

THE ROCHE SCHOOL
Handwriting Policy

This policy, which applies to the whole school, is publicly available on the school website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or another accessible format if required) may be obtained from the school Office.

Information Sharing Category	Public Domain
Date Published	November 2025
Authorised by (if required)	SLT Team
Review/Update Date	November 2026
Responsible Area	Allison Judge

The place of Handwriting in the Writing Process

The National Curriculum for English (2014) defines the two scopes of the writing process as:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

Aims

Our aims in teaching handwriting are:

- For all children to learn and practise appropriate and effective handwriting skills at each stage of development, continually working towards mature handwriting which is:
 - Legible
 - Presentable
 - Comfortable
 - Fluent
 - Flexible
 - Fast
 - Automatic
 - Sustainable
- For children to have opportunities to write in different styles and for different purposes across the curriculum.
- For all staff to use and model the agreed handwriting conventions outlined in this document, thus providing consistency and continuity throughout the school community.
- To make provision for left-handed children and for children who experience difficulties.

The Roche School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all children fulfil their potential

Development of Handwriting skills: Rationale

Handwriting is complex perceptual-motor skill that is dependent upon the maturation and integration of several cognitive, perceptual, and motor skills including:

- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills
- Visual-motor control
- Eye hand co-ordination
- Cognitive and perceptual skills
- Tactile and kinaesthetic sensitivities
- Behaviour, concentration, and motivation

Awareness of this complexity informs the curriculum and teaching progression across the school. It also underpins any intervention programme when children experience difficulties. From Early Years onwards, staff and children understand that handwriting is a ‘whole body’ activity.

Curriculum

We understand that handwriting is a taught developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression. We aim to ensure that all children can communicate their work through the development of cursive handwriting that is legible and of appropriate size.

Early Years Foundation Stage (0-5 years)

All areas of learning in the EYFS are integrated, but specific references to handwriting skills are found in:

- Physical Development (movement and growing)
- Literacy (writing)

Other areas which support handwriting development include:

- Communication and language development
- Personal, social, and emotional development
- Expressive arts and design

Secure learning in this early stage lays the crucial groundwork for effective, lifelong handwriting habits. This begins with informed practice whereby:

- Staff support parents and carers as partners in their children’s learning by sharing and explaining the handwriting curriculum.
- We acknowledge the fundamental importance of developing the ‘big muscles of the body’ (gross motor) as this support the ‘little muscles of the hand’ (fine motor)

- Activities to develop handwriting skills are implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activity.
- The movement patterns needed for letter formation are modelled and practised using a wide variety of playful activities, tools, media, and positions.
- Warm-up activities are used before any writing activity begins.
- Specific handwriting lessons, where children are taught to form letters in cursive, do not begin until the beginning of the Spring Term. Prior to this, children practice their fine and gross motor skills with a variety of mediums and through play.
- Baseline assessment is used to establish a clear starting point and identification of the next steps in developing the subskills of handwriting.
- Progress in all areas of development is monitored to ensure that extra support is given where needed.

Children are taught to:

- Hold a pencil in an effective manner for writing and be encouraged to correct any errors in grip or stature.
- Understand that letters are written on a base line.
- Begin to form some recognisable letters, capital letters and numerals.
- Have an understanding of writing their own name.
- Understanding different shaped letter families.

In Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) pupils should continue to be taught to:

- sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.
- form lower-case letters in the correct direction, and when the child is reading, begin to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.
- 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.
- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another.
- start to understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- 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.

Years 3 & 4 Programme of Study: Statutory Requirements

Joined cursive 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 unjoined.
- 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.

Years 5 & 6 Programme of Study Statutory requirements:

Handwriting and presentation

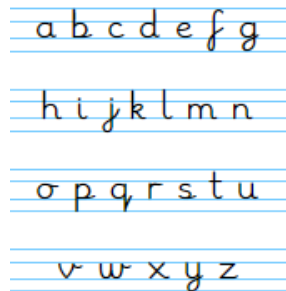
Pupils should be taught to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:

- choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether to join specific letters.
- choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

Progression of letter formation throughout the school

Early Years Foundation Stage (0-5 years)

- In Nursery and Reception, pupils should be taught pre-cursive (print) letter formation without lead in lines or looping descenders.
- At the spring term in Reception, children will be taught cursive handwriting, with the lead out. These will not join. If children are not developmentally ready, they will remain with pre-cursive.



- Pupils will have daily handwriting sessions. These may focus on the development on gross and fine motor skills in multi-sensory ways. If a child is identified as needing additional support, then this will be provided for.

Year 1 upwards

- In Year 1 and 2, children will practice this daily, eventually leading them to cursive handwriting.
- In Years 3 and 4, children will have one handwriting lesson a week.
- In Years 5 and 6, children who need further support in handwriting will take part in booster sessions and interventions.
- If any children are identified as needing extra support in any year group, they will have additional lessons when appropriate.

This is the formation of letters that we expect children to produce by the time they reach Upper Key Stage 2 (Year 5).