



'I can do all things through God, who gives me strength'

Philippians 4:13

## Newton Solney C of E (VA) Infant School

### Handwriting Policy

## **Introduction**

This document sets out the School's approach to handwriting and presentation. It sits within the context of the School's vision and the other policies of the School; it applies to the whole School community - governors, staff, children and parents/carers.

The School follows the national framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage ("EYFS") and Key Stage 1 ("KS1"). The handwriting requirements from the National Curriculum for these classes is shown in Appendix 4.

The outcomes that we will strive to ensure all our pupils achieve are:

- Having fluent, legible and speedy handwriting that can be performed automatically, so that the attention of the brain is on the content of the writing.
- Having the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation.
- Having competence in transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition.
- Having a comfortable and efficient pencil hold and working position.

Handwriting is of fundamental importance to educating our children, because children who do not learn to read and write fluently and confidently are disadvantaged in daily life.

*'Newton Solney C of E (VA) Infant School is a friendly, caring and happy family, where children learn in a creative environment to reach their full potential within the love of Jesus'*

Our school vision is reflected in the way Handwriting is taught at Newton Solney C of E (VA) Infant School, where lessons are creative and imaginative and support each and every child to reach their full potential.

## **About Kinetic Letters**

Handwriting comprises physical and cognitive skills that need to be learnt and become part of the automatic skill set for each child. To achieve this, the School has chosen the Kinetic Letters handwriting programme, to train teachers and teach children.

The programme has four Threads.

- Making bodies stronger
- Holding the pencil (for speed, comfort and legibility)
- Learning the letters

- Flow and fluency

The key principles of the programme are:

- Building physical strength underpins handwriting and concentration. This knowledge informs the working positions that children use for writing and the strengthening targets they work on.
- Children are not expected to do anything before they are developmentally ready for it.
- The different components of writing are mastered individually before being used in combination.
- Letters are learnt as movements, not as visual shapes, and movement remains central to developing automaticity in letter formation, flow and fluency.
- Posture is important in developing the correct position for handwriting and so children are taught how to organise their working position and paper position to enable comfortable and fluent writing from the start.
- Correct pencil hold is taught from the start (ie as soon as a tripod grip is developmentally appropriate), and the strength is developed to maintain this, enabling comfort, speed and writing stamina.

Reading and writing are reciprocal processes; strengthening handwriting skills will support reading and writing development as a whole.

### **Progression through the School**

The Kinetic Letters programme starts in Reception and is used throughout the School. By the end of KS1, each child should be working at the national standard and most should be working at a greater depth (see Appendix 2). Children may begin joining in Year 2.

Handwriting practice takes place in sessions that are outside English lessons, since handwriting underpins the majority of curriculum areas and is integral to self-esteem and engagement with learning. Handwriting is taught in discrete sessions, separate from Phonics, and achieves fidelity with the Reading Framework (2023).

Pupils in EYFS and KS1 complete regular handwriting sessions of at least 20 minutes. Handwriting practice takes place on the 6-lined (or 3-lined if appropriate) Kinetic Letters white boards, supported by visits to sand trays, with a transition to books via the 'Practice Patch' and the checking of weekly targets in other curriculum (subject) books.

The majority of the time, sessions are taught to the whole class with differentiation enabled Kinetic Letters strategies and resources. Reinforcement may take place in small groups and/or individually.

Strategies to build physical strength for handwriting are integrated into general school life and provision for EYFS.

The Digital Teaching Turtle (DTT), is used as a front of classroom teaching aide to animate letters and animate the strategies for Pencil Hold and Writing Positions.

### **Assessment**

The Teacher Assessment Framework in the National Curriculum will apply to each pupil when their progress is being assessed at the end of KS1. Prior to this measurement point, teachers will use the Kinetic Letters assessment guides on a daily basis (Appendix 3). Marking of work by teachers will be positive and self-correction by pupils will be encouraged.

Formative and summative assessment is built into the structure of the S.T.A.R.T. handwriting session (**Set-up, Target Practise, Attention Focus, Reinforcement Practise, Target Setting) and teachers and pupils use the Kinetic Letters strategy of **Assess, Detect, Correct (ADC) for all threads of Kinetic Letters. This is both during specific handwriting sessions, and when monitoring the transfer of the physical and cognitive handwriting skills into daily classwork.****

Other Kinetic Letters assessment opportunities are listed and linked to the National Curriculum in Appendix 3 of this document. Teachers will choose the assessment opportunities that they feel work best for their individual cohorts and children.

### **Equality**

The Handwriting curriculum adheres to our school Equality Information and Objectives Policy. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that all children access the Handwriting curriculum and are treated equally, regardless of race, gender, gender reassignment, disability, age, religion or belief, socio-economic backgrounds and sexual orientation. We are an inclusive school and teach Handwriting to all children, as appropriate, respecting individual needs and differences.

## **Special Educational Needs and Disability ("SEND")**

The School's SEND policy applies. However, it should be noted that the Kinetic Letters programme is applicable to pupils with dyslexia and dyspraxia (developmental co-ordination disorder).

### **Home involvement**

It is important that parents/carers are involved in supporting the learning of handwriting. They will be given details of the handwriting programme and encouraged to support children in practising Kinetic Letters strategies that have been taught in school.

### **Resources**

Resources for Kinetic Letters are accessed online, with teaching staff having access to the online Digital Teaching Turtle and linked eBooks for the scheme.

A set of Kinetic Letters sand trays is stored in the Reception Classroom and can be used by all year groups.

Kinetic letters whiteboards, pens and pencils are available for all year groups to use.

### **Role of the English Co-ordinator**

Victoria Allan, as English co-ordinator, encourages and supports colleagues in the teaching of all areas of English, including handwriting. She has the responsibility to ensure that the policy is implemented, used and reviewed and that resources are regularly monitored and evaluated. Lessons are monitored and evaluated each year.

Up to date information is received through LA Literacy bulletins and staff training. This policy was reviewed and amended in September 2024.

The policy was reviewed by the Teaching and Learning committee in November 2024 and by the Full Governing Body in December 2024.

This policy will be reviewed on a 3 yearly cycle.

## Appendix 1

### Letter groups

(in teaching order)

Jumper Family: hnmrbp

Abracadabra Family coadgsq

Special Squirter e

Window Cleaner Family: ltiu

Fisher Family: jgfy

Slider Family: vwxzk

Pushing numbers: 2357

Pulling numbers: 068914

## Appendix 2: Expected Standards progression

The table below, from the teacher assessment framework, has the expected standards for pupils at the end of KS1.

The expected standard	Key Stage 1		
	Working towards	Working at	Working at greater depth
'Pupil can' statement			
Form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place	All	All	All
Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another	Some*	All	All
Form capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters	Some* capitals All numbers	All	All
Use spacing between words	All	All	All
Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.		All	All
Use question marks and exclamation marks			All
Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters			Some*
Produce legible joined handwriting			
Maintain legibility, fluency and speed in handwriting through choosing whether or not to join specific letters.			

\*Some 'indicates that the knowledge or skill is starting to be acquired and is demonstrated correctly on occasion but not yet consistent or frequent.'

**Source** National curriculum assessments - KS1: Interim teacher assessment frameworks at the end of KS1 Updated September 2021



Appendix 3: Assessments for monitoring progress		Kinetic Letters assessment strategies											
Expected standards in handwriting and National Curriculum Statutory Requirements 2017-2018	Corresponding Kinetic Letters Strand- (colour coded)	Push up targets. Meerkat - BOGOFs	Pupils' writing questionnaire	Starter Marker Writing sample	3 Colour check	Fluency targets	Pencil hold diagnostic sheet	Assess, Detect, Correct (ADC)	Monkey Smile Pencil targets	Turtle tick targets Formation/spacing	Practice Patch	Letter Family challenges	3 More, better than before
Sit correctly at a table	Writing position Pelvic Girdle strength	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓		
Hold a pencil comfortably and correctly	Shoulder Girdle strength 3 Friends Pencil Hold	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place	Letter Formation/orientation The Tree symbol		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another	Writing characteristics: Heights of letters Grounding		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
Understand which letters belong to which families and to practise these	Letter Families Family Features			✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Use spacing between words. Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.	Writing Characteristics: Spacing within/between words		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined	Letter Formation: letter finish Break letters (Breakers)		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
Increase legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting e.g. 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.	Flow and speed More sky above the Tree		✓	✓				✓			✓		✓

### Kinetic Letters assessment opportunities

**Push ups:** Pupils record weekly progress e.g. on post-its. **Meerkat BOGOFs:** e.g. measure using counting/reciting tables/alphabet/register etc.

**3 Colour check:** To assess Formation: Start/Finish and orientation of a continuous Letter Trail = pencil circle of incorrect letters.

To assess Writing Characteristics: Spacing= yellow pen line, Grounding=green pen line. Heights=brown pen line. (TB 5.11).

**Assess, Detect, Correct (ADC):** Use throughout the day -for Writing position: (TB 2.14)

-for Pencil Hold: (TB 4.20-29).

-for Letter Formation:(TB 3.28/32/36/39/42/46)

Start/Finish (and continuous Trail)

Orientation

-for Writing Characteristics:

Spacing- within words/ between words/across the line

Grounding- on line/below line.

Heights- lower-case/upper-case/numbers.

**Fluency targets:** a checklist of features of fluent unjoined writing. Use to inform teaching and as a check of readiness for joining (TB 5.10).

**Pencil Hold Diagnostic Sheet:** record progress towards maintaining the 3 Friends Pencil Hold. Complete periodically until all pupils can maintain the 3 Friends Pencil Hold and to inform strength provision. (TB 2.12 and Resources pack).

**Monkey Smile targets:** record Pencil Hold maintenance. Pupils self-mark, adding a smile to the stamp of the monkey on whiteboards and Paper (TB 3.21 & 4.12).

**Turtle Tick targets:** record achievement of the formation/spacing target. Pupils self-mark, ticking the turtle's tummy on their whiteboard (TB 3.21).

**Practice Patch:** a weekly transfer by pupils of mastered targets to books, at the end of START. It also measures Automaticity in the writing that follows (TB 3.23).

**3 More, better than before:** a peer-marking activity (TB 6.17).

1. Pupils work on own whiteboards and write the target letter/pair/word, by each of the Trees-down the board.
2. They each 'choose with their eyes' which they are most proud of, but do not disclose this to their partner.
3. Pupils swap boards and guess/mark with a dot, the letter/pair/word they think their partner chose.
4. Pupils swap boards back and discuss each other's judgements. (e.g. 'you didn't flick' or 'it's not a Brave Monkey letter' etc.)
5. They both try '3 more, better than before', on the last three lines of the board, to correct what they learnt from the feedback above.
6. Pupils share/discuss the improvements each made and 'take a photo with their eyes' of their best line, before rubbing off boards to play again.

**Letter Family Challenges:** complete regularly as part of START sessions. Use to work on specific targets (see details for each e.g. Letter starts) and to reinforce the Family Feature within the Letter Families, to gain Flow and Automaticity (TB 3.48 and Portal Teaching Resources).

## Appendix 4

### Handwriting requirements - national framework - statutory

This page and the following one set out the National curriculum handwriting requirements for early years and Key Stage 1.

#### References:

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (2021)

Early years foundation stage profile handbook (2022)

National curriculum - Framework documents (2014) and primary curriculum (2015)

National curriculum assessments - Key stage 1: Teacher assessment frameworks at the end of KS1 (2018/19 onwards)

**The Statutory framework for EYFS** specifies learning and development requirements.

The areas of learning relevant to handwriting, together with the early learning goals children should reach at the end of the academic year in which they are 5, are in the table below.

Early Years Foundation Stage: Statutory Framework	
Activities and experiences in areas of learning	Early Learning Goals (ELGs) 'Expected' level of development
<p>Prime area: Physical development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>gross and fine motor experiences to develop strength, coordination and positional awareness through tummy time crawling and play movement.</li> <li>adults can support children to develop core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, coordination and agility.</li> <li>fine motor control and precision helps with hand eye coordination, which is later linked to early literacy.</li> </ul> <p>Specific area: Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting).</li> </ul>	<p>ELG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gross motor skills Demonstrate strength, balance and co-ordination when playing</li> </ul> <p>ELG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fine motor skills Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing-using the tripod grip in almost all cases.</li> </ul> <p>ELG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.</li> </ul>

