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# **Handwriting Policy**

## **Tibshelf Infant & Nursery School**

[Version 1.0]

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<b>Reviewed By (Name)</b>	<b>FGB</b>
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<b>V1.0</b>	<b>2021</b>

## TIBSHELF INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

### HANDWRITING POLICY

#### **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. At Tibshelf Infant and Nursery school we believe in the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate effectively.

Increasing fluency and speed is taught by supporting all children to;

- Develop the correct pencil grip
- Know all letters start from the top, except d and e which start from the middle
- Be able to form all letters correctly
- Know the size and orientation of letters
- Work towards developing a fluent, joined handwriting style by the end of Year 2.

#### **Organisation**

Handwriting objectives are taken from National Curriculum English Programme of Study and form part of the class teachers' and children's continuous work. Handwriting is taught in explicit, regular sessions focussing on letter formation, consistent size and shape of letters, as well as accurate joining when the child is ready. Learning is differentiated based on the needs of the child. Handwriting is applied in all writing and modelling.

#### **Planning and Delivery**

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 style.

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

#### **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are involved in a variety of activities to develop their physical development. Both gross and fine motor skills develop in a 'top down' approach. Just as a baby first learns to lift its head, then gains core control, beginning to sit, crawl and then stand, so it is the same for fine motor skills. These emerge from the shoulder joint, then to elbow and lastly to wrist and finger joints. (See appendix item 1 – The National Strategies, Early Years for Developing Handwriting).

Opportunities for mark making are planned in both the inside and outside environment. Children are offered a range of materials and experiences for mark making developed across all areas of learning. When teachers are modelling activities, they demonstrate and encourage correct pencil grip.

Across school, Children are taught how to form individual letters accurately in line with the agreed letter formation (See Appendix 2) alongside phonic teaching using a variety of strategies.

The EYFS for FS2 children states that pupils should be taught to:

#### 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.

#### 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.

#### **Teaching Sequences (EYFS)**

- Hand and finger strength
- Physical preparation (Physical Literacy)
- Tracing
- Patterns
- Over teacher's writing (highlighter)
- Under teacher's writing (directly under words – write in large letters, leave large spaces between words)
- Independence

**See appendix item 3 for the order of teaching letters and joins**

#### **Techniques for teaching letter formation**

- Model good handwriting all the time
- Demonstrate
- Talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Children form letters in the air
- Finger trace over tactile letters
- Write over highlighter pen
- Write in sand with finger or stick
- Write with chalk on chalkboard
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the back of the person in front of you...

## **NEW Development Matters – Non-statutory Guidance**

<b><u>PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT FS1 (3-4 years)</u></b>	
Children in FS1 will be learning to;	Examples of how staff can support this;
Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors. Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils. Start eating independently and learning how to use a knife and fork. Show a preference for a dominant hand	You can begin by showing children how to use onehanded tools (scissors and hammers, for example) and then guide them with hand-over-hand help. Gradually reduce the help you are giving and allow the child to use the tool independently. The tripod grip is a comfortable way to hold a pencil or pen. It gives the child good control. The pen is pinched between the ball of the thumb and the forefinger, supported by the middle finger with the other fingers tucked into the hand. You can help children to develop this grip with specially designed pens and pencils, or grippers. Encourage children to pick up small objects like individual gravel stones or tiny bits of chalk to draw with.
<b><u>LITERACY FS1 (3-4 years)</u></b>	
Children in FS1 will be learning to;	Examples of how staff can support this;
Use some of their print and letter knowledge in their early writing. For example: writing a pretend shopping list that starts at the top of the page; writing 'm' for mummy. Write some or all of their name.	Motivate children to write by providing opportunities in a wide range of ways. Suggestions: clipboards outdoors, chalks for paving stones, boards and notepads in the home corner. Children enjoy having a range of pencils, crayons, chalks and pens to choose from. Apps on tablets enable children to mix marks, photos and video to express meanings and tell their own stories. Children are also motivated by simple home-made books, different coloured paper and paper decorated with fancy frames.
Write some letters accurately.	Help children to learn to form their letters accurately. First, they need a wide-ranging programme of physical skills development, inside and outdoors. Include large-muscle co-ordination: whole body, leg, arm and foot. This can be through climbing, swinging, messy play and parachute games etc. Plan for smallmuscle co-ordination: hands and fingers. This can be through using scissors, learning to sew, eating with cutlery, using small brushes for painting and pencils for drawing. Children also need to know the language of direction ('up', 'down', 'round', 'back' etc).

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT Reception/FS2**

Children in FS2 will be learning to;	Examples of how staff can support this;
Develop their small motor skills so that they can use a range of tools competently, safely and confidently. Suggested tools: pencils for drawing and writing, paintbrushes, scissors, knives, forks and spoons.	<p>Before teaching children the correct pencil grip and posture for writing, or how to use a knife and fork and cut with scissors, check: - that children have developed their upper arm and shoulder strength sufficiently: they don't need to move their shoulders as they move their hands and fingers - that they can move and rotate their lower arms and wrists independently</p> <p>Offer children activities to develop and further refine their small motor skills. Suggestions: threading and sewing, woodwork, pouring, stirring, dancing with scarves, using spray bottles, dressing and undressing dolls, planting and caring for plants, playing with small world toys, and making models with junk materials, construction kits and malleable materials like clay. Regularly review the equipment for children to develop their small motor skills. Is it appropriate for the different levels of skill and confidence of children in the class? Is it challenging for the most dexterous children? Continuously check how children are holding pencils for writing, scissors and knives and forks. Offer regular, gentle encouragement and feedback. With regular practice, the physical skills children need to eat with a knife and fork and develop an efficient handwriting style will become increasingly automatic.</p>
Use their core muscle strength to achieve a good posture when sitting at a table or sitting on the floor	<p>Provide areas for sitting at a table that are quiet, purposeful and free of distraction. Give children regular, sensitive reminders about correct posture. Provide different chairs at the correct height for the range of children in the class, so that their feet are flat on the floor or a footrest. Provide different tables at the correct height for the range of children in the class. The table supports children's forearms. The top of the table is slightly higher than the height of the child's elbow flexed to 90 degrees.</p>

Develop the foundations of a handwriting style which is fast, accurate and efficient.	Encourage children to draw freely. Engage children in structured activities: guide them in what to draw, write or copy. Teach and model correct letter formation. Continuously check the process of children's handwriting (pencil grip and letter formation, including directionality). Provide extra help and guidance when needed. Plan for regular repetition so that correct letter formation becomes automatic, efficient and fluent over time.
<b><u>LITERACY – Reception/FS2</u></b>	
Children in FS2 will be learning to;	Examples of how staff can support this;
Form lower-case and capital letters correctly.	Teach accurate formation as they learn the sounds for each letter using a memorable phrase

**Updated Statutory Framework (from Sept 2021)** states;

Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

### **ELG: Fine Motor Skills**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases;
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery;
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

### **ELG: Writing Children at the expected level of development will:**

- 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.

## **Getting Ready to Write (Throughout school)**

### **Seating and posture**

- Chair and table to be at a comfortable height
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Encourage children to sit up straight and not slouch
- The height of the chairs should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor.
- Tables should be free of clutter
- Rooms should be well lit

- Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners.

## **Key Stage One (Year 1)**

In Year 1 children will build on the skills they have learnt in the Foundation Stage. They will be taught how to join the letters they are writing if they are forming their letters correctly.

The four joins are;

1. To letters without ascenders
2. To letters with ascenders
3. Horizontal joins
4. Horizontal joins with letters to ascenders

All Year 1 children have daily handwriting practice as part of their phonics session, this is linked to the words they are learning. All Year 1 children have a discrete handwriting session once per week.

The curriculum for Year 1 pupils states that in Year 1 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' (ie letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practice these

## **• Key Stage One (Year 2)**

By the end of Year 2 children are expected to be able to write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and correct spacing between words. Year 2 children will continue to be taught to join the letters they are writing (especially in relation to digraphs), and to start to develop a joined handwriting style. All Year 2 children have a daily 15 minute handwriting session (in addition to their daily Phonics session).

The Curriculum for Year 2 pupils states that in Year 2 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

**In Key Stage One, when children are confident with the individual letters, they begin to learn the letter combinations detailed in appendix 3, linked to the Letters and Sounds program.**

## **Links to Spelling**

Linking handwriting with spelling is one of the most powerful ways of developing the visual memory. Handwriting should be practised using letters, blends, strings or digraphs so that patterns are internalised.

Remember to use **Look-Say-Cover-Write-Check** strategy

The child;

Looks at the word carefully

Says the word

Covers the word so it can't be seen

Writes the whole word from memory

Checks the word is written correctly

If not REPEAT.

## **Disabilities and Equality Statement**

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently by the end of Year 2. However, some pupils need more support, this may include children whose first language is not English, and provision will be made for this as and when needed. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills will liaise with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) to develop a program 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, writing slopes, pencil grips. Outside agencies will be contacted where appropriate.

## **Assessing and Monitoring:**

Teachers monitor handwriting constantly across the curriculum, and especially through Exciting Writing and in work recorded in English books. Teachers record in children's books how letters and words should look so that the child has a model to copy. Handwriting targets are set as part of writing targets. Children are encouraged to improve their handwriting through incentives such as sparkly pencils and handwriting pens.

**'Tibshelf Infant & Nursery School is committed to all aspects of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.'**

Updated: May 2021

To be reviewed: May 2023



# Tibshelf Infant and Nursery School Handwriting Policy Appendix 1

## The National Strategies □ Early Years

### Gateway to writing – Developing handwriting

## Developing handwriting

Handwriting develops as children develop increased control over their bodies and a desire to communicate through mark making. The *Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage* pages 61-62 sets out some basic elements of the developmental pathway that leads from babies playing with their own fingers and toes to the early learning goal for five-year-olds: **Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.** This guidance is designed to provide some additional support for practitioners working with children in Reception classes.

### **What should I teach about handwriting in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)?**

In order that children eventually acquire a legible, fluent and fast handwriting style, they need to develop skills including:

- good gross and fine motor control
- a recognition of pattern
- a language to talk about shapes and movements
- the main handwriting movements involved in the three basic letter shapes as exemplified by: l, c, r.

### **What is the difference between gross and fine motor control?**

Children can develop and extend their gross and fine motor control through much of the effective practice, planning and resourcing for Physical Development recommended in the *Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage*, pages 92-105.

*Gross motor control* is the term used to describe the development of controlled movements of the whole body, or limbs (arms or legs). Of particular importance in relation to handwriting is the development of good posture and balance. Activities such as dance, football, use of small apparatus, cycling, gripping climbing frames and building with large-scale construction kits all develop gross motor control.

*Fine motor control* is the term used to describe smaller movements, usually of the hand and fingers (or of the feet and toes for children who communicate using touch sensitive pads with their feet). Fine motor control is best developed through activities which involve small-scale movements such as those described in the EYFS Physical Development 'Using Equipment and Materials' pages 103-105 and Creative Development 'Exploring Media and Materials', pages 110-112.

Until children have gained reasonable fine motor control through art, mark making and other activities, formal handwriting worksheets are not appropriate.

Many early years practitioners find that boys develop fine motor control more slowly than girls.

### **Ideas for developing gross motor control**

- Consolidate the vocabulary of movement by talking about the movements children make, such as going round and round, making curves, springing up and sliding down, making long, slow movements or quick, jumpy movements.
- Show children how to make large movements in the air with their arms, hands and shoulders. For example, fix ribbons on to the end of sticks for the children to swirl in the air. Encourage the use of both sides of the body.
- Let the children make different body shapes/actions in response to music to help them to remember the shapes.

### **Developing letter shapes using gross motor movements**

- Encourage children to skywrite with both hands.
- Ask another adult or a confident child to model the movement with her/his back to the rest of the children. Stand behind the children to check they are all following the movement correctly.
- Let children make patterns in the air or on each other's backs.
- Make a letter shape in the damp sand tray. Invite each child in the group to trace over the shape, going a little deeper each time. The object is to get down to the base of the sand tray without the sides falling in.
- Reinforce the vocabulary of movement, for example *the curly caterpillar*, *the long ladder* and *the one-armed robot*. Talk about the movements as you make them, using a 'patter', for example for the one-armed robot: '*Start at his head and go down to his feet. Bounce back up and go over for his arm.*' While this is helpful in the early stages, it is purely to help to establish the movement. Reinforce a letter movement by asking the children to write the letter with their eyes closed.

### **What kinds of letter patterns should I teach?**

When you introduce patterns for writing to children, it is useful to focus on features which keep recurring in letter formation, for example:

- focus on patterns which build on the three basic letter shapes:  
l, for example *the long ladder*  
c, for example *the curly caterpillar*  
r, for example *the one-armed robot*
- include patterns that move across the body, from left to right □ use pattern-making for different purposes.

Sometimes, allow children to produce the pattern across the entire line. This encourages fluency of movement and helps to emphasise the right to left direction of our writing system.

At other times, it may be useful to restrict the number of repetitions to four or five so that the child learns a little about the need to leave spaces between words.

- keep talking about the movements you make in the patterns
- let the children invent 'sounds' to make as they draw their patterns, for example a bouncing sound as they bounce up from the one-armed robot's feet, a buzzing sound as you draw anticlockwise spirals, a **shsh** sound as you make wave patterns, etc.
- some children find drawing patterns in time to music helpful. Arches can be formed to slow, relaxed music and the tempo can be changed to a marching rhythm and children encouraged to produce angled movements.

## **Some ideas for developing fine motor control**

- Let the children make patterns using pegboards.
- Provide sewing and weaving activities.
- Involve the children in chopping and peeling in cooking activities.
- Provide woodworking tools - pliers, screwdrivers, hammers.
- Use finger rhymes, counting fingers, playing with words and sounds, etc.
- Provide small construction toys.
- Structure sand and water play to include sieving, pouring, picking up toys using tools, etc.
- Develop the pincer movement: show the children how to use tweezers to pick up and sort sequins, small beads, etc., sprinkle coloured sand, glitter, salt, etc. on pictures.
- Provide the children with paints, finger paints, etc. for making big patterns on differently shaped paper, for example fish, balloons, kites. Talk about the

patterns they make. Focus on developing the *curly caterpillar*, *long ladder* and *one-armed robot*.

- Encourage the children to strengthen their fingers by using clay, play dough, Plasticine, etc., for modelling. They can make letter shapes and patterns using the modelling media.
- Encourage dexterity by asking the children to cut out large letter shapes or patterns. They can use different coloured marker pens for tracing along inside the shapes. Emphasise that circles and curly caterpillars need to be traced from the top and anti-clockwise.
- Give the children thick paintbrushes and water to paint patterns on walls, fences, etc.

## **Children's names**

Children's names are a useful source of learning for both phonics and handwriting. However, some children who come to school already able to write their names may associate the wrong movement with certain letters (the common error is forming o and a using a clockwise movement). A sensitive approach is needed here, but when the child has learned the correct movement he or she will have acquired over a third of the alphabet! Close home-school links really pay off in this area, and a sheet of letters showing correct formation should always be available for parents.

## **Choice of paper**

As children begin to write letters, having practised the letter shapes through skywriting and other large-scale activities, provide them with a large piece of paper (turned landscape) with a single line.

Lined paper is important because so much about handwriting is to do with the letters' orientation to the line. Line guides are useful for older children.

## **When should I introduce handwriting?**

Skills for handwriting can be introduced from a very early stage. Some children with special educational needs (SEN) may require specific support or provision. It is important that an accurate assessment of needs is completed to ensure that the appropriate support and provision can be planned. It is also important that where appropriate, children with SEN are included in group handwriting practices and that the highest expectations are maintained. On occasions it might be necessary to consult local SEN advisory and support services for guidance on approaches and resources but largely, practitioners will find that these children are on the continuum of learning handwriting skills and will respond positively to good quality first teaching, reinforcement of skills and appropriate small steps targets. They will need skilled practitioner input. Most importantly teachers need to assess accurately where

the child is, and plan carefully for the small steps of progress which will support them in eventually achieving the Early Learning goal. Practitioners should offer activities which encourage children to develop controlled movements - both in terms of fine and gross motor control - through all kinds of play and cross-curricular opportunities. Children should be allowed to pick up the writing implement themselves and decide which hand they prefer.

Only then should they be given help with the pencil hold (see sections on pencil grip and lefthanded children). As children begin to discover their preferred hand for holding a pencil and once they are confidently using flowing movements, they can be introduced to smaller, more controlled activities.

Through these, you can reinforce left → right hand movements, moving from the top to the bottom of a letter and reinforcing the anti-clockwise movement, etc. Some children's previous experience of print forms in languages other than English may have prepared them for the movements required to write English letters. Other children will need to learn there are differences between the directionality of English and that of other print systems.

Specific advice and guidance can be obtained from local ethnic minority achievement services.

## **How does handwriting practice link into emergent/developmental writing?**

Ideally, children need to be supervised when they are practising handwriting until letter formation is secure - bad habits reinforced in the EYFS are difficult to eradicate later on. Children who have experienced the multi-sensory approach to learning letter shapes are less likely to develop bad handwriting habits. The holistic approach to learning handwriting and phonics together is an ideal basis for emergent writing, because children become used to thinking about letter shapes and sounds together. As children begin to join letters to write digraphs and some high frequency words, their writing and spelling will become increasingly accurate.

## **Is there a recommended style of handwriting?**

Each school should have a handwriting policy which aims to teach children to write in a way that is legible, fluent and fast. This entails a style which enables the letters to be joined easily. If children find the physical act of scribing taxing, they will be unlikely to develop into confident effective writers.

Continuity from EYFS through Key Stages 1 and 2 is vitally important. Not only should a school have an agreed style, but also an agreed 'patter' for helping children to recall the required movement for each letter. Teaching assistants and student teachers should be aware of the style and the 'patter'.

## **Using 'shape families' to teach letter formation**

For simplicity, the letters of the alphabet can be sorted into four main movement groups. Some letters have different forms - b, k, y, v, and so these fall into two groups.

Some letters e.g. f, s, have some affinity with a group but could be taught separately. The advantage of aligning letters with a key letter is to help children to remember the starting point and subsequent movement of the letter. This is particularly effective in discriminating b from d.

The four groups are:

- down and off in another direction, exemplified by the letter l (**long ladder**): letters i, j, l, t, u (v, w with rounded bases)
- down and retrace upwards, exemplified by the letter r (**one-armed robot**): letters b, h, k, m, n, p, r; (numbers 2, 3, 5 follow a clockwise direction)
- anti-clockwise round, exemplified by the letter c (**curly caterpillar**) letters: c, a, d, e, g, o, q, f, s; numbers: 0, 6, 8, 9
- zigzag letters: letters: v, w, x, z; numbers: 1, 4, 7.

## Preventing confusion between the letters 'b' and 'd'

Introduce each letter of the alphabet in association with its key letter (l, c or r). The letter d is a 'curly caterpillar' letter: it starts exactly like a c, but then 'goes up to the top in a straight line and then down again'. The letter b is a 'one-armed robot' letter: it starts higher than the letter r, but when it touches the line it goes back again, over and round. In this way children learn letters as movement rather than as visual shapes, and so they have a mechanism for remembering letters that are visually confusing. In *Letters and Sounds*, the letter d is learned in Phase 2, Set 2 and the letter b in Phase 2, Set 5. If the letters are taught effectively, the motor memory of each letter will be paired with the phoneme and will not present a problem.

## Why is good posture important?

Developing a good posture is as important as developing a good pencil grip. Over the years children spend a great deal of time writing, and sitting in an awkward position can cause headaches, fatigue and pain in the shoulder, arm or hand. It can also slow down a child's writing.

Children will be able to sustain writing for longer if they become used to sitting comfortably.

- Ensure that they have a good pencil grip - use commercial pencil grips only if other methods have failed.
- Check that tables are large enough for the children not to be jostling each other's arms.



- Check that the height of tables and chairs allows children to sit comfortably, with their feet flat on the floor. Their legs should be free and not come into contact with the underside of the desk top. They should be able to sit up at the table without having to lean over it or stretch to reach it.
- The lighting should be good, so that the children can see what they have written.
- Children should use their non-writing hand to steady the paper and bear some body-weight.
- The paper should be tilted slightly.
- Provide a slanting board for those who need it (a partially filled A4 file is a useful shape).

### **Should I use formal worksheets to teach handwriting?**

At Tibshelf Infant and Nursery school we do not choose to use worksheets to record child's writing. While children are experimenting with shapes and letter forms, fluency of movement is most important. Size and neatness do not matter at this stage. Children enjoy experimenting with making patterns in sand or salt, using finger paints, marker pens, etc. and incorporating these into drawings, etc. (*Mark Making Matters: young children making meaning in all areas of learning and development* (DCSF ref 00767-2008BKT-EN) provides more guidance on the significance of practitioners' role in fostering and celebrating this early mark making.

Once children have had plenty of experience in drawing the letter shapes without constraints, they can then move on to using pencils and finer pens on smaller sheets of paper. For instance, you could cut out some green cabbage leaves for them to draw lots of caterpillars (letter c). The children could then cut a short slit up the stem, and with adult help, fold and staple a number of leaves together to form a cabbage. Similarly, they could draw apples lying under a tree (a) or oranges growing in a tree (o). To start with, the children could trace over 'the apples' and you may want to put a mark at the point where the 'letter' begins.

Then they can go on and do some more by themselves. This sort of handwriting 'worksheet' has motivational appeal and will help in the development of fine motor control.

### **Why is a good pencil grip important?**

If children are to develop a fluent and fast handwriting style, they must learn to hold a pencil with a grip that is relaxed but allows for efficient control of the pencil. If children grip a pencil too tightly, they won't develop a free-flowing movement and they will tire very quickly. Experts agree that children should be encouraged to hold the pencil between the thumb and forefinger with the pencil resting on the third finger. The thumb and forefinger should also be able to move slightly so that very fine movements required for writing are possible.

Commercial pencil grips, or triangular pencils, can be used to encourage this pencil hold but their use must be monitored as they can be misapplied. Care should be taken

that children do not grip the pencil too tightly, as this produces tenseness in the arm and shoulder and also increases pressure on the paper.

## **Left-handed children**

At least ten per cent of the population is left-handed - a slightly higher proportion of these are males. There is no need for left-handed children to be disadvantaged when writing, if a few simple strategies are employed:

- Model letter formation, skywriting, etc. specifically for left-handed children, with your left hand.
- Make sure that left-handed children sit on the left of right-handed children, otherwise their writing arms will clash.
- Put a mark at the left side of the page to indicate where writing begins, as some left-handed children mirror-write from the right.
- Left-handed children usually need to have the paper slightly to the left of the centre of their body and should be encouraged to tilt their work clockwise so they can see what they have written.
- Experiment with seat height - some left-handed children may need a higher seat to view their work clearly and to prevent the elbow locking into their side as they work across the paper.
- To avoid smudging their work:
  - left-handed children should be encouraged to position their fingers about 1.5cm away from the end of their writing implement
  - the pencil should sit in the 'V' between thumb and forefinger, sitting parallel to the thumb — the wrist should be straight.
- Writing from left to right is more difficult for left-handed children. They should, therefore, be given more attention in the classroom to ensure that they do not learn bad habits of position, posture and pen hold which will hinder the development of a fast, fluent and legible hand.

## **Ascenders and descenders**

Getting the movement of the letter right is one aspect of securing good handwriting. Establishing the relationship between the position of the letters is another. Lined paper (or the fine squared paper used on the continent) is essential. Show the children that the 'body' of the descenders (g, j, p, q, y), the part which sits on the line, is the same height as the x letter (a, c, e, i, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x, z). In most styles, the letter t is shorter than the other ascenders b, d, h, l. The letter f is distinguished by the variety of ways in which it is written.

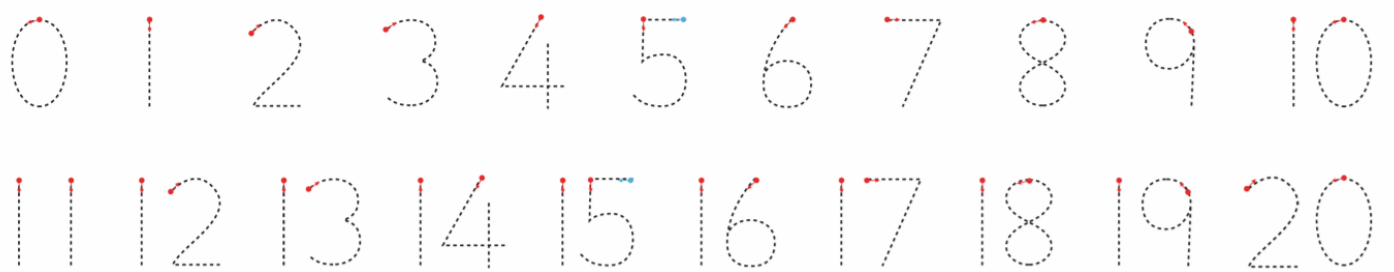


Tibshelf Infant and Nursery School Handwriting Policy Appendix 2

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



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20



## **Tibshelf Infant and Nursery School Handwriting Policy Appendix 3**

### **Order of Teaching**

#### **Single letters (YR and Y1)**

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

#### **Supporting activities**

- tracing patterns
- tracing
- copying over (letters, numbers, words)
- copying under (letters, numbers, words)

#### **Joins Y1 (going into Y2)**

Introduction of the three handwriting joins

- First join; un um ig id ed eg an or in
- Second join; ch th tl ll ill ck ack ti ink unk
- Third join; od ve oon oom
- Practise the break letters; b p g q y j z
- Practise capital letters

**Letters under the line never join**

**Children in Year 2 should consolidate all joins previously taught.**



YEAR 1 JOINS LINKED TO YEAR 1 COMMON EXCEPTION WORDS FROM NATIONAL CURRICULUM WORDS & TRICKY WORDS UP TO END PHASE 5 FROM LETTERS & SOUNDS – APPENDIX 4

Long ladder to one armed robot <b>th</b>	Curly caterpillar to curly caterpillar <b>ee, ear, ea</b>	One armed robot to curly caterpillar <b>ng,</b>	<b>ay, au</b>	Curly caterpillar to one armed robot <b>ch, or, ar, er</b>	Long ladder to curly caterpillar	One armed robot to long ladder	Long ladder to curly caterpillar	<b>oa, oo, ow, ou, oy, oi</b>	NO JOIN
<b>th e</b>	do	me	to <b>d ay</b>	<b>ar e</b>	<b>t he y</b>	<b>hi s</b>	to	<b>y ou</b>	a
<b>th ey</b>	<b>co me</b>	no	<b>s ai d</b>	<b>w er e</b>	he	<b>i nt o</b>	<b>to day</b>	<b>y ou r</b>	of
<b>th ere</b>	<b>on ce</b>	<b>co me</b>	<b>s ay s</b>	<b>c om e</b>	<b>s he</b>		<b>lo ve</b>	<b>l ov e</b>	is
<b>th eir</b>	<b>p eo ple</b>	<b>so me</b>		<b>s om e</b>	<b>he re</b>		<b>sc ho ol</b>	<b>h ou se</b>	I
<b>in to</b>	<b>ca lled</b>	<b>o ne</b>		<b>on e</b>	<b>t he re</b>		<b>in to</b>	<b>ou r</b>	be
<b>the ir</b>	<b>call ed</b>	<b>o nc e</b>		<b>on ce</b>	<b>w he re</b>		<b>ha ve</b>	<b>ou t</b>	we
	<b>look ed</b>	<b>frie nd</b>		<b>fri en d</b>	<b>ho use</b>		<b>litt le</b>	<b>l oo ked</b>	go
	<b>ask ed</b>	<b>ha s</b>		<b>h er</b>	<b>he r</b>		<b>w ha t</b>	<b>c ou ld</b>	so
	<b>co uld</b>			<b>wh en</b>	<b>cal le d</b>		<b>w he n</b>	<b>sch oo l</b>	by
					<b>fr ie nd</b>		<b>peop le</b>		ask
							<b>t he re</b>		push
							<b>t he ir</b>		oh
							<b>lo oked</b>		Mrs

							cou ld		Mr
Zig zag zebra to curly caterpillar	ey	Curly caterpillar to zig zag aw, ew	Long ladder to long ladder	ur	Curly caterpillar to long ladder ai			ear air ig h ur e	
wa s	th ey	h av e	pu ll	o ur	s ch ool	p ut	my		th ei r
			fu ll		al l	p ul l			
			a ll		wh at	f ul l			
			li ke		c al led	o ut			
			li ttle			co ul d			
			l it tle						
			li tt le						
			lit tl e						
			ca ll ed						

YEAR 2 JOINS LINKED TO YEAR 2 COMMON EXCEPTION WORDS FROM NATIONAL CURRICULUM WORDS – APPENDIX 5

Long ladder to one armed robot <b>in, im, th, tm</b>	Curly caterpillar to curly caterpillar <b>do, oo, ec</b>	Long ladder to curly caterpillar <b>ld, lo</b>	One armed robot to one armed robot <b>mb, mp, hr</b>	Curly caterpillar to one armed robot <b>ch, or, ar, er</b>	Long ladder to curly caterpillar <b>lo, ld, te, la</b>	One armed robot to long ladder <b>ki, mi, hi, nl</b>	One armed robot to curly caterpillar <b>nd, mo, ho</b>	Long ladder to long ladder <b>il, li, tt, ut, ul</b>	Curly caterpillar to long ladder <b>au, cl, at, et</b>
f in d	do or	chi ld	cli mb	do or	f lo or	ki nd	fi nd	ch il d	bec au se
k in d	d oo r	chi ld ren	i mp rove	flo or	o ld	mi nd	ki nd	ch il dren	cl imb
m in d	fl oo r	wi ld	C hr istmas	po or	co ld	be hi nd	mi nd	w il d	gre at
beh in d	p oo r	c lo thes		b eh ind	go ld	c hi ld	behi nd	c li mb	pr et ty
cl im b	b ec ause			ch ild	ho ld	c hi ldren	mo st	pre tt y	be au tiful
bo th	be ca use			ch ildren	to ld	o nl y	ho ld	bea ut iful	f at her
fa th er	co ld	<b>ou, op</b>		chil dr en	to ld	pla nt	fat he r	beau ti ful	cl ass
pa th	gr ea t	h ou r		childr en	s te ak	pare nt s	ho ur	beautif ul	p at h
ba th	br ea k	c ou ld		on ly	af te r		mo ve		b at h
im prove	st ea k	sh ou ld		ev er y	la st		w ho		cl othes
clo th es	b ea utiful	w ou ld		bre ak	c la ss		w ho le		w at er
aga in	co uld	pe op le		ste ak	p la nt		ma ny		h al f
Chris tm as	p eo ple			aft er	cou ld		clot he s		everybo dy

[illegible]