



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

Handwriting Policy

Review Date: Feb 2026
Next Review: Feb 2028

Intent

At Sparken Hill Academy, the importance of children being able to write legibly, fluently and at a reasonable speed is recognised. With these skills, children have a much greater chance of being able to reach and demonstrate their true potential throughout their school careers and in their lives beyond. The programme of study at Sparken Hill seeks to ensure that:

- **EYFS –**

Children in the EYFS begin early-handwriting through PE and outside learning to develop their physical gross motor skills, such as using their arms to make different sized circles and lines. Once children have established gross motor movements, they then are ready for fine motor practice. Interventions such as dough disco, strengthen finger and hand muscles in preparation for letter formation. Children are then encouraged to make marks in a variety of ways, once they have established a dominant hand.

Pencil grip will be monitored closely to ensure pupils are using the correct 'Tripod' grip whilst writing/mark making (where appropriate). Appropriately sized pencils, and pencil grip supports will be provided, where needed, to ensure pupils move from the Palmer grip stages to the dynamic Tripod grip **before beginning** Key Stage 1.

There is ongoing reinforcement of these skills daily. Throughout foundation stage children are learning to form letters correctly through tracing until they are able to form letters independently. Teachers will take great care at this stage to ensure pupils learn to correctly form each letter, using the correct directional movements. Lower case letters begin at the top and move anti-clockwise. This support continuation into pre-cursive and cursive in Key stage 1 and 2.

Where appropriate, children have planned opportunities to develop writing letters, building up to writing simple sentences, which can be read by themselves and others. Children are taught to write **in print**, until they have completed the phonics programme.

- **KS1** - In KS1, handwriting practice focuses on ensuring that children form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another. Children also develop accuracy in writing capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters and use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters. Children are taught to write **in print**, until they have completed the phonics programme.
- **The introduction of cursive** - Children are taught to write with a joined style (pre cursive) as soon as they **can form letters securely** with the **correct orientation and direction** in print, and have a secure knowledge of their phonics sounds and letters. Teachers will ensure that pupils are using the correct directional movements in

print (starting from the top and moving anticlockwise) before beginning cursive writing. We aim for most pupils to begin learning pre-cursive by the summer term of Year 2. Teacher judgement will inform when pupils are ready to begin cursive practice.

- **KS2** - Throughout KS2, emphasis is placed on children's development of writing legibly, fluently and with increasing speed and accuracy. Pupils who have completed the phonics programme will have cursive handwriting tuition at least three times per week, following our school handwriting programme, linked closely to their weekly spellings

Fonts

In order to support pupils acquisition of the letter shapes, we will endeavor to use fonts that follow the letter shapes our pupils will be learning.

Some fonts have a differently shaped 'a' for example, which may confuse are emerging writing and readers.

Fonts which follow our print scheme are:

- Comic Sans
- Sassoon Primary
- Primary Dots (free to download online)

Fonts which follow our cursive scheme are:

- XCCW Joined 1a (This can be found in the English folder)
- The XCCW traceable variants (These can be found in the English folder)

Intent

Letter sound knowledge is the association between the mechanics of creating letter shapes and its sounds. For this reason, we feel pupils who are still learning basic letter formation should **not** be expected to learn to write in cursive until they have a solid understanding of how each letter is formed.

In Foundation and Key Stage 1, handwriting (in print) will be intrinsically linked with phonics learning. This is because part of learning letters and sounds, is learning how to recognise and write each letter.

Towards the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2 Summer term), we would expect that most pupils are ready to begin learning cursive handwriting. Pupils who are identified as ready, will be taught the basics of cursive.

Pupils in Year 2, **who have a secure letter formation (in print)**, can begin to be explicitly taught cursive handwriting (suggested summer term, if not before). Pupils are ready to learn cursive writing when:

- letters are correctly formed and evenly spaced
- letters are an appropriately and consistently sized
- they understand that some letters are ascenders/descenders
- Pupils know all the names and sounds of each letter in phonics phase 1-5.

In KS2, most children will learn and practice cursive handwriting. This will be taught both explicitly and in conjunction with spellings and writing lessons.

In some cases, cursive handwriting may not be appropriate for individual children. In these cases, pupils will be assessed individually and may continue to use print, depending on the needs of the child.

Implementation

Pupils in EYFS and Key Stage 1 (and those in KS2 that still require phonics input) should have daily phonics sessions, including (or followed by) opportunities for them to practice their letter formation with adult support.

Pupils in key stage 2 should have at least three, guided handwriting lessons per week, where teachers and TA's support pupils to improve their technique and letter formation where needed. Specific handwriting interventions will be provided for those that require it. Handwriting will be linked closely to pupil's weekly spellings.

Impact

This is measured through English monitoring and will be carried out in a variety of ways:

- Reader leaders will speak to and work with pupils individually to assess ability and need
- Handwriting book monitoring
- English book monitoring
- Pupil questionnaires/interviews

Teaching Schedule

All pupils who are part of our phonics programme will learn **to print** graphemes in line with the phonics schedule, as detailed below. These are taught as part of our Phase 2 phonics schedule and are then reinforced and consolidated in the subsequent phases, throughout EYFS and Key Stage One. Pupils with particular gaps will have phonics interventions, during which they will be supported to learn to form the relevant graphemes they need, in addition to this schedule.

EYFS – Pupils should be taught to form all of these graphemes **in print** by the end of their reception year. Pupils who have not mastered these letters will have additional support through interventions.

s a

t p

i n

m d

g o

c k

e u

r

h b

f l s

j v

w x

y z

q

Key Stage One – Pupils will continue to learn to print graphemes as part of our phonics teaching, until they finish the phonics programme. They will be supported to master the correct shape, relative size and orientation of all the letters, including leaving appropriate spaces between words.

Towards the end of Key Stage 1, pupils who have finished the phonics programme will begin to learn **cursive letter formation**, in readiness for Key Stage Two. Pupils who have not finished the phonics programme will continue to practice in print, with additional support.

Key Stage Two – Pupils who have finished the phonics programme will be taught to use cursive writing, in line with the schedule below. The reason for this particular order is that the letters are grouped according to the pen's route from the line. The letter 'c' is first since it forms the basis for the letters c, o, a, d, g and q.

c o a

d g q

s

e f

n m

l h b

p r

i j

k t

u y v

w x z