Year Reception Handwriting Overview

Children will be focusing on developing the necessary fine and gross motor skills in readiness for handwriting. They will practise a range of patterns including dots, waves and zig zags to prepare them to begin letter formation following the four letter families. All letters, including pre letter shapes are modelled by staff to support children in forming. Children will also develop their pencil grip and a relaxed handwriting position.

Autumn Term	
Dots	
Straight lines and crosses	
Circles	
Waves	
Loops and bridges	
Joined straight lines	
Angled patterns	
Eights	
Spirals	
Left-to-right orientation	
Mix of patterns	
Mix and review of patterns	

Spring Term	
On going over the term; practice of formation of digits 0-9	
Introducing long-legged giraffe letters: l	
Practising long-legged giraffe letters: l, i	
Practising long-legged giraffe letters: u, t	
Practising long-legged giraffe letters: j, y	
Practising all the long-legged giraffe letters: l, i, t, u, j, y	
Introducing one-armed robot letters: r	
Practising one-armed robot letters: b, n	
Practising one-armed robot letters: h, m	
Practising one-armed robot letters: k, p	
Practising all the one-armed robot letters: r, b, n, h, m, k, p	
Practising all the long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters	
Reviewing all the long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters	

Summer Term	
Ongoing over the term: practice of the formation of digits 0-9	
Introducing curly caterpillar letters: c	
Practising curly caterpillar letters: a, d	
Practising curly caterpillar letters: o, s	
Practising curly caterpillar letters: g, q	
Practising curly caterpillar letters: e, f	
Practising all the curly caterpillar letters: c, a, d, o, s, g, q, e, f	
Practising all the curly caterpillar, long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters	
Introducing zig-zag monster letters: z	
Practising zig-zag monster letters: v, w, x	
Practising all the zig-zag monster letters: z, v, w, x	
Practising all the curly caterpillar and zig-zag monster letters	
Reviewing all the curly caterpillar and zig-zag monster letters	
Assessment of handwriting writing against ELG	



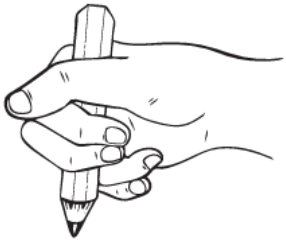
1 Whole-hand grasp: using a fisted hand.

- Around 1–2 years.
- Use of upper body muscles.
- Movement comes mainly from the shoulder with the arm moving as a unit.



2 Beginning to use the fingers: no longer using whole-hand grasp.

- Around 2–3 years.
- Use of forearm.
- Movement is still quite stiff but there may be some wrist movement.



a



b

3 Holds pencil between thumb and two fingers: no longer using whole-hand grasp.

- Around 3–4 years.
- Both of these grips are the crude beginnings of the tripod grip. The hand tends to move as a unit, with limited wrist movement.

Children at this stage need more experiences that will strengthen their muscles (cutting, working with dough etc.) to increase readiness for a precision pen hold.



4 Moving towards the tripod grip.

- Around 4–6 years.
- Holds pencil near point between first two fingers and thumb and uses it with good control.
- Finger movements and wrist now in play.
- Moving to a comfortable and efficient tripod grip: a precise three-way or tripod use of thumb, index and middle fingers.

Are you ready for handwriting? Relax!



Are your elbows off the desk?

Sit up and lean slightly forward

Is your body a fist width away from the desk?

Are your feet flat on the floor?

Are all chair legs touching the ground?

Left Handers



Is there a circle gap between your thumb and finger?

Is your paper tilted at a slight angle?

Right Handers



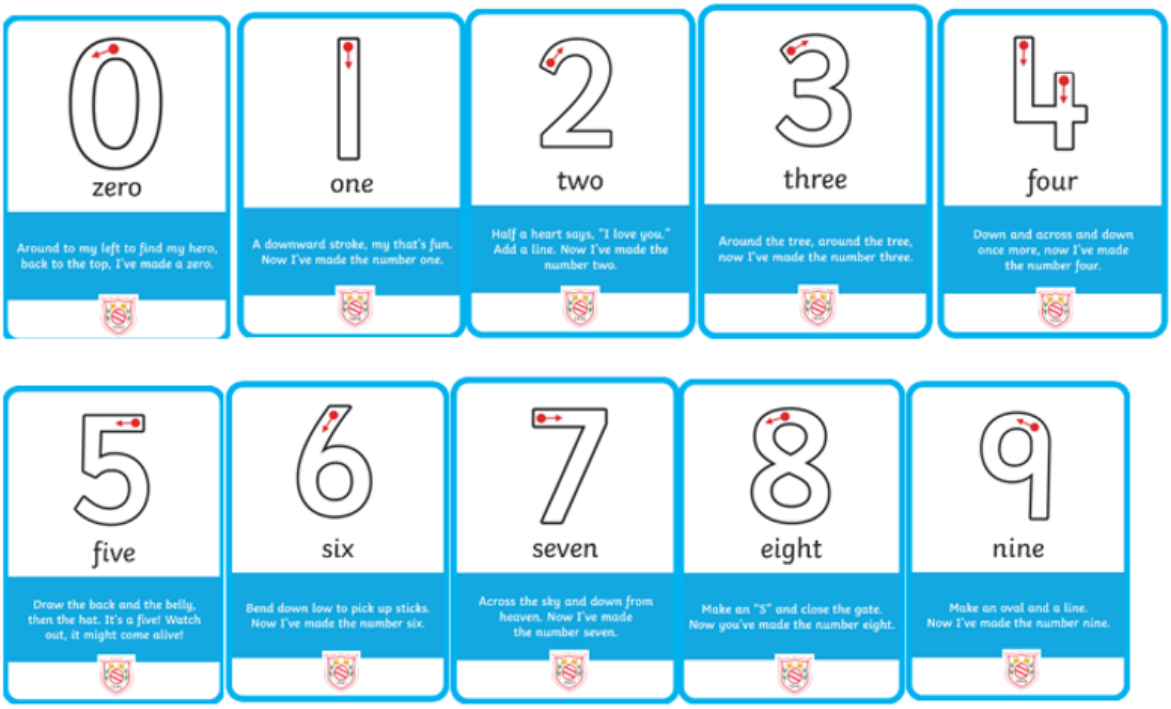


As a reminder, correct letter formation for lower-case letters is as follows. The arrows show the direction of your child's pencil:

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

Capital letters are formed as follows:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N
P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



Assessment Criteria
Expected Outcomes Children at Foundation 2 will be able to demonstrate- • Confidence when following patterns with a pencil • Typically beginning to show correct formation of long-legged giraffe letters. • Typically beginning to show correct formation of one armed robot letters. • Typically beginning to show correct formation of curly caterpillar letters. • Typically beginning to show correct formation of zig zag monster letters. • Typically beginning to show correct formation of digits 0-9. ELG: Writing Children at the expected level of development will: • Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. • Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters. • Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.