Jewell Academy Bournemouth
an Aspirations Academy

Policy for

Handwriting

Date of last review:	July 2026	**Review Period:**	1 years
Date of next review:	July 2027	**Owner:**	Kirsty Churchill
Type of policy:	School	**Regional Board or Trust Approved:**	N/A

Our Aims

Our aim is for children to develop **legible, fluent** and **efficient** handwriting suited to a given task.

In handwriting, as in other skills, children will develop at different rates; for that reason, it is important that there is a **consistent style of handwriting** throughout the school and that all staff explicitly teach and model handwriting, with a clear understanding of the progression of skills, and of how to remedy errors.

It is not sufficient to simply encourage children to improve their handwriting; the different elements **need to be taught and practised**. Early intervention is essential at every stage, to prevent the acquisition of bad habits which are difficult to correct.

At Jewell Academy, we have adopted the **Handwriting Scheme** that is presented and linked with our **Phonics Programme, Super Sonic Phonic Friends**. **Progression document can be found here.** This is consistently used in KS1 and for interventions in KS2. Whole class handwriting in KS2 will adopt the progression of letters but may not adhere to the phrases and images due to the age content of the programme- this is at the teachers' discretion. .

Progression

Reception – Children are taught to read and write all letters using an unjoined, print style through a variety of resources and materials linked to the daily phoneme. Practising and developing fine motor skills to support the drawing of pre shapes, mark making and letter formation.

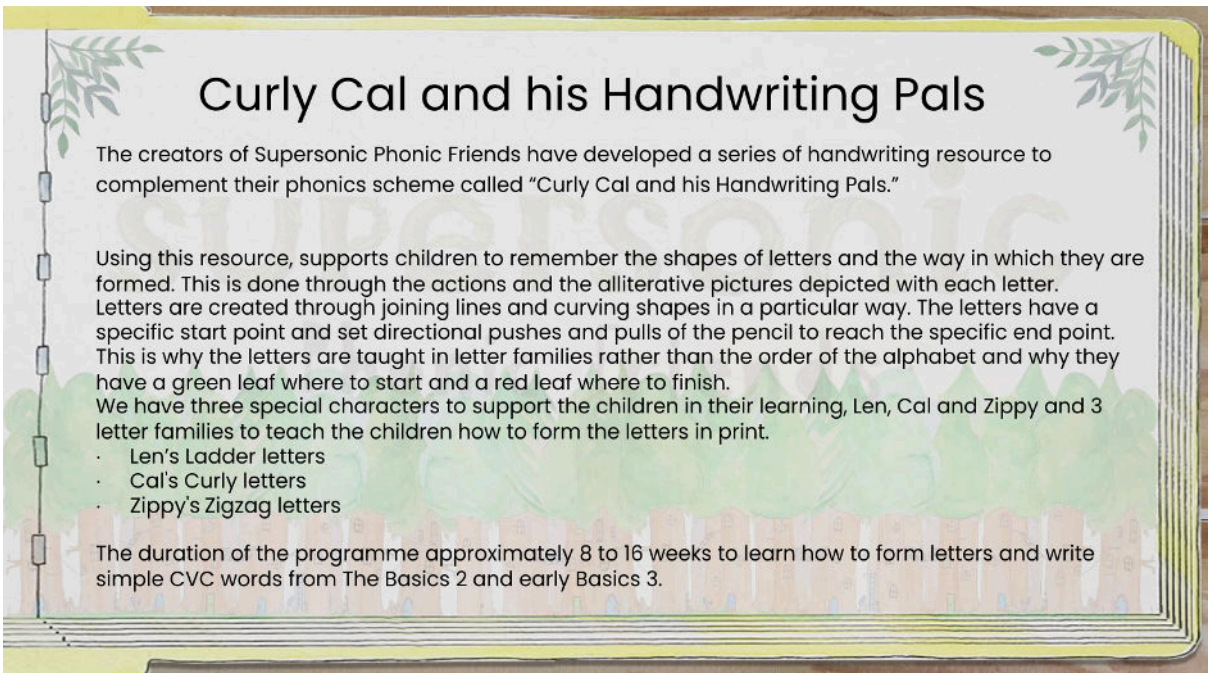
Year 1 – Children are taught to write using pre-cursive lettering linked to phonics, spellings and high frequency words, leading to simple joins throughout the year.

Year 2 – All joins are revised and applied to high frequency words, leading to cursive writing being used in independent writing. Children can achieve a 'Pen Licence' from this point.

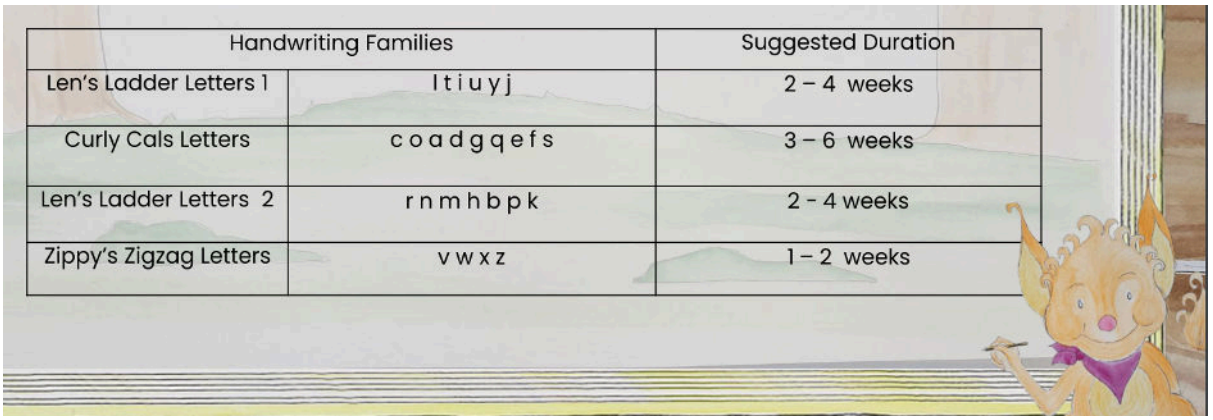
KS2 – All letter forms are revised and applied further to independent writing. Children will make choices about style and form of handwriting suited to particular tasks.

Teaching and Learning

At Jewell Academy we teach the **cursive style.** We teach handwriting as a specific skill, little and often – at least **10 minutes twice a week** is ideal with additional, independent practice.



Agreed letter formation and Sequence of teaching From year 1



Handwriting Families		Suggested Duration
Len's Ladder Letters 1	l t i u y j	2 – 4 weeks
Curly Cals Letters	c o a d g q e f s	3 – 6 weeks
Len's Ladder Letters 2	r n m h b p k	2 - 4 weeks
Zippy's Zigzag Letters	v w x z	1 – 2 weeks

Resources for the Super Sonic Phonic Friends programme can be found here. The phrases that correspond to the letter formation are used from EYFS / Year 1. The time scale and progression may be adapted to the needs of the children / year group.

The following is a brief outline of our agreed policy:

Gross and fine motor skills: activities to develop gross and fine motor skills are essential to the development of good handwriting. A font which matches our cursive style is installed on all staff computers so that additional resources can be created to suit the teachers' needs.

Posture: children should be taught the importance of sitting upright and correctly on their chair with their feet on the floor.

Pencil grip: children should use a tripod grip, and be given constant reminders until this is established. Triangular section pencils and shaped pencil holders are available in school for children who find them helpful.

Position of paper: left handed children should be encouraged to tilt their paper slightly to the right to improve their view of what they are writing, and to reduce smudging later on when they write in

ink. Right handed children may find it helpful to tilt paper slightly to the left. Paper should be steadied with the free hand.

Paper: early writers will write on unlined paper so that they are able to write at a size appropriate to their needs. As soon as children are beginning to control the size of their writing, they will be given lined paper and exercise books to encourage the correct placing of letters on the line. Where work is redrafted and presented for display, children may use plain paper and guidelines with the same line spacing. For the teaching and practice of handwriting, it may sometimes be helpful to use handwriting exercise books or "handwriting paper" to give further support for the relative heights of parts of the letters.

Correct letter formation: children are taught to form letters correctly, paying attention to the starting point for each letter, the direction of pencil movement, the shape and orientation of the letter, and the relative heights of the body of each letter, and any ascender and descender. Teaching will be multi-sensory and appropriate to the needs of the child. Our policy is to teach a letter shape which closely resembles cursive print for early readers, and which will not need to be changed as handwriting becomes joined.

Joining letters: children should be introduced to joined handwriting as soon as they have mastered the shape of individual letters. They will begin by joining vowel and consonant digraphs, to facilitate the recall of spelling patterns. Later, the four basic handwriting joins will be taught systematically and then practised in regular short handwriting sessions linked to spelling patterns.

National Curriculum Expectations

1.1.1.1 RECEPTION
1.1.1.2 Notes and Guidance
Pupils should be taught to: ▪ Develop **gross motor control** (See Appendix A) ▪ Develop **fine motor control** (See Appendix A) ▪ Use **large equipment** to **make marks** e.*g big chalks, large paint brushes, shaving foam, finger painting etc.* ▪ Use a **range of mark making tools** such as pencils, pens and crayons, etc with **confidence** and **enjoyment** ▪ Develop a **recognition of pattern**

- Develop a language to **talk about shapes** and **movements**
- The main **handwriting movements** involved in the **three basic letter shapes**; c, l and r
- When the children have developed appropriate gross and fine motor control, they will be **gradually introduced to letter formation** and encouraged to learn how to write their **first name**, using a **capital letter** for the beginning and correct letter formation
- Learn letter formation **alongside phonics**
- **Use a pencil**, and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters [with 'kicks'/'flicks'], ***most*** of which are correctly formed.
- Receive **instant feedback** when errors in pencil grip or formation are seen.
- When digraphs are introduced during phonics sessions, children will be **introduced to the joins**.
- Lines can be **widely spaced** (15mm). It may help children to leave a blank line between each line of writing initially to avoid ascenders and descenders overlapping. **Formation practice** will also occur without the restriction of lines, including the use of whiteboards, sand trays etc.

1.1.1.3 YEAR 1

1.1.1.4 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.

1.1.1.5 Notes and guidance

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.

Pupils should begin to write with **spaces between words** accurately

1.1.1.6 YEAR 2

1.1.1.7 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 unjoined** (e.g. any letter following f)
- 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.

1.1.1.8 Notes and guidance

Pupils should revise and practise 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.

They should form **ascenders** and **descenders** consistently and correctly

Pupils should practise **writing at speed**

Handwriting should be practised **in conjunction with phonics** and **spelling patterns**.

1.1.1.9 YEAR 3&4

1.1.1.10 Statutory requirements

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 unjoined**

- **increase the legibility, consistency** and **quality** of their handwriting [*for example, 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*].

1.1.1.11 Notes and guidance

- 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.
- Produce writing which **sits on the line** most of the time
- **Ascenders and descenders** in the **correct place** and **on the lines** automaticity (ie not having to think about formation).
- Pupils should use **joined handwriting for all writing**, except where other forms are required.
- To know **when to use** a clear neat hand for finished, **presentation work** and informal writing for everyday **informal work**

1.1.1.12 YEAR 5&6

1.1.1.13 Statutory requirements

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.**

1.1.1.14 Notes and guidance

- 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.
- Pupils should develop competency at **a steady dictation speed**
- In handwriting sessions, children will learn and practise **patterns involving 3 joins**.
- They will **reinforce previous work**, especially considering the **spacing** of letters, **consistent spacing and size**, distinguishing **ascenders and descenders**, reinforcing that the **capital letter is not joined** and **analysis of writing style** and presentation.

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, **some pupils need more support and provision should be made** for this. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with the SENDCO to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc. Outside agencies can be contacted where appropriate.

Left handed pupils

Teachers should be aware of the specific needs of **left-handed pupils** and make appropriate provision:

• Paper should be positioned to the left for right handed pupils and to the right for left handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision

• Pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side

• Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space – avoiding elbows knocking

• Left handed pupils should be encouraged to bring their hands down and round so a hooked, claw like style doesn't develop

• Extra practise with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.

• Letters which have a cross-stroke such as T, t and f will be formed slightly differently by left handers, where the cross is formed right to left rather than left to right

Teachers should be alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them.

Teachers may demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even

if the resulting writing is not neat.

The contribution of handwriting to other aspects of the curriculum

Teachers discuss handwriting and presentation in all subjects and aim to model good handwriting themselves. Teachers are **explicit** about different types of handwriting for example, personal note-taking or best handwriting for presentation.

Teachers give handwriting a high priority in classroom displays. The use of rubbers is allowed. However longer errors are indicated by marking through with one neat horizontal line.

Teachers in KS2 aim to make handwriting lessons relevant to the curriculum, by providing a purpose to the work where possible, encouraging the children to view handwriting as part of an overall presentation policy.

Writing Tools

Children should be encouraged to demonstrate neat, clear and consistent handwriting and presentation using any form of writing equipment; it may be easier for some to write in a pen (handwriting or biro) especially if they have weaker fine motor skills. Children will be advised by teachers as to which tool they use.

Handwriting Certificate

A 'Handwriting Certificate' can be awarded to any child who has made progress in their handwriting or fine motor, these certificates are to acknowledge the effort of those children who may be in interventions as handwriting is challenging for them.

Bronze Certificate- children are joining neatly and can now write in pen.
Silver Certificate- children are consistently joining in English
Gold Certificate- children are consistently joining in all lessons

Appendix A

Activities and exercises to develop Motor Control

Gross Motor Control is the term used to describe the development of controlled movements of the whole body, or limbs such as the legs or arms. Of particular importance in relation to handwriting is the development of good posture and balance. Activities such as:

• Dancing and skipping

• Running and jumping to music

• Use of small apparatus e.g. throwing, rolling, catching, kicking and bouncing balls

• Cycling

• Building with large-scale construction kits

• Hammering

• Consolidate vocabulary of movement by talking about movements such as: g*oing round and round, making curves, springing up and sliding down, making long, slow movements or quick, jumpy movements*

• Make large movements in the air with arms, hands and shoulders with dance ribbons, use music

• Rolling hoops

• Running with hoops

• Chalking

• Painting on a large scale

- Interactive Whiteboard

Fine Motor Control is the term used to describe smaller movements, usually of the hand and fingers (or of the feet and toes). Activities and exercises to develop Fine Motor Control:

• Folding paper

• Cutting out shapes from paper and card

• Fitting things into frames like geometric shapes

• Model making

• Building and stacking bricks

• Screw toys and wood working tools

• Pegboards

• Modelling with malleable materials like Playdoh, plasticine and clay

• Drawing in sand and sand and water play in general, including sieving, pouring and picking up toys using tools e.g. fishing rods and cranes

• Sewing and weaving

• Peeling fruit

• Develop the pincer movement by using tweezers to pick up sequins, beads and feathers, sprinkling glitter, sand and salt

• Scribbling and drawing with chalk, dry wipe pens, felt tip pens and paints on small, large boards and easels and on small and large paper

• Playing with tactile and magnetic letters

• Puzzles Games and miming involving finger and wrist movement e.g. finger puppets

• Use increasingly finer tools to make patterns of lines

• Tracing

• Colouring within guidelines and pictures

• Pattern work

• Using glue spreaders in small pots

• Painting with the tips of fingers

• Threading

• Separating beads into colours.

Appendix B

Hand gym/miming activities to relax fingers and hands before

Writing

• Washing

• Wringing, rubbing, shaking and folding clothes

• Brushing hair

• Stroking a teddy

• Playing a musical instrument

• Playing with snow, bubbles, feathers, balloons

• Picking up sweets to put in a dish or your mouth.

Later on:

• Sit in the writing position but with arms dangling limply. While in this position let the hands flutter loosely

• Let the forearms lay limply on the table in the correct writing position.

Raise and lower the elbows several times

• Place elbows on the table with the forearms held upright. Let the hands flap loosely backwards and forwards

• Clench and unclench the fists

• Drum lightly with fingers on the table

• Circle the hands, inwards, then outwards

• Hold the pen in the tripod grip lightly. With the forefinger, tap the pencil lightly.