



Progression Document

**Handwriting  
including number  
formation**



# Barnburgh Academy Vision

**Learning to SHINE together!**

## Barnburgh Academy Core Values

**Perseverance**

**Courage**

**Independence**

**Respect**

**Ambition**

## Leger Education Trust Key Drivers



**Ambition**  
Risk takers,  
Goal setters,  
Believe in  
better,  
Courageous



**Support**  
Encouraging,  
Sympathetic,  
Helpful,  
Nurturing and  
kind



**Persistence**  
Determined,  
Stickability,  
Patience,  
Stamina



**Inspire**  
Motivate,  
Persuade,  
Encourage and  
Influence



**Resilience**  
Strength of  
character,  
Adapability,  
Bounceback-  
ability



**Effort**  
Strive,  
Endeavour,  
Stretch,  
Exertion

## INTENT

*“Writing is a way of talking without being interrupted.”*

Jules Renard

At Barnburgh, we ensure that every child develops a clear, fluent, and confident written style that supports their communication across the curriculum and beyond. Handwriting is not taught in isolation, but as an essential life skill that underpins literacy, self-expression, and academic success. We aim to provide a structured, progressive approach that enables pupils to form letters accurately, develop consistency in size and spacing, and build the stamina required for sustained writing. Through high-quality modelling, regular practice, and timely feedback, children are supported in moving from early mark-making to a joined, legible script. We believe that strong handwriting fosters pride in presentation and helps children to communicate their ideas effectively. By embedding handwriting within meaningful contexts, pupils understand its purpose and value, rather than seeing it as a standalone task. Our teaching is inclusive and responsive, recognising that children develop at different rates. We provide additional support where needed, ensuring all learners can achieve success and build confidence.

Ultimately, our goal is for all pupils to leave primary school with a secure, automatic handwriting style that enables them to focus on composing and refining their ideas. In doing so, we strive to nurture **Truly Great** learners who are equipped with the foundational skills needed for lifelong learning.

**Our Core Values provide the platform on which we have built our curriculum offer at Barnburgh Primary Academy. Our handwriting curriculum is underpinned by our Core Values in the following ways;**

### **COURAGE**

We promote courage in handwriting by encouraging pupils to take risks, make mistakes, and view improvement as part of the learning process.

### **PERSEVERANCE**

We teach that perseverance in handwriting is essential for developing fluency, accuracy, and confidence over time. By practising regularly, refining their letter formation, and learning from mistakes, our children build resilience and make steady progress, leading to clear, effective written communication.

### **AMBITION**

We teach our children that ambition in handwriting encourages them to strive for high standards in presentation, accuracy, and fluency. This drive to improve motivates them to practise regularly, refine their technique, and take pride in producing clear, well-formed writing that supports their communication across the curriculum.

### **RESPECT**

We teach our children that respect in handwriting is shown through taking pride in their work and valuing the importance of clear, legible communication for the reader. By respecting the process of learning and the effort of others, pupils are encouraged to listen to feedback, support one another, and continually improve their presentation and technique.

### **INDEPENDENCE**

We teach that independence in handwriting is important because it enables pupils to take ownership of their work, applying their knowledge of letter formation, joins, and presentation with confidence. This growing autonomy allows them to write fluently without over-reliance on support, helping them to focus on expressing their ideas clearly and effectively.

## NURSERY

### HANDWRITING & NUMBER FORMATION IMPLEMENTATION

In Nursery, handwriting is not taught as a formal, sit-down activity but is carefully developed through a rich programme of play, exploration, and targeted adult support. The focus throughout the year is on building the physical, cognitive, and visual foundations that children need before they are ready to form letters.

At the start of the year, emphasis is placed on **gross motor development**. Children engage in large-scale movements such as painting on easels, making marks with water outdoors, using ribbons, and drawing in the air. These activities strengthen shoulder and arm muscles, which are essential for later pencil control. Alongside this, children take part in activities that develop **core strength and posture**, ensuring they can sit comfortably and maintain control when working at a table.

As the year progresses, there is a strong focus on **fine motor development**. Children are given frequent opportunities to build hand strength and coordination through activities such as threading, using construction toys, squeezing and shaping dough, picking up small objects, and using tools like tweezers. These experiences are essential in developing the pincer grip needed for effective pencil control.

Mark-making is continuous and embedded across all areas of provision. Children explore a wide range of tools (crayons, chalks, brushes, pencils) and surfaces (paper, sand, paint, outdoor spaces), allowing them to experiment freely and develop confidence. Adults model how to make different types of marks—such as lines, circles, zig-zags, and patterns—while encouraging children to talk about their movements. At this stage, there is no expectation of letter formation; instead, the aim is control, confidence, and enjoyment.

As children gain control, adults begin to introduce **intentional mark-making**, encouraging children to give meaning to their marks. This might include “writing” in role-play areas, making signs, or drawing pictures with emerging labels. Adults support this by modelling and narrating their thinking, helping children understand that marks can carry meaning.

Towards the latter part of the year, some children will begin to show readiness for **early letter formation**. At this point, adults may introduce simple letter shapes, often linked to children’s names or early phonics, always modelling correct formation in a clear and consistent way. However, this is done sensitively and only when children have the necessary physical control. Pencil grip is gently supported, with adults modelling and adjusting where appropriate, without forcing development before the child is ready.

Throughout the year, adults play a crucial role in **modelling, scaffolding, and providing feedback**. They demonstrate how to use tools effectively, reinforce correct habits, and create an environment where children feel confident to experiment and take risks. Praise is focused on effort, control, and engagement rather than outcomes.

By the end of Nursery, children will have developed the essential foundations for handwriting: strong motor control, growing confidence in mark-making, and an understanding that marks have meaning. This ensures they are well prepared to begin more formal letter formation in Reception

Children are also introduced to **early number formation** through play-based and practical experiences that develop their awareness of numerals in the environment. Numbers are explored informally through counting activities, songs, rhymes, and everyday routines such as tidying, snack time, and registration. Children begin to recognise and attempt to represent numbers through marks and shapes, often using large-scale movement, sand, paint, and outdoor mark-making. Adults model number shapes alongside counting activities, encouraging children to notice and experiment with forming simple numerals such as 1, 2, and 3 when they are developmentally ready. At this stage, the focus is on developing awareness of number symbols, building confidence in mark-making, and strengthening the physical control needed for later, accurate number formation in Reception and beyond.

## RECEPTION

### HANDWRITING & NUMBER FORMATION IMPLEMENTATION

In Reception, handwriting is taught as part of a structured and progressive approach that builds on the physical control developed in Nursery and is closely linked to early phonics learning. The focus throughout the year is on developing correct letter formation, secure pencil grip, and early writing fluency, while ensuring learning is practical, multi-sensory, and meaningful.

At the beginning of the year, there is a strong emphasis on **posture, pencil grip, and control**. Children are explicitly taught how to sit correctly, hold a pencil effectively, and position their paper. These expectations are reinforced consistently across all writing opportunities. Fine motor activities such as threading, cutting, dough work, and tool use continue to develop the strength and coordination needed for handwriting.

Children are also introduced to **pre-writing patterns** including lines, circles, zig-zags, and curves. These are taught through a multi-sensory approach using air writing, sand trays, whiteboards, and large-scale movements before progressing to pencil work on paper. This helps children develop the motor memory required for accurate letter formation.

As children begin formal phonics learning, handwriting is closely linked to the **Read Write Inc. phonics programme**. Each new grapheme is taught alongside correct letter formation, with teachers using the associated **Read Write Inc. handwriting rhymes** to model how each letter is formed. These rhymes provide consistent language and clear guidance for starting points, direction, and movement, supporting children to internalise correct formation from the outset. Adults consistently reinforce these rhymes during modelling and guided practice.

A key priority is **accuracy and consistency over speed**. Children practise forming letters using a range of approaches including tracing, copying, air writing, and independent practice on whiteboards and paper. Any misconceptions are addressed quickly through modelling and immediate feedback, ensuring correct habits are established early.

Capital letters are introduced alongside phonics where appropriate, particularly for names and simple sentences, with a focus on correct formation and understanding of their purpose.

As the year progresses, children begin to apply their handwriting skills to **writing simple words and captions**, with increasing independence. This is carefully scaffolded, with adults supporting oral segmenting for spelling and encouraging children to apply their phonics knowledge. Writing opportunities are embedded across all areas of learning, including role-play, storytelling, and topic-based activities.

By the summer term, most children are expected to write **phrases or even simple sentences with growing independence**, demonstrating correct letter formation, finger spaces, and emerging punctuation such as capital letters and full stops. Stamina is gradually built through short, purposeful writing tasks that maintain a focus on control and presentation.

Throughout Reception, handwriting is consistently reinforced across the curriculum. Adults model formation using Read Write Inc. rhymes, provide regular feedback, and offer targeted support where needed, particularly for children who require additional practice with motor control or letter formation.

By the end of Reception, children will have developed secure foundations in handwriting: accurate letter formation supported by Read Write Inc. rhymes, a confident pencil grip, and the ability to write simple words and sentences with increasing fluency and control. This provides a strong foundation for the introduction of cursive handwriting in Year 2.

Children are also introduced to **number formation** in Reception as part of their early mathematical development. Numbers 0–10 are taught explicitly using clear modelling of correct starting points, orientation, and formation. Teaching is practical and multi-sensory, with children practising number formation through air writing, sand trays, whiteboards, and physical movement before recording on paper. Adults model correct formation consistently and reinforce key language such as “start at the top” or “round and down” to support accuracy. Number formation is revisited regularly throughout the year within continuous provision and focused maths sessions, ensuring children develop secure, consistent habits before moving into Year 1.

## YEAR 1 HANDWRITING & NUMBER FORMATION IMPLEMENTATION

In Year 1, handwriting and number formation are taught systematically and explicitly to ensure that children develop secure, accurate, and consistent formation of both letters and numerals. This is essential in building the foundations for fluency, legibility, and mathematical accuracy later in their learning.

At the start of every **English skills lesson**, handwriting is explicitly taught. These short, focused inputs ensure that expectations remain high and consistent. Teachers model correct letter formation clearly, using precise language and referring to the **Read Write Inc. handwriting rhymes** where appropriate. These rhymes provide children with a consistent verbal structure to support accurate formation, helping them to internalise the direction and shape of each letter.

Alongside the Read Write Inc. approach, we also use **letter grouping**, particularly focusing on letters that share similar starting points and movement patterns, such as those beginning with the curve of "c". This helps children to recognise commonalities in letter formation and reduces cognitive load by grouping similar motor patterns together. Teachers explicitly model these patterns and reinforce them through repetition and guided practice.

In addition to daily reinforcement, a **full explicit handwriting lesson is taught at the start of every half term**. These lessons revisit key formation rules, address common misconceptions, and provide structured practice opportunities. They ensure that all children begin each new unit with clear expectations and secure understanding of correct formation.

Although handwriting is explicitly taught in English, it is also consistently reinforced **across all writing in the curriculum**. Teachers expect and model correct formation in every subject, ensuring that children apply their skills in meaningful contexts. Immediate feedback is given where needed, and children are supported to correct errors and develop good habits over time.

Number formation is taught with equal care and consistency. In Year 1, we use the **Ten Town programme** to support the teaching of numerals. This approach gives children memorable characters and stories linked to each number, helping them to understand and recall correct formation. Ten Town is typically used at the **start of arithmetic lessons**, where teachers introduce or revisit number formation before children apply their learning in calculations.

As with handwriting, accuracy is prioritised over speed. Children are taught to form numbers correctly from the outset, paying attention to starting points, orientation, and consistency. Teachers model formation clearly and children practise through guided and independent activities, with immediate feedback provided to correct misconceptions.

By the end of Year 1, children are expected to form all letters and numerals accurately and consistently. They will have developed secure habits supported by Read Write Inc. handwriting rhymes, letter grouping strategies, and the Ten Town programme, enabling them to present their work clearly across all areas of the curriculum

## YEAR 2

# HANDWRITING & NUMBER FORMATION IMPLEMENTATION

In Year 2, handwriting and number formation are taught through a structured and progressive approach that builds on the secure foundations established in Year 1. The focus is on developing fluency, consistency, and accuracy, while introducing cursive handwriting in preparation for full joining in Year 3.

Handwriting is taught **explicitly at the start of every English skills lesson**. These daily sessions ensure that expectations remain high and consistent across the year. Teachers model correct letter formation carefully, reinforcing clear starting points, direction, spacing, and proportion. They continue to use the **Read Write Inc. handwriting rhymes** where appropriate, supporting children to recall accurate formation through consistent language and rhythm. These rhymes are particularly valuable for pupils who need additional reinforcement of correct letter shapes and movement.

In addition to daily teaching, a **full explicit handwriting lesson is delivered at the start of every half term**. These lessons revisit key formation rules, address common errors, and provide structured practice of both lower-case and capital letters. They also give teachers the opportunity to reset expectations for presentation and ensure consistency across the year group.

A key feature of Year 2 is the **introduction and consolidation of cursive handwriting in preparation for joining**. Children are taught to write using a cursive style with clear lead-in and exit strokes, ensuring that letters are formed in a way that supports future joining. While full joining is not yet expected, children begin to develop a sense of flow and continuity in their writing. Teachers model cursive formation explicitly and consistently, emphasising accuracy and correct letter orientation before speed or fluency.

Handwriting is reinforced **across all writing in the curriculum**, not just in English skills lessons. Teachers expect children to apply correct formation in every subject, and feedback is given immediately where errors occur. This ensures that handwriting remains a high priority and is embedded as part of everyday learning.

Alongside handwriting, **number formation is taught systematically and consistently throughout Year 2**. At the start of each arithmetic lesson, teachers explicitly revisit number formation to ensure accuracy before children apply their knowledge in calculations. This daily reinforcement helps to maintain high expectations and prevent the development of poor habits.

Teachers model number formation clearly, focusing on correct starting points, orientation, proportion, and consistency. Children practise forming numerals accurately and are expected to apply these skills in all mathematical recording. Where needed, misconceptions are addressed immediately through modelling and guided correction, ensuring that accuracy is maintained even as pace and independence increase.

By the end of Year 2, children are expected to form all letters and numbers accurately and consistently using a cursive style. They will have developed early cursive handwriting skills in preparation for joining, alongside secure number formation habits that support increasingly complex mathematical work. This provides a strong foundation for the introduction of full joining in Year 3.

## YEAR 3

### HANDWRITING & NUMBER FORMATION IMPLEMENTATION

In Year 3, handwriting becomes more formally structured as children move from a cursive foundation into fully joined handwriting. The focus throughout the year is on developing fluent, legible, and consistent joined writing, alongside secure and accurate number formation that supports increasingly complex mathematical recording.

Handwriting is taught **explicitly at the start of every English skills lesson**. These daily sessions ensure that expectations remain high and consistent, with a clear focus on developing and maintaining joined handwriting. Teachers model joining carefully and systematically, ensuring children understand how letters connect correctly and how spacing, size, and alignment contribute to overall legibility. Where appropriate, teachers continue to reinforce correct letter formation and joins using consistent modelling language and references to prior learning, ensuring that secure habits are embedded.

At the **start of every half term**, a full explicit handwriting lesson is taught. These sessions revisit key joins, reinforce expectations for presentation, and address any common misconceptions. They provide structured opportunities for children to practise specific joins and letter combinations, ensuring consistency across the cohort and allowing teachers to reset and refine expectations for fluent joined handwriting.

A key focus in Year 3 is that **children are taught to join their handwriting fluently and consistently**. Teachers explicitly model how letters connect, starting with simple and more common joins before progressing to more complex letter combinations. Children are supported to understand that joining should not compromise legibility, and that consistency in size, spacing, and alignment remains essential. Fluency is developed gradually, with accuracy prioritised before speed.

Handwriting is reinforced **across all writing in the curriculum**, with expectations that children apply joined handwriting in most written work. Teachers provide immediate feedback where joins are incorrect or inconsistent, supporting children to self-correct and refine their writing over time. This ensures handwriting remains a high expectation across all subjects, not just in English.

Alongside handwriting, **number formation is explicitly taught and reinforced throughout Year 3**. Teachers maintain a consistent focus on correct numeral formation, ensuring that all digits are formed accurately, clearly, and with consistent orientation and proportion. At the start of arithmetic lessons, teachers regularly revisit number formation where needed, particularly when introducing new written methods or more complex calculations.

Children are expected to form numbers neatly and consistently in all mathematical work, including place value, written methods, and problem-solving activities. Teachers model correct formation and presentation, particularly focusing on alignment in columns and clarity when recording calculations. Where misconceptions arise, they are addressed immediately through modelling and guided practice to ensure accuracy is maintained.

By the end of Year 3, children are expected to write fluently using a fully joined handwriting style that is legible and consistent. They will have developed secure habits for joining letters correctly and maintaining presentation standards across the curriculum. In mathematics, they will form numbers accurately and consistently, supporting clear and efficient written calculations. This provides a strong foundation for increased fluency, speed, and independence in Year 4.

## YEAR 4

# HANDWRITING & NUMBER FORMATION IMPLEMENTATION

In Year 4, handwriting and number formation are taught with a strong emphasis on fluency, consistency, and increasing independence. By this stage, children are expected to have a secure joined handwriting style, and teaching focuses on refining accuracy, improving speed, and ensuring that presentation is consistently high across all subjects.

Handwriting is taught **explicitly at the start of every English skills lesson**. These daily sessions ensure that expectations remain high and that joined handwriting is consistently reinforced. Teachers model fluent, joined writing, focusing on maintaining consistent size, spacing, and alignment across extended pieces of writing. Attention is given to improving fluency without compromising legibility, and children are reminded that presentation should support clarity of meaning.

Teachers continue to reinforce correct formation and joining where needed, addressing any misconceptions quickly through live modelling and targeted feedback. While joins should now be secure, teaching focuses on refining consistency, ensuring that children maintain a neat, efficient, and readable style even when writing at greater speed or length.

At the **start of every half term**, a full explicit handwriting lesson is taught. These lessons revisit key joins, address any common errors, and provide structured practice to refine fluency and presentation. They also set clear expectations for handwriting across the curriculum, ensuring that standards remain consistent and high throughout the term.

Handwriting is reinforced **across all writing in the curriculum**, with an expectation that children apply their joined handwriting in most written work. Teachers provide immediate feedback where presentation or formation slips, encouraging self-correction and pride in work. Handwriting is treated as an integral part of communication in all subjects, not just English.

Alongside handwriting, **number formation is explicitly taught and reinforced throughout Year 4**. Teachers maintain a clear focus on correct and consistent numeral formation, ensuring that all digits are formed accurately and clearly in all mathematical contexts. This includes place value work, written methods, and problem-solving activities where clear recording is essential.

At the start of arithmetic and maths lessons, teachers regularly revisit number formation when needed, particularly when introducing more complex written calculations. Emphasis is placed on maintaining consistency in size, alignment (especially in column methods), and clarity of recording. Teachers model correct numeral formation and presentation expectations, ensuring that children understand the importance of accuracy in supporting correct mathematical outcomes.

Where misconceptions arise, they are addressed immediately through modelling and guided practice, with children encouraged to self-correct and take responsibility for the clarity of their work. Number formation is expected to be automatic by this stage, allowing children to focus on mathematical reasoning rather than the mechanics of writing digits.

By the end of Year 4, children are expected to write in a fluent, joined style with increasing speed and accuracy, maintaining clear and consistent presentation across all subjects. In mathematics, they will form numbers accurately and consistently, ensuring clarity in all written methods and supporting effective problem-solving. This provides a strong foundation for increased independence and adaptation of handwriting style in Year 5

## YEAR 5

# HANDWRITING & NUMBER FORMATION IMPLEMENTATION

In Year 5, handwriting and number formation are taught with a strong emphasis on fluency, efficiency, and purposeful adaptation. By this stage, children are expected to have a secure, legible, and fluent joined handwriting style, and teaching focuses on refining stamina, consistency, and the ability to adapt handwriting for different purposes across the curriculum.

Handwriting is taught **explicitly at the start of every English skills lesson**. These daily sessions ensure that expectations remain consistently high and that joined handwriting is embedded as the expected standard in all written work. Teachers model fluent, joined handwriting with a focus on maintaining consistency in size, spacing, and alignment, even in extended pieces of writing. Emphasis is placed on writing at an appropriate speed without losing legibility, and children are reminded that presentation should support clarity and meaning.

At this stage, it is expected that **all children are joining their handwriting in a legible and consistent way**. Where children are not yet secure in this expectation, **targeted intervention is put in place**, either through 1:1 support or small group teaching. These interventions focus on identifying specific gaps, such as inconsistent joins, poor spacing, or incorrect letter formation, and provide structured, repeated practice to secure fluency and accuracy.

At the **start of every half term**, a full explicit handwriting lesson is delivered. These sessions revisit key joins, refine expectations for presentation, and provide structured opportunities to practise fluency and consistency. They also allow teachers to reset standards, ensuring that expectations remain high and that any drift in presentation is quickly addressed.

Handwriting is reinforced **across all writing in the curriculum**, with a clear expectation that children apply their joined handwriting in all subjects. Teachers provide regular feedback, encouraging pupils to self-monitor and edit their work for presentation as well as content. Increasingly, children are expected to take responsibility for maintaining high standards independently, including correcting slips without adult prompting.

A key focus in Year 5 is **adapting handwriting for purpose**. Children are taught that handwriting style may vary depending on the task—for example, producing more careful, polished writing for final drafts, or writing more quickly for note-taking—while still maintaining legibility and consistency. This helps develop independence and prepares pupils for the varied demands of secondary school writing.

Alongside handwriting, **number formation is explicitly taught and reinforced throughout Year 5**. At this stage, correct numeral formation should be secure, and teaching focuses on maintaining accuracy within increasingly complex mathematical contexts. Teachers ensure that numbers are consistently formed clearly and legibly in all areas of maths, including place value, calculations, and problem-solving tasks.

At the start of arithmetic and maths lessons, number formation is revisited where necessary, particularly when children are engaging with multi-step written methods or larger numbers. Teachers model precise formation and correct layout, with a particular focus on clarity, alignment in column methods, and consistency of digit size. This ensures that recording supports accurate calculation and reduces avoidable errors.

Where issues with number formation persist, targeted support is provided, often in small groups or through focused intervention, to address specific misconceptions and reinforce correct habits. However, by Year 5, most children are expected to form numbers automatically and accurately without direct support.

By the end of Year 5, children are expected to write fluently and legibly in a joined style across all subjects, adapting their handwriting appropriately for different purposes while maintaining high standards of presentation. In mathematics, they will form numbers accurately, consistently, and clearly, supporting efficient and reliable written calculation. This ensures they are fully prepared for the increased independence and expectations of Year 6

## YEAR 6

# HANDWRITING & NUMBER FORMATION IMPLEMENTATION

In Year 6, handwriting and number formation are taught with a strong emphasis on independence, efficiency, and readiness for secondary school. At this stage, pupils are expected to have a fluent, legible, and automatic joined handwriting style, and teaching focuses on refining consistency, speed, and purposeful adaptation across all curriculum areas.

Handwriting is taught **explicitly at the start of every English skills lesson**. These daily sessions ensure that high expectations are consistently reinforced and that pupils maintain a secure joined handwriting style in all written work. Teachers model fluent, efficient handwriting, focusing on maintaining consistent size, spacing, alignment, and legibility, even when writing at speed or producing extended pieces of work. The emphasis is on handwriting supporting clarity of meaning, rather than becoming an isolated focus.

By Year 6, it is expected that **all children are joining their handwriting in a legible and consistent way across all written work**. Where pupils are not yet meeting this expectation, **targeted intervention is put in place**, either through 1:1 support or small-group teaching. These interventions are highly focused and personalised, addressing specific issues such as broken joins, inconsistent letter sizing, spacing difficulties, or reduced legibility at speed. The aim is always to secure independence as quickly as possible so pupils can meet age-related expectations.

At the **start of every half term**, a full explicit handwriting lesson is delivered. These sessions revisit key expectations, refine fluency and presentation, and provide opportunities to address any deterioration in standards. They also reinforce the importance of handwriting as a professional skill, particularly in preparation for transition to secondary school, where presentation expectations remain high but explicit teaching is reduced.

Handwriting is consistently reinforced **across all writing in the curriculum**, with pupils expected to maintain a high standard of joined writing in all subjects. Increasingly, responsibility is placed on pupils to self-monitor and self-correct their presentation. Teachers provide feedback not only on content but also on clarity, consistency, and overall presentation, encouraging pupils to take pride in their written work and understand its impact on the reader.

A key focus in Year 6 is **writing fluently at speed while maintaining legibility and control**. Pupils are taught to adapt their handwriting appropriately for different purposes, such as producing careful, polished work in final drafts or writing more quickly in note-taking or timed tasks, while ensuring that their writing remains readable and consistent.

Alongside handwriting, **number formation is explicitly taught and reinforced throughout Year 6**. At this stage, number formation should be fully secure and automatic, and teaching focuses on maintaining accuracy and clarity within increasingly complex mathematical work. Pupils are expected to form all digits correctly and consistently across all areas of mathematics, including algebra, fractions, decimals, percentages, and multi-step problem solving.

At the start of arithmetic and maths lessons, number formation is revisited where necessary to ensure that expectations remain high, particularly when pupils are working with large numbers or complex written methods. Teachers model precise and efficient numeral formation, with a strong focus on clarity, alignment in column methods, and accuracy in recording. This ensures that written work supports correct mathematical reasoning and reduces avoidable errors.

Where issues with number formation persist, targeted intervention is provided, typically through short, focused 1:1 or small-group support. However, by Year 6, these cases are expected to be rare, with most pupils demonstrating secure, independent control of number formation.

By the end of Year 6, pupils are expected to write fluently, legibly, and efficiently in a fully joined style across all subjects, adapting their handwriting confidently for different purposes and audiences. In mathematics, they will form numbers accurately, consistently, and automatically, ensuring clarity and precision in all written calculations. This ensures they leave primary school fully prepared for the demands of secondary education.



# Statutory Links

## STATUTORY LINKS FOR HANDWRITING

### Birth to 5 Matters & Early Learning Goals

By the end of Reception, children are expected to:

#### Writing ELG

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

These ELGs directly reflect early handwriting development through:

- Correct letter formation
- Increasing control and legibility
- Early transcription skills (forming letters to represent sounds)

### Birth to 5 Matters (Non-statutory guidance)

#### Physical Development (Fine Motor Skills)

Children develop the physical foundation for handwriting through:

- Using a range of tools competently, safely, and confidently (e.g. pencils, paintbrushes, scissors).
- Developing a tripod grip and increasing control over small movements.
- Showing increasing control in drawing and mark-making.
- Developing hand strength and coordination through activities such as threading, cutting, and manipulating materials.
- Beginning to show a preference for a dominant hand.

#### Literacy (Mark-making and Early Writing)

Children develop early writing behaviours through:

- Making marks that are increasingly controlled and purposeful.
- Giving meaning to marks and drawings.
- Beginning to ascribe meaning to marks that represent sounds, words, or ideas.
- Writing some or all of their name.
- Attempting to write letters in their own name and other familiar words.
- Using some identifiable letters to communicate meaning

#### Progression Link: Birth to 5 Matters → ELGs

The progression towards handwriting in Reception can be summarised as:

Physical foundations (Birth to 5 Matters)

- Strengthening shoulders, arms, and hands
- Developing coordination and grip
- Controlling tools and making deliberate marks

Early mark-making and symbolic understanding

- Marks represent meaning
- Children begin to attempt letter shapes and familiar symbols

Early writing (ELGs)

- Accurate formation of most letters
- Writing simple words and sentences
- Linking sounds to written symbols

### Key Stage 1 – Year 1 and Year 2 (National Curriculum)

Year 1 statutory requirements

- Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.
- Begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
- Form capital letters.
- Form digits 0–9.
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting ‘families’ (e.g. letters that are formed in similar ways).
- Leave spaces between words.

Year 2 statutory requirements

- Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another.
- Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters.
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

### Lower Key Stage 2 – Year 3 and Year 4

Year 3 statutory requirements

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters.
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting.
- Write using joined handwriting where appropriate.

Year 4 statutory requirements

- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting, including maintaining the downstrokes of the cursive style.

### Upper Key Stage 2 – Year 5 and Year 6

Year 5 statutory requirements

- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
  - Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices
  - Deciding whether or not to join specific letters
  - Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task

Year 6 statutory requirements

- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed.
- Maintain legibility when writing at speed.
- Ensure handwriting is adapted for different purposes and audiences.

In addition, reference should be made to Leger Education Trust Assessment for Writing Framework for EYFS to Year 6

## SKILLS PROGRESSION MAP FOR HANDWRITING INCLUDING NUMBER FORMATION

NURSERY	RECEPTION	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6
<p>Children will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop gross and fine motor skills through mark-making, large arm movements, and practical activities such as threading and using malleable materials.</li> <li>explore a range of tools and surfaces to make marks, including lines, circles, and patterns.</li> <li>begin developing hand strength, coordination, and early control.</li> <li>show increasing awareness of how to hold mark-making tools and sit appropriately.</li> <li>begin making marks that represent numbers, including lines and circular shapes, developing early control needed for number formation.</li> </ul>	<p>Children will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>form recognisable letters, linked to phonics learning.</li> <li>use correct letter formation, including clear starting and finishing points.</li> <li>hold a pencil correctly and demonstrate good posture.</li> <li>write simple words and captions with increasing control and accuracy.</li> <li>form some numerals (0–9) recognisably, using correct starting points with increasing accuracy.</li> </ul>	<p>Children will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>form all lower-case and capital letters correctly.</li> <li>Children will be able to maintain consistent size and orientation of letters.</li> <li>use finger spaces between words.</li> <li>write with increasing stamina and control.</li> <li>demonstrate a secure pencil grip and appropriate posture.</li> <li>form all numerals (0–9) correctly, with clear orientation, size, and starting points.</li> </ul>	<p>Children will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consistently form letters accurately and with control.</li> <li>use a cursive style with lead-in and exit strokes.</li> <li>begin joining some letters where appropriate.</li> <li>maintain consistency in size, spacing, and alignment.</li> <li>write with increased fluency and stamina, showing pride in presentation.</li> <li>form numerals consistently and accurately, maintaining correct size and alignment alongside their handwriting.</li> </ul>	<p>Children will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>join letters accurately using a taught cursive style.</li> <li>develop a consistent and legible joined handwriting style.</li> <li>apply appropriate joins without forcing connections.</li> <li>write with increased fluency and speed while maintaining clarity.</li> <li>use joined handwriting in most written work.</li> <li>form numerals fluently and neatly, applying correct formation automatically in all maths work.</li> </ul>	<p>Children will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>write fluently using a legible, joined handwriting style.</li> <li>increase speed and automaticity without losing accuracy.</li> <li>maintain consistent size, spacing, and alignment across extended writing.</li> <li>demonstrate stamina for longer pieces of writing.</li> <li>present work neatly and consistently across the curriculum.</li> <li>form numerals with speed and consistency, maintaining legibility in extended calculations and written methods.</li> </ul>	<p>Children will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>write with a mature, efficient, and legible handwriting style.</li> <li>adapt handwriting for different purposes, including neat presentation and quicker note-taking.</li> <li>maintain legibility when writing at speed.</li> <li>demonstrate consistency while developing an individual style.</li> <li>take pride in presentation across all subjects.</li> <li>form numerals efficiently and clearly, adapting size and spacing appropriately for different mathematical contexts.</li> </ul>	<p>Children will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>write fluently, automatically, and legibly in a joined style.</li> <li>sustain clear handwriting when writing at speed.</li> <li>demonstrate control, consistency, and independence in all written work.</li> <li>adapt handwriting confidently for different audiences and purposes.</li> <li>meet the demands of secondary school writing with confidence and efficiency.</li> <li>form numerals fluently, accurately, and automatically, ensuring clarity in all mathematical recording, including more complex methods and problem-solving.</li> </ul>