



Handwriting Policy

Updated: September 2022

Review Due: September 2024

Aims

It is our aim to encourage the progression and development of each child's handwriting throughout the schools into a fluent, legible and individual style that can be adapted for a range of purposes and will support their spelling and composition.

To raise standards in writing and handwriting across the school.

- To raise pupils standards of presentation across the school.
- To teach children to write with a flowing hand, which is legible, swift and pleasant to look at.
- To teach correct letter formation.
- To encourage children to develop a comfortable and efficient pencil grip.
- To assist children in taking pride with the presentation of their work.
- To have a consistent approach across all Key Stages when teaching handwriting and presentation of work throughout the school.
- To adopt a common approach, with high expectations of handwriting by all adults.
- Adults model correct handwriting at all times.

Methodology

Stoughton Infant school and Northmead Junior school have worked in collaboration to ensure continuity and progression for their children.

- Children will start with print in EYFS, in line with the delivery of phonics whereby the teaching of lower-case and capital letters will be in print, with clear start and finish points. (not joined or to start every letter 'on the line' with a 'lead-in', because these practices cause unnecessary difficulty for beginners.)
- When the children have secured print, they will move on to cursive during Autumn 1 in Year 2.
- In Year 2, the children will move onto lead out line and then start lead in lines in the Summer term.
- In Year 3 and 4, children will work on joins and apply them to words.
- In Year 5 and 6, children's handwriting will be addressed according to need through interventions as well as starting to develop their own unique style.

When the children move on to joins, they will link the joins directly to phonics and phases. The children have an opportunity to practise the join and then apply it to words. These words link to phonics, high frequency words, common exception words and the Year 3 / 4 word list.

(See handwriting progression document for more detailed information)

Children are taught in letter families.

Lowercase

Straight line - (l,l,t)
Curves to start - c a d g q o e s
Top exit - r v w
Tunnel - n m h b p u
Hooks, loops and lines - j y k f
Alternative straight lines - x z

Uppercase

Straight line - L T I F E H
Straight and slant lines - V W X Y A N M K Z
Straight and curly line - D P B R J G Q U
Curly line - C O S

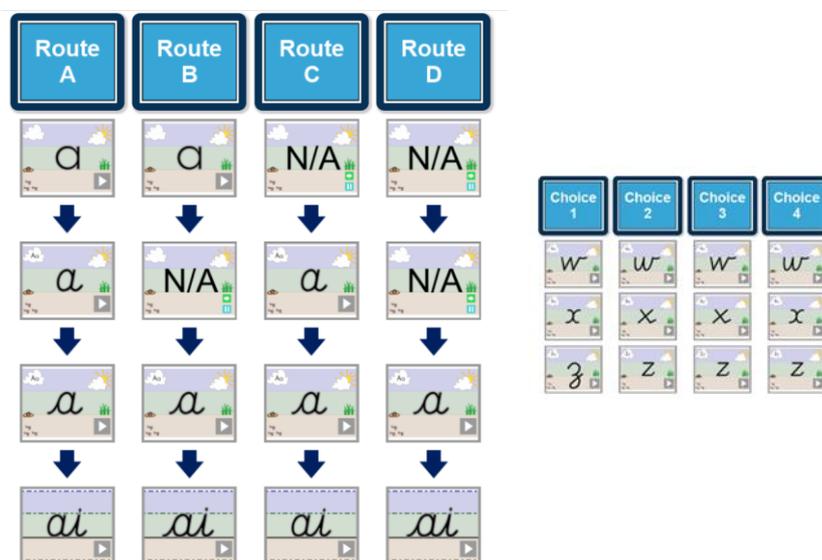
Letter formation

Children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units BEFORE LEARNING TO JOIN. Teachers should demonstrate letter formation on flipcharts or on interactive white board and have them displayed in the room (See appendix)

Planning and Delivery

Handwriting skills are taught both as a discrete subject and as part of everyday written language activities. As a guideline, children will receive at least 3 sessions of 10 -15 mins teaching per week. Skills are reinforced in many ways including.

Teachers will be using www.teachhandwriting.co.uk for resources, animations as well as for support and guidance. (Route A but final join is B) (Choice 2)



Handwriting is taught and modelled in marking and teaching from Reception and throughout Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2).

All teachers give specific attention to pencil and pen control, grip and posture in helping pupils to develop a legible cursive style.

Teachers identify all left-handed pupils in their class. Left-handers should always sit on the right of a right-handed child to avoid collision.

In Reception and Year 1, children are encouraged to write using a wide variety of media, from chalks and charcoal to crayons.

In KS2, pens will be introduced in Year 4, when pupils are secure in their handwriting.

Lesson structure:

Warm up

- Carry out the handwriting fine and gross motor exercises as a warm up.
- They will also be either taught or reminded about posture, seating positions, pencil grip and paper orientation.

Recap previous letter

- Begin each session by reminding the children of the letter shapes they have been learning in previous lessons and revise quickly taking account of any difficulties pupils are encountering in lessons.

New letter formation

- When introducing a new letter shape demonstrate the shape on the board first, then ask the children to practise drawing the shape in the air with their finger along with the teacher.
- Lower case letters should come halfway up the space and tall letters should reach the top line.
- Capitals should not be joined and must touch the top line.
- Ensure you and the children use consistent vocabulary eg ascenders, descenders, loops, lead in strokes and flicks.
- If the children's letter shape is poor, write the letter shape for them and allow them to go over it for a few times for practise.
- Check letters are evenly sized and spaced and that they sit on the line correctly.

Letter formation words

- If children have grasped the letter or join, model how this appears in a word. (A word that is preferably either a high frequency word, common exception word or one from their year group list – see progression document for links)
- Allow opportunities for children to reflect on their own handwriting ability through peer and self-assessment.

Some common problems (but by no means all of them!):

- Not keeping the letters on the line (this should be helped by always using a lead-in).
- Not keeping to the same line of letter when coming back along it e.g. 
- Joining to bottom of letter from horizontal join e.g. 
- Going round bottom of some curly caterpillar letters e.g. 
- Not going all the way round to "one O'clock" on curly caterpillar letters e.g. 
- Too large "i" and "s" e.g. 
- Descenders standing on line (especially j and p) – this should be sorted by joining all letters.

Agreed language

Staff use consistent language to describe handwriting, including:

Letter families, lower case, upper case, capital letters, ascenders, descenders, x-height letters, exit flicks, joining stroke

We use technical language to support children with difficulties rather than the derogatory 'messy', 'untidy'.

Terminology

Cursive: Joined-up handwriting style

Capital and lowercase: The names of capital and lowercase letters (rather than 'big and small').

Ascenders and Descenders: Letters that go above the usual letter line and below the base line

Letter bodies: The main body of letters, which are neither ascenders or descenders (e.g. the rounded parts of 'b', 'd' and 'a' and the arches of 'm' and 'n')

Entry and exit strokes: Entry stroke starts on the line and exit strokes generally end on the line (with the exception of 'o', 'v', 'w', 'r' and 'x')

Teaching Resources

Handwriting Tools

Throughout their time in school, children use a range of tools for different purposes and styles of handwriting including:

- A wide range of tools and media for mark-making in the EYFS.
- A selection of pencils and support grips in KS1 &2
- Whiteboard pens throughout the school.
- A selection of handwriting pens

Books and Paper

We acknowledge that children need appropriate line spacing in books and on paper to match their developmental needs, to ensure that their letters are not cramped and to allow sufficient space for letter alignment.

As most children's fine motor skills improve and their letter formation or joining becomes increasingly accurate, the width between the lines they write on gradually decreases. There can be flexibility at all stages. Once children are confident in the correct movement of separate letters and the concept of spacing, they will use 'zoned' paper to learn alignment of letters. When the children are secure, they will move on to lined paper.

Teaching handwriting development

A booklet is provided for teachers to support them in the teaching handwriting. (This can also be made available to parents)

This covers:

- Pre-Writing Skills
- Activities to Develop Visual Motor Integration & Copying of Basic
- Pre-Writing Shapes
- Development of Postural Control
- Activities to Develop Postural Control
- Development of Grasp & Fine Motor Skills
- Activities to Develop Grasp & Fine Motor Skills
- Development of a Tripod Grasp

- Activities to Develop a Tripod Grasp
- Development of Letter Formation
- Activities to Develop Visual Motor Integration & Copying of Basic
- Pre-Writing Shapes
- Starting Letters
- Early Writing Skills
- Improving Legibility / line guides
- Fluency & Speed
- Left Handedness – Handwriting grip & Arm position
- Pressure & Hand Fatigue
- Equipment
- Helpful Hints on Handwriting
- Handwriting Tips for Older Children
- Writing Activities for Older Children

Individual and Group Support

At all stages, teachers are aware of the specific requirements of individuals and will adapt lessons to meet individual needs. Individuals and groups pinpointed as needing further support are given extra time to practise handwriting. Opportunities to continue to develop fine motor skills are planned and provided as appropriate. Teachers also give further support to children who still have not established correct letter formation and may need to include this in an IEP. When marking, teachers offer opportunities to practise specific letters that children are struggling with. Pencil grips and ergonomic pens are provided for children where required. See **Teaching handwriting development** for further information on support.

Provision for left-handed children

All staff are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision. See **Teaching handwriting development** for further information and tips.

- Left handed scissors are provided and left hand pencil grips if needed.
- Where pens are used, left handers need one which is smooth and non-smudging
- Children are shown how to position paper
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision
- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that elbows do not bump
- Children should be encouraged to have the correct sitting posture for good handwriting

Parental Involvement

The EYFS handwriting curriculum is explained to parents and carers when children begin Nursery and Reception. They are shown how to write the letter formation families and especially their child's name. There are workshops every year for each age group to inform parents of the curriculum requirements. Where children are experiencing difficulties, parents will be guided towards appropriate intervention strategies.

A booklet (**Teaching handwriting development**) can be provided to parents to support them in with their child at home or where a child may have certain difficulty and need more reinforcement.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Development Matters and National Curriculum Handwriting Programme of Study

EYFS

Physical Development 40-60 months

- Negotiates space successfully when playing racing and chasing games with other children, adjusting speed or changing direction to avoid obstacles.
- Shows increasing control over an object in pushing, patting, throwing, catching or kicking it.
- Uses simple tools to effect changes to materials.
- Handles tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control.
- Shows a preference for a dominant hand.
- Begins to use anticlockwise movement and retrace vertical lines. •Begins to form recognisable letters.
- Uses a pencil and holds it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Physical Development Early Learning Goal

Children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.

National Curriculum for English – Handwriting

Year 1 Statutory Requirements

Pupils should be taught to:

- 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’ (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil’s hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided. Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.

*NB The Year 1 curriculum focuses on **teaching** letter formation. As we teach this earlier in EYFS, by Y1, correct formation should be an automatic habit. **Shape, Space, Size, Sitting on the line** are also taught in*

Y1, so that good habits are established. Stringing (joining) is not taught until all the previous S Factors are secure, but may be introduced in the last term if children are ready.

Year 2 Programme of Study: Statutory Requirements

Pupils should be taught to:

- 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 and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined
- 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.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should revise and practice correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Years 3 & 4 Programme of Study: Statutory Requirements

Joined handwriting should be the norm; pupils should be able to use it fast enough to keep pace with what they want to say:

Pupils should be taught to:

- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined.
- increase the legibility and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

Years 5 & 6 Programme of Study

Statutory requirements: Handwriting and presentation

Pupils should be taught to:

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

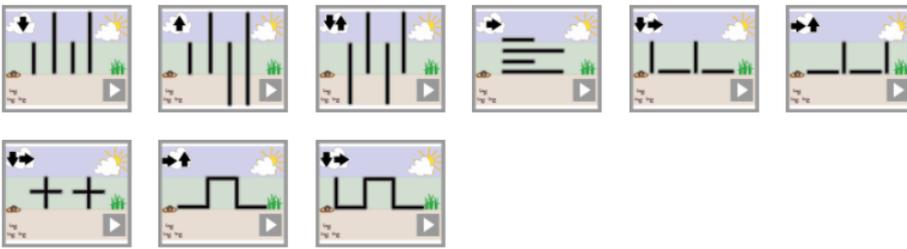
Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.

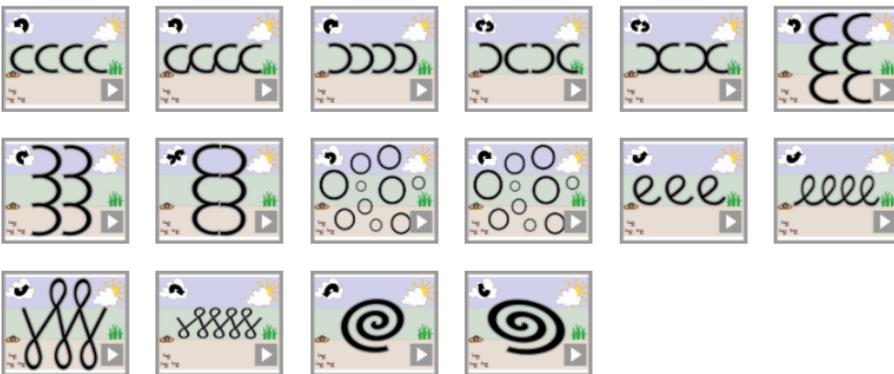
Appendix 2 – letter formation

+EYFS mark making

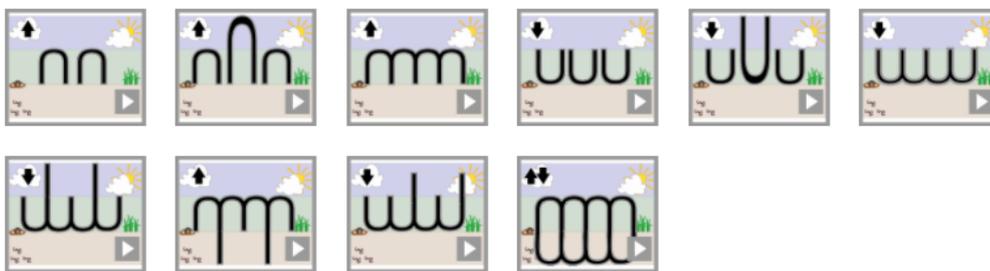
Straight pre-handwriting patterns



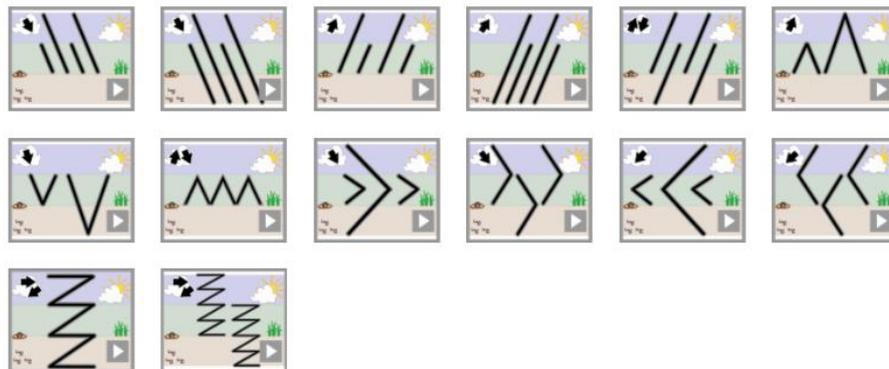
Curve pre-handwriting patterns



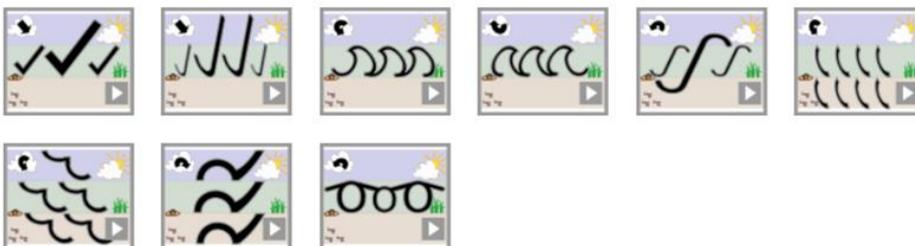
Tunnel pre-handwriting patterns



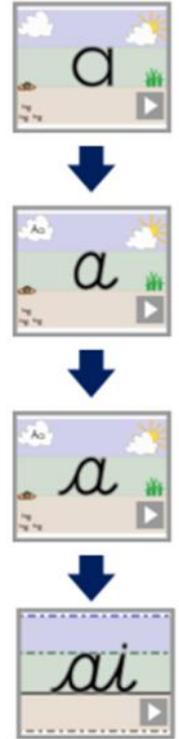
Diagonal pre-handwriting patterns



Join pre-handwriting patterns



Handwriting progression route

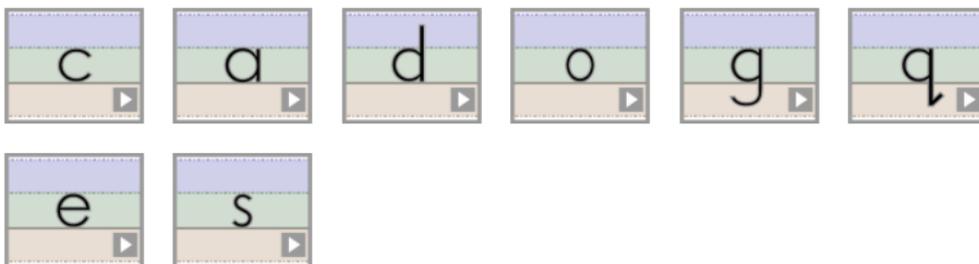


EYFS and Year 1 print handwriting

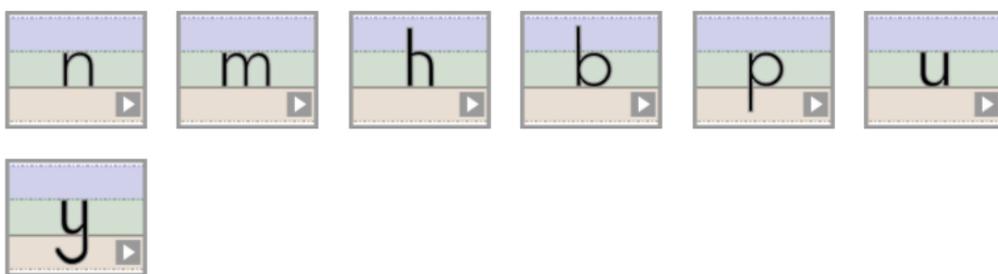
Straight line - Print Letters



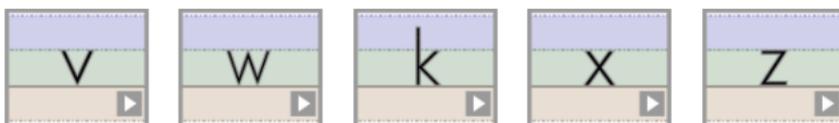
Curves to start - Print Letters



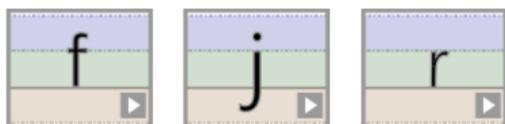
Tunnel - Print Letters



Diagonal line - Print Letters



Hooks, loops and line - Print Letters

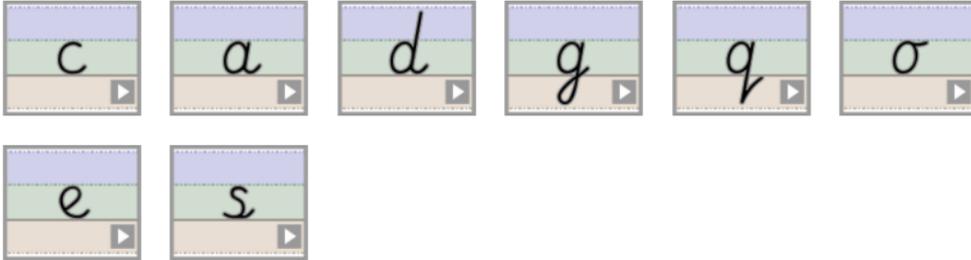


Year 2 Cursive

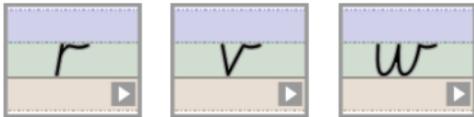
Straight line - Cursive Letters



Curves to start - Cursive Letters



Top exit - Cursive Letters



Hooks, loops & lines - Cursive Letters



Tunnel - Cursive Letters

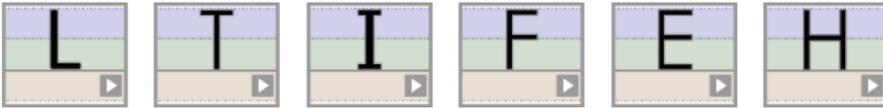


Alternative straight lines

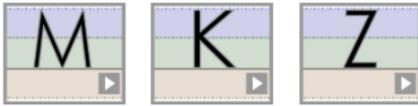
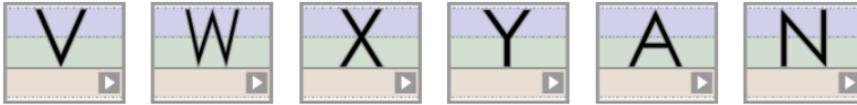


Year 1 and 2 capital letters

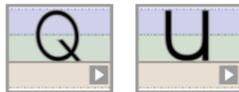
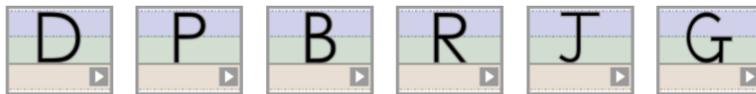
Straight line - Capital Letters



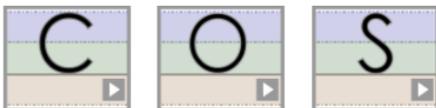
Straight and slant line - Capital Letters



Straight and curly line - Capital Letters



Curly line - Capital Letters

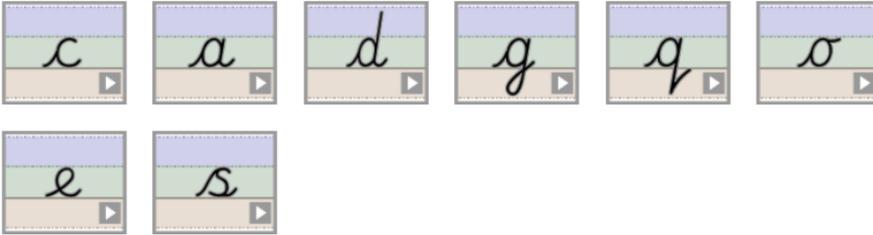


Year 3 onwards continuous cursive

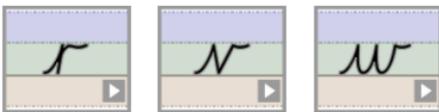
Straight line - Continuous Cursive Letters



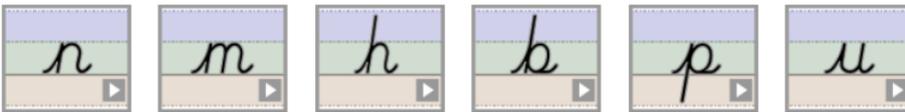
Curves to start - Continuous Cursive Letters



Top exit - Continuous Cursive Letters



Tunnel - Continuous Cursive Letters



Hooks, loops & lines - Continuous Cursive Letters

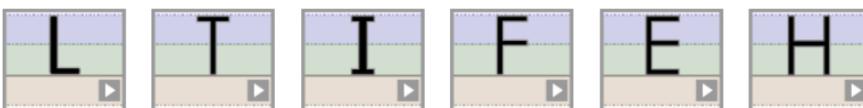


Alternative straight lines

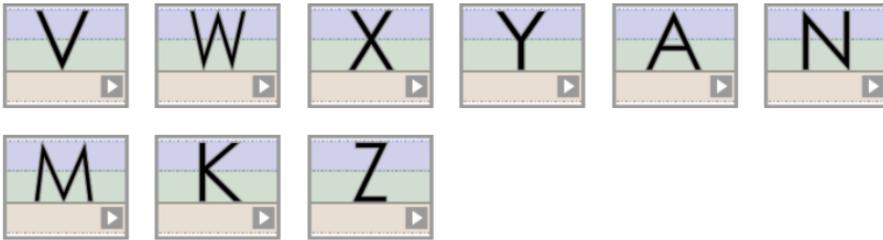


Year 3 onwards capital letters

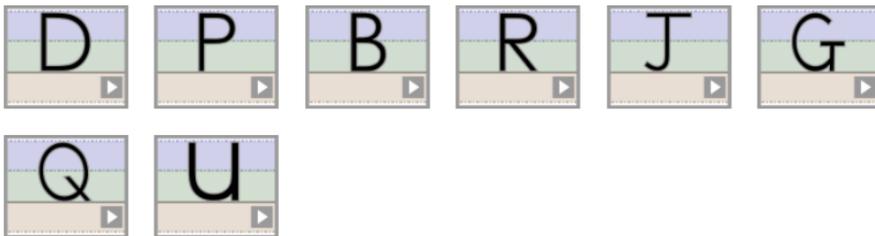
Straight line - Capital Letters



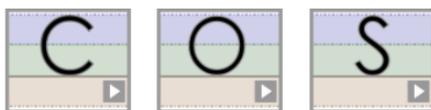
Straight and slant line - Capital Letters



Straight and curly line - Capital Letters



Curly line - Capital Letters

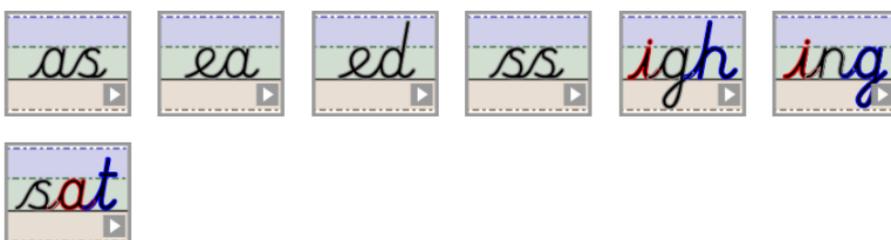


Letter joins continuous cursive

Continuous Cursive Letter - bottom joins



Continuous Cursive Letter - bottom to c shaped letter joins



Continuous Cursive Letter - bottom e letter joins



Continuous Cursive Letter - top e letter joins

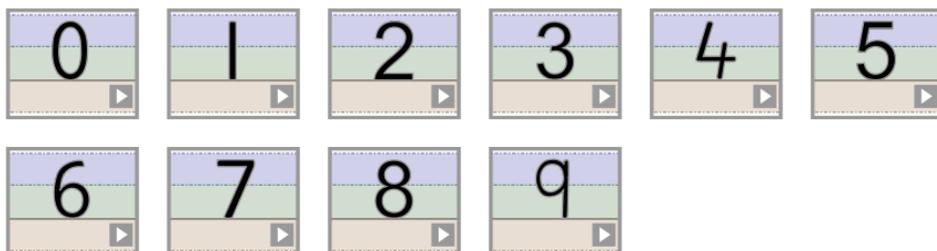


Continuous Cursive Letter top letter joins



See progression document for further joins linked to phonics and spelling

Numbers



Symbols

