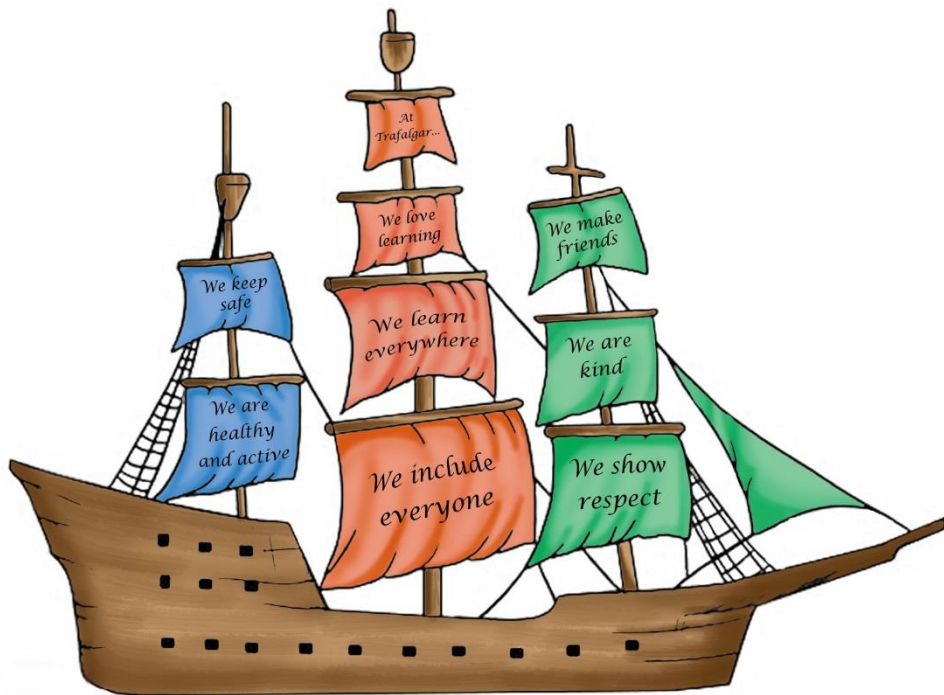


Trafalgar Community Infant School



Policy Document **ENGLISH POLICY** **Handwriting**

REVIEWED: Autumn 2026
TO BE REVIEWED: Autumn 2027

Handwriting at Trafalgar

Aims

Here at Trafalgar, we are very proud of our pupils' handwriting. Handwriting is a key skill that influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum and the ease with which children can share their thoughts and ideas.

By the end of Year 2, pupils should be able to:

- know the importance of clear and neat presentation to communicate meaning effectively;
- form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place;
- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another;
- form capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation, and relationship to one another and to lowercase letters;
- use spacing between words that reflect the size of the letters;
- join some letters (beginning with digraphs).

Curriculum Expectations for each year group

Reception	Year 1	Year 2
<p>ELG: Fine Motor Skills Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases. <p>ELG: Writing Children at the expected level of development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. • Write their name <p>Autumn Develop a dominant hand Build upper arm/shoulder strength so that children do not move shoulders as they move hands/fingers Have a go forming letters Draw pictures of their own choice</p> <p>Spring Use core strength to sit at a table with good posture. Hold a pencil effectively using the tripod grip frequently. Form some letters correctly. Continue to use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery.</p>	<p>Pupils are taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 practise these • Write their full name <p>Autumn and Spring Letter families including capital letters alongside lower case. Once secure with letter shapes practising these with common exception words.</p> <p>Learn in the order below Curly Caterpillar Family (anticlockwise movements) a, c, d, e, f, g, o, q, s Long Ladder Family (mainly down and round movements) i, j, l, t, u, y One Armed Robot Family (down, up, and over movements) b, h, k, m, n, p, r</p>	<p>Pupils are taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another • Use some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and 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 • Write their full name <p>Autumn 1 Formation of numerical digits during maths lessons. Refer to digits during handwriting. Letter families including capital letter alongside lower case</p> <p>Review in the order below Curly Caterpillar Family (anticlockwise movements) a, c, d, e, f, g, o, q, s Long Ladder Family (mainly down and round movements) i, j, l, t, u, y</p>

<p>Cut with scissors Show accuracy and care when drawing. Begin to draw diagonal lines. Copy a square. Begin to draw recognisable pictures.</p> <p>Summer Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing- using the tripod grip in almost all cases. Continue to use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery. Cut along a curved line continue to show accuracy and care when drawing. Form letters correctly.</p>	<p>Zig-Zag Monster Family (diagonal movements) v, w, x, z</p> <p>Summer Revisit letters as necessary paying close attention to ascenders, descenders and position on the line, spacing between words. Write days of the week. Write numbers as written words Zero to twenty and tens numbers</p>	<p>One Armed Robot Family (down, up, and over movements) b, h, k, m, n, p, r Zig-Zag Monster Family (diagonal movements) v, w, x, z</p> <p>Autumn 2 Write common exception words from year 1 including writing these as single words and then in sentences. Autumn focus on transcription e.g. copying a short nursery rhyme or poem that an adult has written out by hand for children to copy.</p> <p>Spring Write common exception words from Year 2 including writing these as single words and then in sentences Introduce lead ins and begin to join letters which make digraphs Use the phrase 'ready and' when taking the pencil from the line to the starting point. Work on digraphs in isolation Work on digraphs in words (only join the digraphs in the word)</p> <p>Summer Continue writing Year 1 and Year 2 tricky words Continue digraph joins Work on trigraphs and joins with descenders</p>
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All classes will support children to enjoy learning and developing their handwriting, with a sense of achievement and pride.

In all classes at Trafalgar:

- All children are taught using the same Little Wandle patter. This includes lower case and upper case letter formation. Numeral formation is also taught following a patter. (See Appendix 1 for patter).
- Once all graphemes have been taught, handwriting teaching will focus on the different handwriting 'families'
- Teachers model our exemplar handwriting in their modelling and marking.
- Children should not use rubbers to correct work, except when 'publishing/sharing'.

For Reception:

- Children will be taught letter formation daily as part of their phonic sessions.
- There will be 2 x 15 minute whole class fine motor sessions weekly.
- All children will complete an adult-led writing activity weekly, where pencil grip will be modelled and supported and children will write at tables in books or on paper.

For KS1 classes (Year 1, and Year 2):

- Handwriting is taught in 15-minute direct, discreet teaching sessions three times per week.
- Children will practise handwriting in handwriting books and in English books.
- A KS1 handwriting lesson will always include a warm up (see Appendix 2 for ideas)
- Adults model on handwriting paper either on a flip chart on the IWB or under a visualiser.
- Children will practise while adults give live feedback.
- Most of the time the children will be working in their handwriting books. Sometimes they will do their handwriting in their English books.
- Handwriting should be taught as a whole class lesson. Year 1 to move towards whole class teaching of handwriting during the autumn term.
- All children in year 2 will be taught to join digraphs.

For more information on strategies we use to help children develop their handwriting skills, please see Appendix 3 the 'Good practice for handwriting Toolkit' from the National Handwriting Association. Currently a separate attachment.






















Letter Handwriting Families at Trafalgar















At Trafalgar, we teach the letters in the following groups:

1. **Curly Caterpillar Family (anticlockwise movements)** a, c, d, e, f, g, o, q, s
2. **Long Ladder Family (mainly down and round movements)** i, j, l, t, u, y
3. **One Armed Robot Family (down, up, and over movements)** b, h, k, m, n, p, r
4. **Zig-Zag Monster Family (diagonal movements)** v, w, x, z













Appendix 1

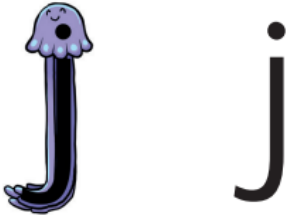
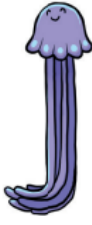










Little Wandle Letter Formation Patter (in order of graphemes taught)













Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
 	 snake	Show your teeth and and let the s hiss out sssss sssss	Down the snake from head to tail.
 	 astronaut	Open your mouth wide and make the a sound at the back of your mouth a a a	Around the astronaut's helmet and down into space.
 	 tiger	Open your lips; put the tip of your tongue behind your teeth and press t t t	Down the tiger and across its neck.
 	 penguin	Bring your lips together, push them open and say p p p	Down the penguin's back, up and around its head.
 	 iguana	Pull your lips back and make the i sound at the back of your mouth i i i	Down the iguana and dot the leaf.
 	 net	Open your lips a bit, put your tongue behind your teeth and make the nnnnn sound nnnnn	Down, up and over the net.
 	 mouse	Put your lips together and make the mmmmm sound mmmmm	Down, up and over the mouse's ears.

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
 d	 duck	Put your tongue to the top and front of your mouth and make a quick d sound d d d	Around the duck's body, up to its head and down to its feet.
 g	 goat	Give me a big smile that shows your teeth; press the middle of your tongue to the top and back of your mouth; push your tongue down and forward to make the g sound g g g	Around the goat's face and curl under its chin.
 o	 octopus	Make your mouth into a round shape and say o o o	All around the octopus.
 c	 cat	Open your mouth into a little smile; make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say c c c	Curl around the cat.
 k	 kite	Open your mouth into a little smile; make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say k k k	Down the kite, up to the top corner and down to the bottom corner.
 ck	 sock	Open your mouth into a little smile, make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say c c c	c Curl around the heel of the sock. k Down the sock, up and back down to the toe. Catchphrase: Rock that sock!
 e	 elephant	Open your mouth wide and say e e e	Around the elephant's eye and curl down its trunk.



Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
 u	 <p data-bbox="646 342 726 369">umbrella</p>	<p data-bbox="798 152 1093 212">Open your mouth wide and say u u u</p>	<p data-bbox="1149 152 1481 212">Down and around the umbrella and back to the ground.</p>
 r	 <p data-bbox="646 577 726 604">rainbow</p>	<p data-bbox="798 403 1093 463">Show me your teeth to make a rrrrr sound rrrrr rrrrr</p>	<p data-bbox="1149 403 1481 463">From the cloud to the ground and over the rainbow.</p>
 h	 <p data-bbox="646 846 726 873">helicopter</p>	<p data-bbox="798 651 1093 712">Open your mouth and breathe out sharply h h h</p>	<p data-bbox="1149 651 1481 678">Down, up and over the helicopter.</p>
 b	 <p data-bbox="662 1097 710 1124">bear</p>	<p data-bbox="798 900 1093 960">Put your lips together and say b as you open them b b b</p>	<p data-bbox="1149 900 1481 960">Down the bear's back, up and around its tummy.</p>
 f	 <p data-bbox="646 1388 726 1415">flamingo</p>	<p data-bbox="798 1149 1093 1265">Open your lips a little; put your teeth on your bottom lip and push the air out to make the sound fffff fffff</p>	<p data-bbox="1149 1149 1481 1209">Down the flamingo to its foot and across its wings.</p>
 l	 <p data-bbox="646 1630 726 1657">lollipop</p>	<p data-bbox="798 1433 1093 1550">Open your mouth a little; put your tongue up to the top of your mouth, behind your teeth, and press lllll lllll</p>	<p data-bbox="1149 1433 1364 1460">Down the lollipop stick.</p>

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
	 jellyfish	Pucker your lips and show your teeth; use your tongue as you say j j j	Down the jellyfish and dot its head.
	 volcano	Put your teeth against your bottom lip and make a buzzing v v v v v v v v v v	Down to the bottom of the volcano and back up to the top.
	 wave	Pucker your lips and keep them small as you say w w w	Down and up and down and up the waves.
	 box	Mouth open, then push the cs/x sound through as you close your mouth cs cs cs (x x x)	From the top, across the box to the bottom. From the top again, across the box to the bottom.
	 yo-yo	Smile, tongue to the top of your mouth, say y without opening your mouth yyy	Down, around the yo-yo and curl around the string.
	 zebra	Show me your teeth and buzz the z sound zzzzz zzzzz	Across the top of the zebra's head, zig-zag down its neck and along.

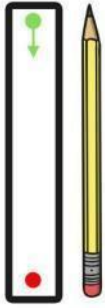
Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase/ Catchphrase
	 queen	Pucker your mouth, then open it as you say qu qu qu	q Around the queen's face, down her robe and a flick at the end. u Down and around the umbrella and back to the ground. qu Quick, it's the queen!
	 cherries	Pucker your lips and show your teeth; use your tongue as you say ch ch ch	ch Chew the cherries, children.
	 shells	Pucker your lips and show your teeth; push the air out shshshshsh shshshshsh	sh Share the shells.
	 thumb	Voiced: Tongue on your teeth, teeth almost closed to make a 'buzzing' th th th Unvoiced: Tongue on your teeth; push the air out th th th	th Thumbs up, we're having fun.
	 ring	Open your mouth a bit and then use your tongue at the back of your mouth to say ng ng ng	ng Bling on a ring.
	 pink panda	Open your mouth a bit and then use your tongue at the back of your mouth to say ngk ngk ngk	nk I think I am pink.

How to write capital letters

Use this document to ensure correct letter formation when you are teaching children to form capital letters.

Letter	Capital letter formation phrase
A	From the top, diagonally down to the left, up to the top, diagonally down to the right. Lift up and across.
B	From the top, down, back to the top. Round to the middle, round to the bottom.
C	From the top, curl around to the left to sit on the line.
D	From the top, down, back to the top. Curve right, down to the bottom.
E	From the top, down, back to the top. Across, back. Lift up and across the middle. Lift up and across the bottom line.
F	From the top, down, back to the top. Across, back. Lift up and across the middle.
G	From the top, curl around to the line, carry on up, then straight down. Lift up and across.
H	From the top and down. Space. From the top and down. Lift up and join the lines across the middle.
I	From the top to the bottom and stop.
J	From the top, all the way down, then short curl to the left.
K	From the top, down, up to the middle. Diagonally up, back and diagonally down to the line.
L	From the top, down and across the line.
M	From the top, down, back to the top. Diagonally down, diagonally up. Straight down to the line.
N	From the top, down, back to the top. Diagonally down, then straight up to the top.
O	From the top – all around the o.
P	From the top, down then back up. Curve right to halfway down.
Q	From the top – all around the o. Lift off. Short line diagonally down.
R	From the top, down, then back up. Curve right to halfway down. Diagonally down to the line.
S	From the top, under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail.
T	From the top, down and stop. Lift up and from the left, make a line across the top.
U	From the top, down and curve right, then straight up to the top.
V	From the top diagonally right to the bottom, then diagonally up to the top.
W	From the top diagonally right to the bottom, diagonally up to the top, diagonally down to the line, then diagonally up again.
X	From the top, diagonally right to the bottom. Space. Start at the top, then diagonally left to the bottom.
Y	From the top diagonally right to the middle. Space. From the top diagonally left to the middle. Straight down to the bottom.
Z	From the top go across, diagonally down to the left and across the bottom.

Numeral formation and patter



one

Straight line down and then
you're done! 1 is fun.



two

Half a heart will never do,
Slide to the right, make a 2.



three

Around the tree, around the tree,
That's the way to make a 3.



four

Down and across, down some more,
That's the way to make a 4.



five

Make a hat, make his back.
Make five's tummy round and fat.



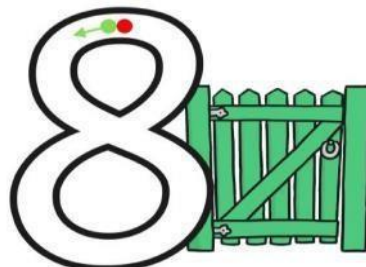
six

Make a 'C' then in you go,
Now you've made a 6, you know.



seven

Across the sky, down from heaven,
Now you've made a 7.



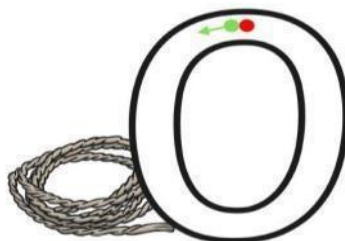
eight

Make an 's', then shut the gate,
That's the way to make an 8.



nine

Circle and line,
That's the way to make a 9!



zero

Make a loop, just like so,
Now you've made a 0.

Appendix 2 Hand warm up ideas

<https://teachhandwriting.co.uk/handwriting-warm-up-exercises.html> With video examples



Hand Warm Up Exercises

Carrying out the following hand exercises prior to fine motor or drawing tasks helps the child's hands prepare for activity. The exercises are aimed at increasing the tactile and proprioceptive sensory messages the child receives from their hands. By doing this the child will have an increased sensory awareness of what their hand muscles and joints are doing. This should help improve motor control and aid motor memory for learning movements involved in fine motor tasks such as writing.

1. Briefly rub hands, palms together, then the back of each hand. If tolerated hand cream can be used.



2. Press hands and fingers together with palms flat, squeeze then stretch fingers out wide. Repeat 5 times.



3. Hook fingers of both hands together and pull in opposite directions.



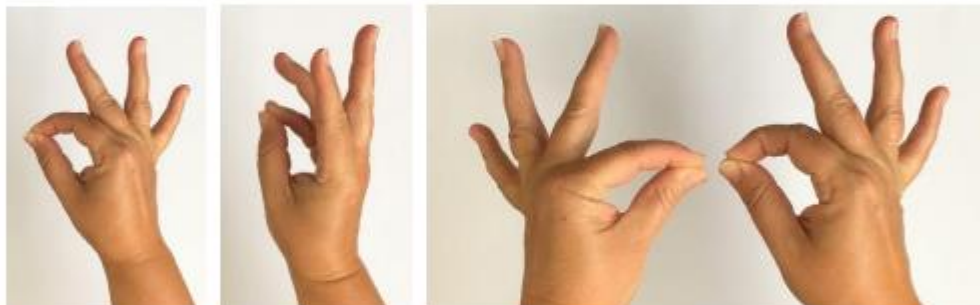
4. With palms together and fingers straight, press fingers together firmly. Hold for 10-20 seconds, and then shake out the hands to relax fingers.



5. Place palms together, fingers straight, separate palms slightly, keeping finger tips touching. Rotate thumbs around each other, away from the body then towards body. Ten times each way.



6. With hands separated, preferred hand first, ask the child to touch their thumb with each fingertip in turn, beginning with the index finger and back again. When mastered separately, carry out with both hands at the same time.



7. Put your hands on the table (palms down). Now copy your partner who is pretending to play the piano, by lifting one finger at a time from the table.



Note: It may be beneficial to have a break during fine motor tasks and carry out hand aerobics to help maintain a high level of sensory messages.