Castle Bromwich Junior School

Where together we can learn, work and succeed.

# Handwriting and Presentation

Approved by trustees – Full Trust Board 07/07/2026

**Date – January 2026**

**Reviewed by – Mrs C Robson**

**Review date – January 2028**

At CBJS we aim to teach the children to do the best they can, so that they learn the most they can, and develop academically, socially and physically to be as happy and as healthy as they can.

**PART 1 – HANDWRITING & PRESENTATION Aims and Rationale**

Our aim, at Castle Bromwich Junior School, is for every child to develop fluent, legible and personalised style of handwriting by the time they leave our school, at the end of year 6. Capital and lower case letters should be formed appropriately and letter size should be consistent. Good handwriting is an essential skill in the quest to spell and write fluently, confidently and competently. A joined handwriting style links kinaesthetic muscle memory, with the relationship between the sounds of our speech and the letter shapes, letter groups and whole written words. The ability to write neatly can raise self-esteem and provides a motivating factor in the production of written work. Children with handwriting difficulties can have their thinking slowed, and as their cognitive capacity is strained by the process of forming legible letter words and sentence, their focus on creativity, composition, spelling and organising ideas, and so on, can suffer. Developing strong handwriting skills can unlock success generally for a learner.

The National Curriculum for primary schools, introduced in 2014, gives additional weight to handwriting more than the previous curriculum. To achieve greater depth, in writing, by the end of KS1, **pupils are expected to 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. There is no expectation for handwriting to be fully joined at any standard in the KS1 frameworks. From the academic year 2018/19, pupils are required to demonstrate joined handwriting to meet the expected and greater depth standard in writing at the end of KS2 (year 6). Pupils who do not demonstrate joined handwriting, at the end of KS2, cannot be deemed to be working at either the expected standard or at greater depth, irrespective of how good other aspects of their written work may be.

As a school, we fully acknowledge that handwriting is not a natural skill; rather it is a motor activity which needs to be taught explicitly through teachers modelling and children practising. Therefore, we will provide opportunities for all children to develop, practise and perfect the skills of handwriting. Alongside this, we will also provide targeted support to any child who has been identified as experiencing difficulties or barriers to handwriting.

**Implementation**

At Castle Bromwich Junior School, we teach the children continuous cursive (fully-joined) handwriting from year three through to year six. Each week, at CBJS, the children receive a handwriting lesson, which includes teaching and modelling the continuous cursive handwriting style.

Each child, in our school, practices their handwriting in dedicated handwriting books, in order to reinforce the consistent high expectations of their handwriting.

**Our expectations of the children**

All children should:

- Take pride in their work;
- Learn to write clearly recognisable letters and form them correctly (at the earliest point – if not already acquired – as this should have been learnt in EYFS);
- Know which letters join to others and how to do this (at the earliest point – if not already acquired – as this should have been learnt at KS1);
- Be able to join letters appropriately (at the earliest point – if not already acquired – as this should have been learnt at KS1);
- Increase speed of writing and fluency in order to develop a confident, legible individual style (KS2);
- Demonstrate correct letter formation and joins as learned across the curriculum (KS2).

**SEND**

If a child has a diagnosis of Dyspraxia or a need which affects their motor skills, they are entitled to reasonable adjustment, as part of the SEND code of practice, and they are not expected to join their handwriting. This would, therefore, not prevent them from achieving the expected standard (as long as they were achieving this in all the other areas) at the end of the key stage, due to these specific needs. However, we strive to challenge all pupils and have high expectations to ensure all pupils reach their full potential. Where specific cases apply, this could be referenced as part of an individual education plan.

**Technical terms**

The word **cursive** means joined.

The correct name for the joining bits between letters is **ligatures**.

The technical name for a tail is a **flourish**.

The letters b, d, h, k, and l are called **ascenders**. The top of the letter should go nearly to the writing line above.

The letters g, j, p, q and y are called **descenders**. This is because the flourish that these letters have goes below the writing line.

Letters that join at the top join **horizontally**.

Letters that join at the bottom join **diagonally**.

**Capital letters** should not be joined and should be the same size as ascenders.

**Lower case** letters should all be the same size.

The letters f, g and y all **loop** on the **descenders**.

**Implementation – Teaching and Learning**

**Entitlement and curriculum provision**

Handwriting is to be taught regularly across the junior school through short, focused sessions and may be linked with spelling, grammar or phonics objectives. Teaching generally occurs outside English lessons, although shared, modelled and guided writing also provides additional opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting.

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style - by the teacher - is very important; it is not appropriate to require children to simply copy out writing without any teacher input/feedback.

Implementation of this policy will be monitored by the school's senior leadership team and by the English co-ordinator.

**Handwriting lessons at CBJS should typically follow a format:**

- Exercises to support pen/pencil control (such as drawing structured lines or shapes)*****;
- Letter formation and/or joining and/or word writing (modelled and assessed by the teacher by the teacher and verbal feedback given during the lesson);

*****The proportion of time taken up with these activities will reduce as children become more confident and fluent writers and may not be evident in all lessons.

**The role of the teacher:**

- To follow the school policies to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting;
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling;
- To model the agreed continuous cursive handwriting style whenever they are writing for a class (e.g. on a whiteboard, screen or in displays which include handwritten elements);
- To provide resources, an environment and opportunities to promote good handwriting;
- To observe learners, monitor progress, determine targets for development and identify learners that may need additional support or intervention and to ensure this is provided.

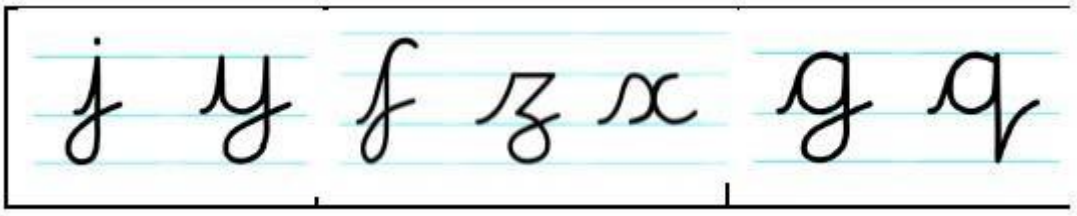
**In Years Three and Four, handwriting outcomes will be:**

○ Children use diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters in a continuous cursive style; ○ Children's handwriting will increase in legibility, consistency and quality; ○ Children produce writing that is spaced sufficiently and begin to develop their own style.

<u>Handwriting examples of year 3 "easy" words:</u>



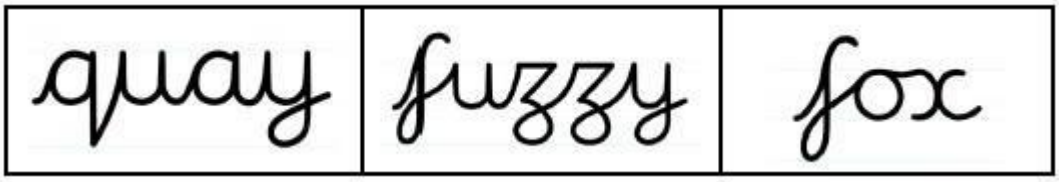
Handwriting examples of year 4 “harder” letters:



**In Years Five and Six, handwriting outcomes will be:**

- Children use diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters in a continuous cursive style (a National Curriculum requirement);
- Children write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed and personal style;
- Children choose which shape of a letter to use as part of their personal style; • Children choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task;
- Children regularly create extended (long) pieces of writing.

Handwriting examples of Year 5 ‘harder words’:




**Teaching of joins**

| **Year Group** | **Joins taught (or revised – in addition to any AfL identified by the teacher).** |
|---|---|
| **Year 3** | Joining of the letter s – sh, as, es<br>Joining of the letter r – ri, ru, ry, er, ir, ur<br>Joining of the letter a – oa, ad, as, ha, ta, fa<br>Joining of the letter e – ee, ea, ed, re, or, fe<br>Joining of the letter o – ow, ov, ox, ou, od, oo, og, ot, ol, ok<br>Joining of the letter y – ky, hy, ly<br>Joining of the letter a – ha, ta, fa<br>Joining of the letter u – fu, wu, vu |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Year 4** | ing, oc, od, oo, ake, ome, are, fla, flo, fle, who, wha, whe, ie, in, il, inly, ky, ny, ap, ar, an, ick, uck, ack, he, we, re, fte, fir, fin, wra, wri, ski, ew, ev, ex, th, ht, fl, ac, ag. |
| **Year 5** | Revise any skills and/or joins identified as needing practice.<br>Teach the children how to personalise their own handwriting style.<br>Teach the children how to write at speed.<br>Provide regular opportunities for extended (long) writing. |
| **Year 6** | Revise any skills and/or joins identified as needing practice.<br>Teach the children how to personalise their own handwriting style.<br>Teach the children how to write at speed.<br>Provide regular opportunities for extended (long) writing. |

**PART 2 – PRESENTATION PRINCIPLES**

**Children's exercise books**

Children must not write, scribble, draw or graffiti on the covers of their books.

Children should be encouraged to take pride in their written work and in their books.

Effort and high standards of presentation should be publicly acknowledged and rewarded by the teacher and other adults within school.

**Date of work in books:**

Full written date (day, date, month, year eg Monday 14th June 2022 in all books, except Mathematics and Shared Reading, when the number date format will be used (eg 14.06.22).

The date is written on the top line, left aligned and underlined in pencil with a ruler.

**Titles or Learning Objectives in books:**

Titles or learning objectives should be in all books for each piece of work, underlined in pencil with a ruler and aligned to the left of the page below the date.

For younger children, teachers are encouraged to work towards this standard as soon as children are able.

**Lines and Underlining:**

Straight lines must always be drawn in pencil using a ruler.

Where appropriate, the teacher should model correct use of a ruler to draw a straight line or to underline writing.

When underlining, a ruler must be used at all times.

Underlining should always be in pencil.

**Handwriting:**

From year 3, the vast majority of children should be given a pen (by Christmas), unless they have an additional need (as discussed with inclusion).

Children will be provided with a black/blue handwriting pen for use in their own work in school, except for Mathematics where all work must be completed in pencil.

**General presentation:**

Where possible, children should write in books that have a pre-printed margin. In mathematics, children should draw a margin down the left-hand side of the page. The margin should be at least one square wide and should be drawn in pencil. Teachers should model the use of ruler and pencil to draw margins. For younger children, teachers are encouraged to work towards this standard as soon as children are able.

Children should use coloured pencils (not felt-tips) when illustrating work in exercise books.

Teachers should encourage a good and high standard of presentation in all work across all subjects.

Errors should be crossed out with a single pencil line and a ruler. Use of erasers should be discouraged (crossing out provides evidence that a child is editing and improving their work – which is a National Curriculum target).

Children may use erasers at the teachers' discretion. However, ink erasers should not be used.

When drawing diagrams, labels should be added using straight lines drawn in pencil using a ruler. In science, straight lines should be used to label diagrams and labels should be written in a handwriting pen.