

Luttons and Sherburn Handwriting Guide

This guide outlines the developmental journey of handwriting at our school, ensuring a consistent approach from the Foundation Stage through to Year 6. We aim to foster legibility, fluency, and a sense of pride in presentation.

Foundation Stage & Year 1: The Building Blocks

In the early years, the focus is on physical readiness and the core mechanics of letter formation.

National Curriculum Expectations:

- **Physicality:** Sit correctly at a table with feet flat on the floor; hold a pencil effectively and comfortably.
- **Formation:** Form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
- **Versatility:** Form capital letters and digits 0–9.
- **Classification:** Understand which letters belong to specific ‘families’ (letters formed with similar movements).

Our Approach: We utilize the **Little Wandle** phonics scheme to teach handwriting. Teachers use specific letter formation phrases to help children internalize the movements.

Hand exercises

1. Rub hands together

Rub hands together until they feel warm. Move them up and down, or in circular motions to stimulate blood flow.

2. Push palms together

Push the palms firmly together and hold for five seconds. Repeat a few times.

3. Finger stretches

Open hands wide, stretching fingers as far apart as you can. Then make a tight fist, hiding fingers away inside the palm.

4. Drumming fingers

Drum fingers on the table, one finger at a time. This can be extended to tapping a rhythm.

5. Squeeze forearms and hands

Use the left hand to squeeze the right forearm and hand firmly, applying gentle pressure to stimulate the muscles and increase awareness. Swap hands.

6. Pulling fingers (like taking off a glove)

With one hand, grasp each finger of the other hand in turn and gently pull downward, as if taking off a glove. Repeat for the other hand.

7. Oppose thumb to each fingertip

Touch the thumb to each fingertip of the same hand in turn. For more challenge, this can be done with both hands at the same time, or with your eyes closed.

8. Finger circle tug

Form a circle with the thumb and index finger. Then form another circle with the other hand, within that circle, and try to pull them apart.

Handwriting in EYFS and Year 1 strictly follow the Little Wandle formation guides.

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
s s		Show your teeth and let the s hiss out SSSSSS	Under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail.
a a		Open your mouth wide and make the a sound at the back of your mouth aaa	Around the astronaut's helmet and down into space.
t t		Open your lips, put the tip of your tongue behind your teeth and press ttt	From the tiger's nose to its tail, then follow the stripe across the tiger.
p p		Bring your lips together, push them open and say ppp	Down the penguin's back, up and around its head.
i i		Put your lips back and make the i sound at the back of your mouth iii	Down the iguana's body, then draw a dot (in the leaf) at the top.
n n		Open your lips a bit, put your tongue behind your teeth and make the NNNNN sound	Draw the stick, up and over the nose.
m m		Put your lips together and make the MMMMMM sound	Down, up and over the mouse's ears, then add a flick on the nose.

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
d d		Put your tongue to the top and front of your mouth and make a quick d d d d	Round the duck's body, up to its head and down to its feet.
g g		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 ggg	Round the goat's face, up to his ear, down and curl under his chin.
o o		Make your mouth into round shape and say ooo	All around the octopus.
c c		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 k		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 and across, back and down to the corner.
ck ck		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 round the heel of the sock. k Down the sock, up and across, back and down to the corner. Catchphrase: Rock that sock!
e e		Open your mouth wide and say eee	Around the elephant's eye and down its trunk.

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
u u		Open your mouth wide and say uuu	Down and around the umbrella, stop at the top and down to the bottom and flick.
r r		Show me your teeth to make a rrrrr sound rrrrr rrrr	From the cloud to the ground, up the arch and over the rainbow.
h h		Open your mouth and breathe out sharply h h h	Down, up and over the helicopter
b b		Put your lips together and say b as you open them b b b	Down bear's back, up and round his big tummy.
f f		Open your lips a little, put your teeth on your bottom lip and push the air out to make the sound ffff	Down the flamingo's neck, all the way to its feet, then across its wings.
l l		Open your mouth a little, put your tongue up to the top of your mouth, behind your teeth, and press llll	All the way down the lollipop.

The lazy dog jumped over the brown fox.

Year 2: Transition & Precision

The lazy dog jumped over the brown fox.

Year 2 acts as a bridge between individual letter mastery and the introduction of cursive strokes.

National Curriculum Expectations:

- Establish and revise correct, consistent letter formation.
- By the Summer Term (pending pupil progress reviews), begin writing in a joined, cursive style once letter orientation is secure.

Our Approach:

- **Autumn Term:** Children continue to reinforce their Little Wandle formation.
- **Post-May Half-Term:** Pupils targeting "Greater Depth" are introduced to **pre-cursive** handwriting. This is taught using specific letter families and formation phrases to prepare them for joining.

Key Stage 2: Fluency & Style

*The lazy dog jumped over
the brown fox.* ^e

Focus: Diagonal and horizontal joins.

- **Year 3:** Most pupils will transition to joined cursive for independent writing, focusing on sitting letters appropriately on the line.
- **Year 4:** Focus on "automaticity," ensuring ascenders (like 'h' and 'l') and descenders (like 'g' and 'y') are placed accurately.

Years 5 and 6

Focus: Legibility, speed, and choosing the right tool.

- **Consistency:** Maintaining uniform size and spacing.
- **The Three Speeds of Writing:**
 1. **Speed One:** Slower, high-quality presentation (e.g., formal letters).
 2. **Speed Two:** Fast, legible everyday writing (the standard for most schoolwork).
 3. **Speed Three:** Rapid note-taking for personal use.

Our Approach: In KS2, children are expected to use **continuous cursive** handwriting. We build upon the letter families and phrases introduced in Year 2 to ensure a seamless transition into a mature, joined style.

Phase	Core Goal	Methodology
EYFS / Year 1	Letter Recognition & Formation	Little Wandle phrases and sheets.
Year 2	Refinement & Pre-cursive	Little Wandle transition to Pre-cursive families.
KS2	Cursive & Automaticity	Continuous cursive joins and adaptive speeds.