



HORBURY BRIDGE CE J&I ACADEMY

PROGRESSION OF HANDWRITING SKILLS

Foundation Stage

In Foundation Stage, children are taught to make marks and engage in writing of many different types using a wide range of mark-making materials.

During play and role play activities they engage in writing as well as in more formal focused group activities. They are provided with a range of activities to help them to develop gross and fine motor skills, including dot to dot activities, writing patterns, and forming letters in sand and play dough. They have regular sessions of 'Write Dance' activities which encourage children to develop whole arm movement patterns. These are the pre-requisite skills needed for writing agility and fluency.

In Upper Foundation Stage, children are taught to use a printed style. They are encouraged to:-

- Write from left to right and from the top to the bottom of the page
- Use a tripod grip when holding any writing tool
- Write letters with the correct formation
- Practise correct letter formation in stroke-related families
- Write capital letters to start their first and last name
- Write their own name

When working with individual children and small groups, staff monitor children's writing to ensure that they develop appropriate letter formation and that a correct tripod grip is developing.





Letter formation is first introduced in the same order and at the same time as the groups of letter sounds so that children can begin to write and use the sounds they are learning:

m a s d t

i n p g o

c k u b

f e l h

r j v y w

z q x

- Once introduced, these are then practised in groups of letters with similar formations

e.g. a, c, o

- Rhymes are used to help teach letter and number formation
- Letters such as a and t finish with a slight 'curl' as this helps when moving towards joining



Introducing Letter Formation: rhymes

The following 'rhymes' may help used to children to remember how to form each letter and are linked to the pictures used to introduce the letter sounds.

a	Round the apple, down the leaf (Apple)	n	Down Nobby and over his net (Football net)
b	Down the laces to the heel, round the toe (Boot)	o	All around the orange (Orange)
c	Curl around the caterpillar (Caterpillar)	p	Down the plait and over the pirate's face (Pirate)
d	Round his bottom, up his tall neck, down to his feet (Dinosaur)	q	Round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair (Queen)
e	Lift off the top and scoop out the egg (Egg)	r	Down his back, then curl over his arm (Robot)
f	Down the stem and draw the leaves (Flower)	s	Slither down the snake (Snake)
g	Round her face, down her hair and give her a curl (Girl)	t	Down the tower, across the tower (Tower)
h	Down the head to the hooves and over his back (Horse)	u	Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle (Umbrella)
i	Down the body, dot for the head (Insect)	v	Down a wing, up a wing (Vulture)
j	Down his body, curl and dot (Jack in a box)	w	Down, up, down, up (Worm)
k	Down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg (Kangaroo)	x	Down the arm and leg and repeat the other side (Exercise)
l	Down the long leg (Leg)	y	Down a horn up a horn and under his head (Yak)
m	Maisie, mountain, mountain (Maisie with mountains)	z	Zig-zag-zig (Zip)



Number Formation: rhymes

All numbers start at the top and should be formed in one fluent movement	
0	Start at the top and around we go, now you've made the number zero
1	Start at the top and down we run, that's the way you make a one
2	Round at the top and then a shoe, that's the way you make a two
3	Around the tree and around the tree, that's the way you make a three
4	Down and across and down some more, that's the way you make a four
5	Short neck, belly fat, number five wears a hat
6	Down and around to make a loop; number six rolls a hoop
7	Across the sky and down from heaven, that's the way you make a seven
8	Make an 's' and close the gate. Now you've made a number eight
9	Round the circle and down the line, that's the way you make a nine
10	A one and an egg laid by a hen, that's the way you make a ten



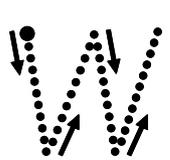
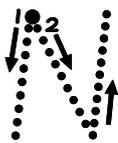
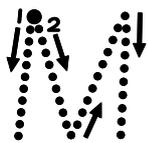
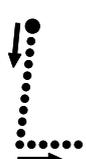
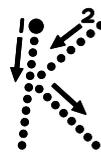
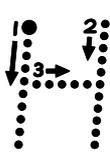
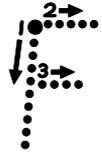
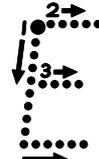
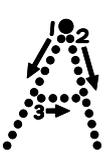
Introducing Letter Formation: direction of formation

Letter formation starts at the • and follows the arrows

All letters and numbers start at the top with the exception of **d** which starts like an **a** but extends on the upward stroke.

Letters are formed in one fluent movement apart from **k** and cross strokes on **f** and **t** which need the pencil to be lifted off the letter.







Vocabulary used: Capital letters (**A**), tall letters (**h**), small letters (**i**), letters with tails that go under the line (**g**)

a b c d e f g h i j

k l m n o p q r s t

u v w x y z

A B C D E F G H I

J K L M N O P Q R

S T U V W X Y Z



Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1, children build on early experiences and consolidate correct letter formation. They are encouraged to:

- Hold a pencil with an efficient grip, preferably a tripod grip although other grips can be successful
- Sit with the correct posture when writing
- Form regularly sized and shaped letters with uniform ascenders and descenders
- Use regular spacing between letters and words
- Be aware of the need for clear and neat presentation and appropriate layout
- Take pride in their handwriting
- Begin to join letters together

Joined writing

- Letter joins are mainly taught within words the children are using in their daily phonics sessions so that the children can write those sounds and words they are learning
- Individual letter joins are also practised in groups of letters with similar joins, e.g. *a, c, o, e* particularly where a child may find a certain join difficult
- Vocabulary used: Capital letters (*A*), tall letters (*h*), small letters (*i*), letters with tails that go under the line (*g*)

As children begin to join letters, there is often deterioration in the neatness and overall appearance of their handwriting as they become familiar with the joins. They are encouraged to recognise that this is a natural part of the process of developing joined writing and not to let it deter them from joining.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, children build on and reinforce their use of letter joins and are given opportunities to:

- Develop greater control and fluency
- Continue to develop legible, joined handwriting
- Use appropriate handwriting for different purposes e.g. print for labelling maps or diagrams; a clear, neat style for finished, presented work; a faster script for notes
- Select appropriate styles of presentation
- Use pens, once they have established correct joins and neatly formed handwriting
- Develop their own style within the general principles of the school style eg *W* or *W*

Vocabulary used: Capital or upper case letters (*A*), lower case (*i*), letters with ascenders and descenders (*h g*)

As children begin to use pen, there is often deterioration in the neatness and overall appearance of their handwriting as they become familiar with the different flow and feel of a pen. They are encouraged to recognise that this is a natural part of the process and not to let it deter them



Letter formation: Joins

a b c d e f g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t u v w x y z

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Posture and Position for Writing

Whenever children are writing they should always be seated in a comfortable upright position. Developing a good posture for writing is as important as developing a good pencil grip. They should use their non-writing hand to steady the paper and their paper/book should be tilted slightly.

Right handed children should have their paper/book tilted slightly to the right with the top right-hand corner raised slightly.

Left-handed writers will have their paper/book tilted slightly to the left with the left corner of their work raised slightly.

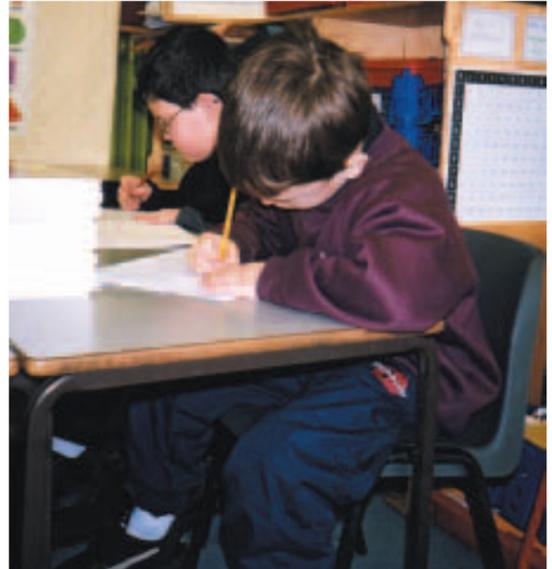
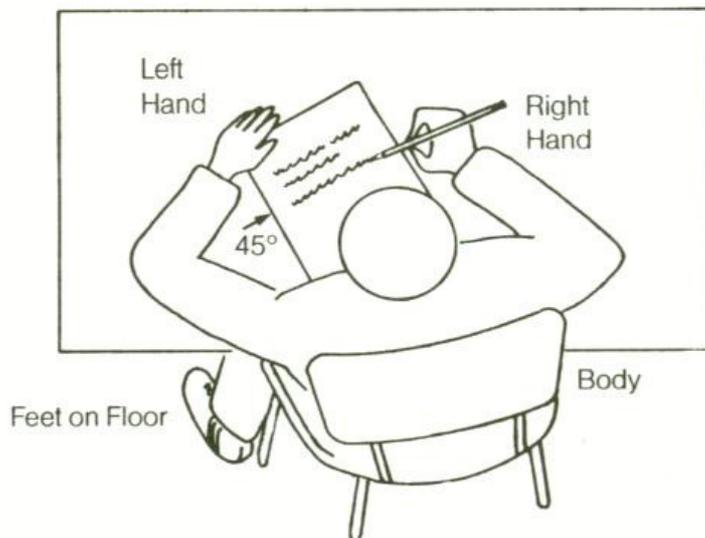


Figure 9-14

Paper Position and Correct Posture for Handwriting



Note: This paper position would be reversed for left handers who write up* but maintained for left handers who hook.†

*Bottom-up position

†Book position

(Developing Early Writing p160)