum.

- **Legibility and Consistency:** To teach a consistent handwriting style, from early years print to a fully joined, **cursive script** by the end of Key Stage 2.
- **Fluency and Speed:** To develop **fluency and speed** so that the cognitive load of letter formation is minimal, allowing pupils to focus on **composition** (planning and expressing ideas) as required by the **National Curriculum** and emphasised by the **Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF)**.
- **Alignment with Ofsted/DfE Guidance:** To follow the current guidance, which recommends **unjoined print** initially, avoiding the "lead-in" or "entry" stroke for beginners, and delaying joining until correct letter formation is secure.

2. Implementation: A Progressive and Consistent Approach

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) - Reception

- **Programme:** Little Wandle Handwriting Programme
- **Focus:** Developing **pre-writing skills, gross and fine motor control**, correct **posture**, and an efficient **pencil grip** (tripod grip).
- **Letter Formation:** Pupils are taught **print letter formation** alongside the **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised SSP** (Systematic Synthetic Phonics).
- Letters are taught in '**families**' with correct starting and finishing points. **Crucially, joining and lead-in strokes are *not* taught in Reception.**
 - *EYFS Statutory Framework* is met by ensuring children: "hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing... [and] write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed."
- **Frequency:** Daily, explicit teaching sessions (e.g., 10-15 minutes), in addition to mark-making opportunities within continuous provision.

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

Year Group	Focus	Key Skills & NC/Ofsted Alignment
Year 1	Print Mastery and Introduction to Cursive (Pre-cursive)	1. Mastering print: Ensure all lower-case letters, capital letters, and digits (0-9) are formed correctly, consistently, and sized accurately relative to one another. 2. Transition: Towards the end of Year 1, pre-cursive script (print letters with a clear exit/exit stroke, ready for joining) is introduced. Joining is delayed until letter formation is secure.

Year Group	Focus	Key Skills & NC/Ofsted Alignment
Year 2	Joining and Developing Fluency	<p>1. Joining: Pupils are taught the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in a cursive style.</p> <p>2. Fluency and Size: Focus on consistent letter size and spacing between letters and words to ensure increasing legibility.</p> <p>3. Self-Correction: Pupils are taught to identify which adjacent letters are best left unjoined (e.g., joins to and from 'f' and 's' can be tricky and need explicit teaching).</p>

- **Frequency:** Daily, explicit 10-15 minute handwriting lessons. Handwriting practice is reinforced across all curriculum subjects.

Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6)

Year Group	Focus	Key Skills & NC/Ofsted Alignment
Year 3 & 4	Consolidating Cursive and Increasing Speed	<p>1. Full Cursive: Pupils are expected to use a fully joined, consistent cursive script in all writing.</p> <p>2. Legibility & Consistency: Focus on increasing the legibility, consistency, and quality of handwriting (e.g., down-strokes being parallel and equidistant).</p> <p>3. Writing Implement: Introduction of a handwriting pen upon achieving a consistent, neat, and legible cursive style (e.g., a 'Pen Licence' or equivalent award).</p>
Year 5 & 6	Developing Speed, Fluency, and Personal Style	<p>1. Fluency & Speed: Pupils work to write legibly, fluently, and with increasing speed.</p> <p>2. Application: Handwriting is expected to be maintained across all subjects.</p> <p>3. Adaptability: Pupils learn to adapt their handwriting for different purposes (e.g., faster script for note-taking, neat hand for presentation). This shows mastery and independence in the transcription skill.</p>

- **Frequency:** Regular, timetabled practice (e.g., 10 minutes, 3-5 times a week) and consistent application across the curriculum.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

SLT/Handwriting Lead: Monitor the teaching, consistency of the agreed style across the school (including displays), and work scrutiny. Ensure staff training is up-to-date with current DfE/Ofsted guidance.

- **Teachers/Support Staff:**
 - Model the agreed handwriting style in all their writing (boards, resources, marking).
 - Correct incorrect formation, posture, or grip immediately to prevent embedding poor habits.
 - Provide targeted interventions for pupils struggling with fluency, grip, or letter formation (see Section 4)

4. Assessment, Monitoring, and Intervention

Monitoring: Handwriting is monitored through regular book scrutinies and learning walks. The agreed handwriting style must be evident on class displays.

- **Assessment:** Termly assessment checks fluency, legibility, and consistency against year group expectations.
- **Intervention:**
 - **Early Identification:** Quickly identify any pupil whose handwriting is becoming a barrier to expressing their ideas due to issues with speed or legibility.
 - **Targeted Support:** Provide **short, frequent, and targeted** intervention/practice sessions focusing on specific letter family groups or joins, or fine/gross motor skill development.
 - **SEND/Differentiation:** For pupils with significant motor difficulties, a move to digital communication (typing) may be supported, ensuring the ability to communicate ideas effectively is prioritised over the mechanics of handwriting.

5. Presentation and Expectations

- **Pencil/Pen Use:** All writing is completed in pencil in EYFS and KS1. A school-standard handwriting pen is introduced from Year 3 when criteria are met.
- **Paper:** Appropriate lined paper is used consistently. Handwriting books/paper may be lined differently to support size and spacing (e.g., specific line heights).
- **Pride in Presentation:** All staff maintain **high expectations** for presentation and effort, providing constructive feedback on presentation and letter formation alongside composition.