

Shaftesbury Junior School

Handwriting Policy

1. Rationale

At Key Stage 2, handwriting should be fluent, legible, and automatic to support high-quality written composition. We use the **Nelson Handwriting** programme to maintain consistency in letter formation, joins, and presentation.

We recognise that some pupils in KS2 may be working at KS1 handwriting levels. Teaching will therefore be differentiated while maintaining age-appropriate expectations and dignity for all learners.

2. Aims

- To develop fluent, joined handwriting
- To ensure consistent formation using Nelson script
- To support pupils working below age-related expectations
- To develop writing stamina and speed
- To promote pride in presentation across all subjects

3. Teaching and Progression in KS2

Handwriting is reinforced across the curriculum. Teachers model the agreed script and provide short, focused teaching where required. Key focus areas include:

- Consistent letter size and spacing
- Secure joins
- Increasing fluency and writing stamina
- Appropriate use of presentation features such as underlining titles

4. Provision for Pupils Working at KS1 Standard

Support will focus on foundational skills including:

- Secure letter formation
- Correct pencil grip and posture
- Controlled, legible writing
- Development of fine motor control

Interventions will be discreet, targeted, and age-appropriate.

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5. Pen Licence Expectations

Pupils in KS2 may work towards earning a **Pen Licence** once they consistently demonstrate secure handwriting skills.

5.1 How to Earn a Pen Licence

Pupils must consistently demonstrate the following:

1. Form Lower-Case Letters Correctly

- Letters must be formed using the correct sequence of strokes.
- Ascenders must reach the top line (tall letters).
- Descenders must drop below the baseline.

Correct letter groups include:

- Ascenders: b d h k l t
- Descenders: g j p q y

2. Form Upper-Case Letters Correctly

Upper-case letters must be clearly formed and proportionate.

Correct formation should be shown for:

A C F G K L M N O P Q U W Y

3. Write on the Line

- Writing must remain consistently on the baseline.
- Letter size must be appropriate and consistent.
- Tall and small letters must be clearly differentiated.

4. Join Writing Neatly

- Letters should be joined using the agreed Nelson script joins.
- Writing should be smooth, controlled, and legible.

(Teachers should model joins such as:

H→a → n → d → s → etc. where appropriate.)

In line with Nelson Handwriting conventions, the following letters are not

joined to the next letter: b, g, j, p, q,

5. Keep Work Neat and Tidy

- Titles and dates should be underlined with a ruler.
- Spacing between words should be consistent.
- Errors should be crossed out with a single neat line.

5.2 Awarding the Pen Licence

A pen licence may be awarded when:

- Handwriting is consistently neat across subjects
- The pupil demonstrates fluency as well as accuracy
- Presentation standards are maintained over time

Teachers will use professional judgement before issuing licences.

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6. Inclusion

Where pupils struggle with handwriting:

- Targeted intervention will be provided
- Alternative recording methods may be considered where appropriate
- Support will be discussed with SENDCo where necessary

High expectations for presentation will remain in place.

6.1 Supporting Left-Handed Pupils

Teachers will ensure that left-handed pupils are supported to develop comfortable, fluent handwriting. Staff will:

- Model appropriate positioning for left-handed writers where needed
- Encourage pupils to sit with their paper angled slightly to the right
- Ensure the writing hand sits **below the writing line** to avoid “hooked” wrists
- Position pupils so their writing arm does not clash with right-handed peers
- Provide appropriate pencil grip guidance where required

Left-handed pupils will be supported to use the **same Nelson letter formation and joins**, while allowing natural adaptations that support comfort and legibility.

7. Monitoring

- Handwriting will be monitored through book scrutiny.
- Feedback will focus on formation, joins, and presentation.
- Progress of pupils working below age expectations will be reviewed regularly.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers:

- Model Nelson script consistently
- Provide explicit teaching of handwriting skills
- Maintain high presentation expectations

Subject Leader:

- Monitor progression and impact
- Provide staff support and CPD