



# Handwriting Policy

It was developed by	Head teacher
Consultation	Whole School Community
Governing Sub Committee	Pastoral
It has been presented to the governors.	Summer 2015
Communication: This policy is hosted on the school website and available for copying from there.	
It will be reviewed:	2 Autumn - Annual
It was last reviewed:	Autumn 2012



## Handwriting Policy

### School Vision

At Chesswood Middle School we inspire our whole school community to enjoy their learning adventure and have fun along the way. We ignite a passion for learning throughout the school community, securing excellence, empathy and equality in all that we do.

### School Mission

We will strive to achieve the highest standards of academic achievement and behaviour within a vibrant, exciting learning environment so that all children leave this school with confidence and the ability to take advantage of future opportunities.

### Agreement Links

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies

English Policy

Supporting Material

<http://mamaot.com/3-tricks-to-help-kids-learn-to-hold-their-pencil-correctly/>

<http://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/index.html>

<http://www.nha-handwriting.org.uk/>

<http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/parent/help-with-handwriting>



## Handwriting Policy

### Contents

<b>SCHOOL VISION .....</b>	<b>- 2 -</b>
<b>SCHOOL MISSION .....</b>	<b>- 2 -</b>
<b>AGREEMENT LINKS .....</b>	<b>- 2 -</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>- 4 -</b>
<b>2. AIMS .....</b>	<b>- 4 -</b>
<b>3. CONTINUOUS CURSIVE SCRIPT .....</b>	<b>- 5 -</b>
<b>4. THE CHESSWOOD CONTINUOUS CURSIVE SCRIPT .....</b>	<b>- 5 -</b>
4.1. CURSIVE UN-JOINED LETTERS .....	- 5 -
4.2. LETTER FORMATION .....	- 6 -
4.3. CONTINUOUS CURSIVE SCRIPT .....	- 6 -
4.4. FONTS AVAILABLE TO TEACHERS .....	- 7 -
<b>5. TEACHING OF HANDWRITING .....</b>	<b>- 7 -</b>
5.1. LINKS TO SPELLING .....	- 8 -
5.2. DELIVERING NATIONAL CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS AT CHESSWOOD .....	- 9 -
5.2.1. YEAR 1 .....	- 9 -
5.2.2. YEAR 2 .....	- 9 -
5.2.3. YEARS 3 AND 4 .....	- 10 -
5.2.4. YEARS 5 & 6 .....	- 11 -
5.3. SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH POOR HANDWRITING .....	- 12 -
5.3.1. POSTURE, PEN, PAPER – THE THREE P’S .....	- 12 -
5.3.1.1. POSTURE FOR WRITING .....	- 12 -
5.3.1.2. PEN / PENCIL GRIP .....	- 12 -
5.3.1.2.1. DIFFICULTY WITH PEN / PENCIL GRIP .....	- 13 -
5.3.1.2.2. CORRECTING POOR PENCIL GRIPS .....	- 14 -
5.3.1.3. POSITION OF PAPER .....	- 15 -
5.3.2. LETTER FORMATION .....	- 15 -
<b>6. APPENDIX 1 .....</b>	<b>- 16 -</b>



## Handwriting Policy

### 1. Introduction

When communicating ideas in writing it is important that children use a handwriting style which is neat and legible. The importance of handwriting should not be under-estimated. It is vital that children can write fluently, comfortably and legibly, with increasing speed, as it is a skill needed in many curriculum areas. Children's self-esteem is also heightened when they are able to take pride in their handwriting.

### 2. Aims

- To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
  - To ensure high expectations in handwriting lessons and that pupils are expected to apply the same standards in other independent writing
- To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by;
  - Having a correct pencil grip
  - Forming all letters correctly
  - Knowing the size and orientation of letters
    - consistent in size, slant and style;
    - joined;
    - legible;
    - fluent.
- Although we teach a set continuous, cursive script at Chesswood, **the key aim is for all children to write legibly in a joined style**. When children join us from KS1, they are already developing their handwriting style. **As long as it is neat, legible and joined appropriately, they do not need to conform exactly to the script taught at Chesswood** – eg. They may use an open b and d
- To support progression and achievement in spelling



### 3. Continuous Cursive Script

“The most widely recommended handwriting style is called continuous cursive. Its most important feature is that each letter is formed without taking the pencil off the paper – and consequently, each word is formed in one, flowing movement.

The key advantages to this system are:

- By making each letter in one movement, children’s hands develop a ‘physical memory’ of it, making it easier to produce the correct shape;
- Because letters and words flow from left to right, children are less likely to reverse letters which are typically difficult (like b/d or p/q);
- There is a clearer distinction between capital letters and lower case;
- The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling.”  
(The British Dyslexia Association)

### 4. The Chesswood Continuous Cursive Script

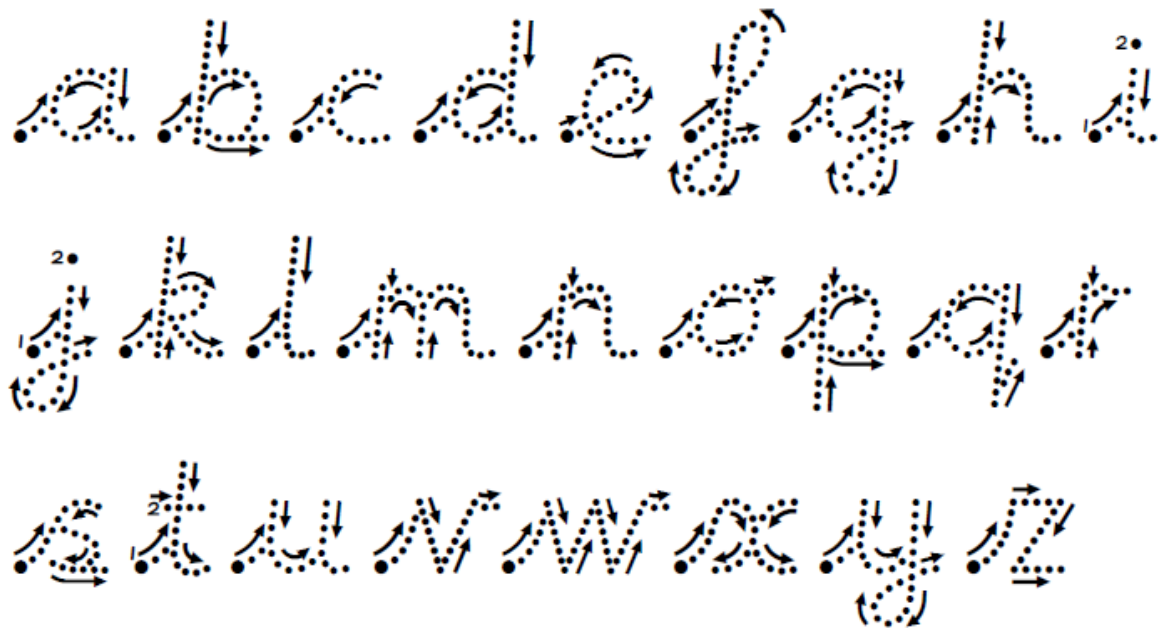
This style has a closed **b** and **p**, an **f** with a loop at the back, a curly **x** and a curly **z** with no tail.

#### 4.1. *Cursive un-joined letters*

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



#### 4.2. Letter Formation



#### 4.3. Continuous Cursive Script

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

The quick brown fox jumps  
over the lazy dog. Baa baa  
black sheep, have you any  
wool? Yes sir, yes sir, three  
bags full.



## Handwriting Policy

### 4.4. **Fonts Available to Teachers**

*XCCW Joined 15a*

*XCCW Joined 15a dotted*

*XCCW Joined 15 a dotted lined*

*XCCW Joined solid 15 a lined*

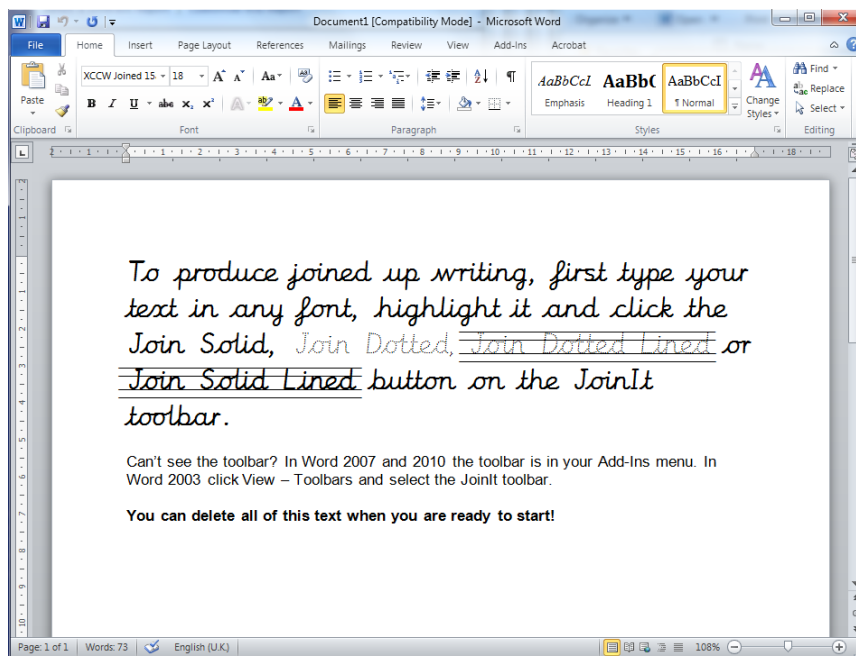
### 4.5. **Using the font in documents**

The font is available in the drop-down font menu in Microsoft Word. HOWEVER, not all joins are accurate when using this method.

To use the font in its full, the 'Join It' desktop link must be used (available on all school computers).



This will launch a Word document –

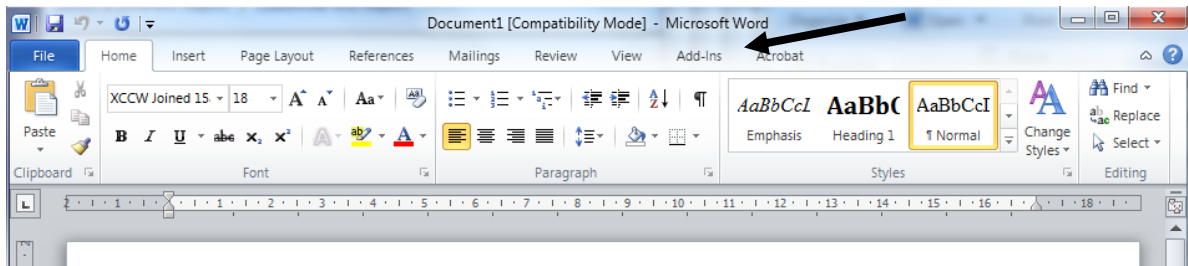




## Handwriting Policy

The text can be deleted and you can add text of your choice. To ensure the full joins are available –

Click on 'Add-Ins'



Select choice of font style from the menu bar



## 5. Teaching of Handwriting

To achieve the above aims –

- we teach a continuous cursive script to aid spelling and fluency;
- children are taught how to hold a pencil/ pen correctly using the tripod grip using the 'pinch and a flip' method if necessary;
- teachers have high expectations and children are expected to join their letters using this script from Year 3 in all lessons;
- children are expected to write in blue ink unless there is a reason not to;
- staff write using this script during lessons, on displays and when marking, in order to model the correct script consistently for the children.

### 5.1. *Links to Spelling*

'One of the most beneficial ways to improve fluency is to intertwine reading and spelling instruction as related subjects. The most effective spelling practice will also include writing the words by hand.' (logicofEnglish.com)

'Good handwriting instruction develops automatic muscle memory, meaning the students can write quickly and legibly with little conscious attention.' (Berninger & Rutberg, 1992)





## Handwriting Policy

Handwriting builds recognition of words using kinaesthetic memory. It is therefore essential to ensure handwriting is a key focus within SPaG lessons (Spelling and Grammar). Teachers must model the school's script when looking at spelling patterns and letter strings – this will be the main delivery of taught handwriting in school. The school font is on all computers and can be used to create worksheets to support children in their spelling work.

### **5.2. Delivering National Curriculum Expectations at Chesswood**

Although, as a junior school, we are mainly concerned with coverage of the Key Stage 2 Curriculum, it is important to know the building blocks of progression throughout the full primary curriculum. KS1 content must be reinforced and revisited as appropriate.

#### **5.2.1. Year 1**

Pupils should be taught to:	Expectations and delivery:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly</li><li>• begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place</li><li>• form capital letters</li><li>• form digits 0-9</li></ul> understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.	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

#### **5.2.2. Year 2**

Pupils should be taught to:	Expectations and delivery:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another</li><li>• 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</li></ul>	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.



## Handwriting Policy

<p>unjoined</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters</li><li>• use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.</li></ul>	
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### 5.2.3. Years 3 and 4

Pupils should be taught to:	Expectations and delivery:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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</li><li>• 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].</li></ul>	<p>Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Teachers remind children of expectations and provide exemplar work where appropriate.</p> <p>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. This will be taught directly within SPaG time, with a particular focus on spelling – eg the school's font can be used to create look / say / cover / write / check worksheets – including using the dotted font – see appendix 1. Children can also be presented with unpunctuated work during dictation, produced in the school font.</p> <p>Further support is provided through handwriting intervention. Worksheets in the school's font are available on the school website.</p> <p>Within all cross-curricular lessons, pupils may be presented with exemplar text to copy into</p>



## Handwriting Policy

	their books e.g. a short paragraph on Charles Darwin in science; part of a poem to be recited in English; key historical facts to be remembered.
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### 5.2.4. Years 5 & 6

Pupils should be taught to:	Expectations and delivery:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:</li><li>• choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters</li><li>• choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.</li></ul>	<p>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 (e.g. quick notes or a final handwritten version). They should also be taught to use an unjoined style (e.g. for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra) and capital letters (e.g. for filling in a form).</p> <p>Handwriting will be taught directly within SPaG time, with a particular focus on spelling – eg the school's font can be used to create look / say / cover / write / check worksheets – including using the dotted font – see appendix 1. Children can also be presented with unpunctuated work during dictation, produced in the school font.</p> <p>Further support is provided through handwriting intervention. Worksheets in the school's font are available on the school</p>

## Handwriting Policy

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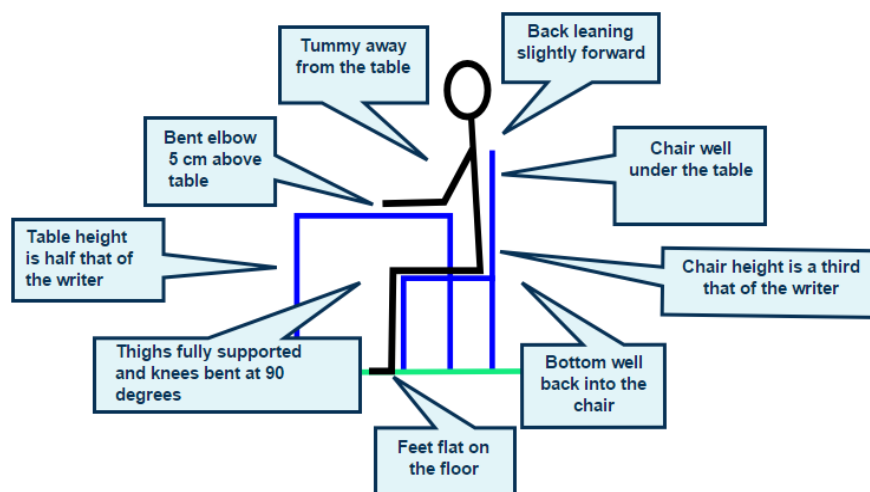
### 5.3. *Supporting children with poor handwriting*

For pupils with poor handwriting, the following areas may need to be addressed to promote progress.

#### 5.3.1. *Posture, Pen, Paper – The three P's*

##### 5.3.1.1. *Posture for Writing*

Children are taught the importance of sitting upright and correctly on their chair, with their feet on the floor.



##### 5.3.1.2. *Pen / Pencil Grip*

Children should use the tripod grip and be given constant reminders until this is established. Triangular section pencils / pens and shaped holders are available in school for children who find them helpful.

### Tripod Grip



[Video and images to support teaching the correct grip](#)

#### **5.3.1.2.1. Difficulty with Pen / Pencil Grip**

For those struggling with the tripod grip, there are 3 key teaching methods to support children.

1. Use shorter Pencils
  - a. A shorter pencil means less space for cramming in unnecessary fingers. It basically forces kids to pinch with thumb and index finger.
2. Simply have them pinch the sharpened end of the pencil and then flip it around until it gently rests in the “webspace” (that soft skin between your thumb and index finger) in the ready position.



## Handwriting Policy

[Pinch and flip method video link](#)

3. Hide something under their last two fingers



### **5.3.1.2.2. Correcting Poor Pencil Grips**

Children find a range of imaginative ways to hold a pencil if they are not supported and trained in developing a tripod pencil grip.

Poor pencil grips can develop for several reasons;

- some children do not have the muscle strength and finger dexterity required to hold a pencil correctly
- others may have been forced to use an inappropriate grip for the stage in their development (which research highlights as causing a poor grip style later on)
- for a few it may be because they have been influenced and copied a sibling's, parent's, other family member's, friend's and even class teacher's or teaching assistant's poor pencil grip.

Place colour markers on the shaft of the pencil to show where to place the thumb and index finger when a tripod grip is used. For left handed writers these should be placed further up the shaft than for a right handed writer.

With older children, who will understand, explain why it is important for them to change their pencil grip and how it will help them to improve the quality and quantity of their handwriting and be less tiring as the hand and fingers can move more freely. Understanding how and why can be very powerful incentive for many children, especially if it makes sense to them and you can prove your point.



## Handwriting Policy

Focus on one point at a time, for example, keeping the little finger and the ring finger gently curled in (try placing a cotton wool ball in the palm of the hand and having the child hold it in place with the little and ring finger). Then focus on the thumb position and index finger, finally the middle finger (a special padded sticker placed on the shaft of the pencil that rests on the middle finger can help).

Try using a triangular shaped pencil, especially good for those just learning to handwrite, but watch the middle finger as it can sneak on top of the shaft rather than underneath.

Moulded pencil grip aids can be useful for some children, improving handwriting and building confidence. However an issue with them is that once removed the child reverts back to the original poor grip because the underlining factors of the poor grip position have not been addressed. So use the grips to build self-esteem while building up the key strengths areas that may have caused the poor grip to develop in the first place. The long term aim is to correct the grip so that your child can use any writing tool effectively without the need for some form of grip aid.

Coordination, finger and hand strength are important key strengths in being able to hold a pencil correctly for periods of time, so games and activities that help to develop these areas are very useful.

Correcting a poor pencil grip will take time, constant encouragement, praise and patients. The long term aim is to correct the grip so that your child can use any writing tool effectively and with confidence, without tiring quickly.

### ***5.3.1.3. 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 when they write in ink. Right handed children find it helpful to tilt paper slightly to the left. Paper should be steadied with the free hand.

### ***5.3.2. Letter Formation***

Refer to section 4.2 to support letter formation



## Handwriting Policy

### 6. Appendix 1

Example of Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check worksheet –

Year 3 & 4 [Teaching & Learning\Subjects\English\English Resources\Spelling\Years 3 and 4 LSCWC](#)

Year 5 & 6 [Teaching & Learning\Subjects\English\English Resources\Spelling\Years 5 and 6 LSCWC](#)

ous	ous	ous	ous
ous	ous	ous	ous
poisonous	poisonous		
dangerous	dangerous		
mountainous	mountainous		
famous	famous		
various	various		
tremendous	tremendous		
enormous	enormous		
jealous	jealous		
humorous	humorous		
glamorous	glamorous		
vigorous	vigorous		
courageous	courageous		
outrageous	outrageous		





## Handwriting Policy

Example of dictation lesson – teacher reads out dictation. Children write out full script and have to add spellings and punctuation.

sitting on top of the \_\_\_\_\_ statue which overlooked the village \_\_\_\_\_ jimmys leg ached from the large purple hed banged as hed rushed to climb up beneath him he could hear the faint shouts of the \_\_\_\_\_ school bullies eagerly searching amongst the headstones for him soon it was that they had given up he hoped his friend jake would find him and \_\_\_\_\_ him home he wished he didnt have to be so \_\_\_\_\_ around other children and was more of an kid maybe then he wouldn't stand out so much he was in the nerdy \_\_\_\_\_ meaning the cool kids didnt want to know he felt that every day he had to \_\_\_\_\_ with biff the school bully not to pick on him \_\_\_\_\_ to jake he should try and fit in with the rest of the school \_\_\_\_\_ by getting more involved with the school clubs and \_\_\_\_\_ that might make him feel more \_\_\_\_\_ to his peers perhaps he could set up an \_\_\_\_\_ photography club maybe then the other children would know he was \_\_\_\_\_ as a friend his dad however said that he was at school to \_\_\_\_\_ and to learn about and \_\_\_\_\_ the world did it really matter if he couldnt \_\_\_\_\_ with the other children he said that jimmy shouldnt feel he must \_\_\_\_\_ the needs of others he knew one of them was right he just didnt know which one