Progression in Handwriting Dewhurst St Mary Primary School

The following overview sets out the sequence for teaching handwriting at Dewhurst St Mary. Our handwriting implementation is supported by PenPals (Cambridge University Press) five developmental stages. The rate of progress children make through sequence may need to be adapted to the needs of individual children or identified groups of children. Handwriting will be practiced discretely and in the context of other learning.

Stage 1: Physical preparation for handwriting 3-5 years and Reception

Foundation 1/3-5 years

Developing gross motor skills

1 Whole-body responses to the language of movement
2 Large movements with equipment
3 Large movements with malleable materials
4 Body responses to music

Developing fine motor skills

5 Hand and finger play
6 Making and modelling
7 Messy play
8 Links to art
9 Using one-handed tools and equipment
10 Hand responses to music

Developing patterns

11 Pattern-making
12 Investigating dots
13 Investigating straight lines and crosses
14 Investigating circles
15 Investigating curves, loops and waves
16 Investigating joined straight lines and angled patterns
17 Investigating eights and spirals

Expected Outcomes

Children at Foundation 1 will be able to demonstrate developments in gross motor control, fine motor control, visual control and spatial control.

- show control and co-ordination of the big movements their body can make,
- able to fine-tune the movements of the arm, hand and fingers,
- hand and eye movements are working well together,
- able to move themselves confidently in a space with an awareness of direction (left/right) and plane (horizontal/vertical) and eventually helping them to transfer that sense of space on to paper.

Foundation 2/Primary 1

Term 1

1 Dots
2 Straight lines and crosses
3 Circles
4 Waves
5 Loops and bridges
6 Joined straight lines
7 Angled patterns
8 Eights
9 Spirals
10 Left-to-right orientation
11 Mix of patterns
12 Review of patterns

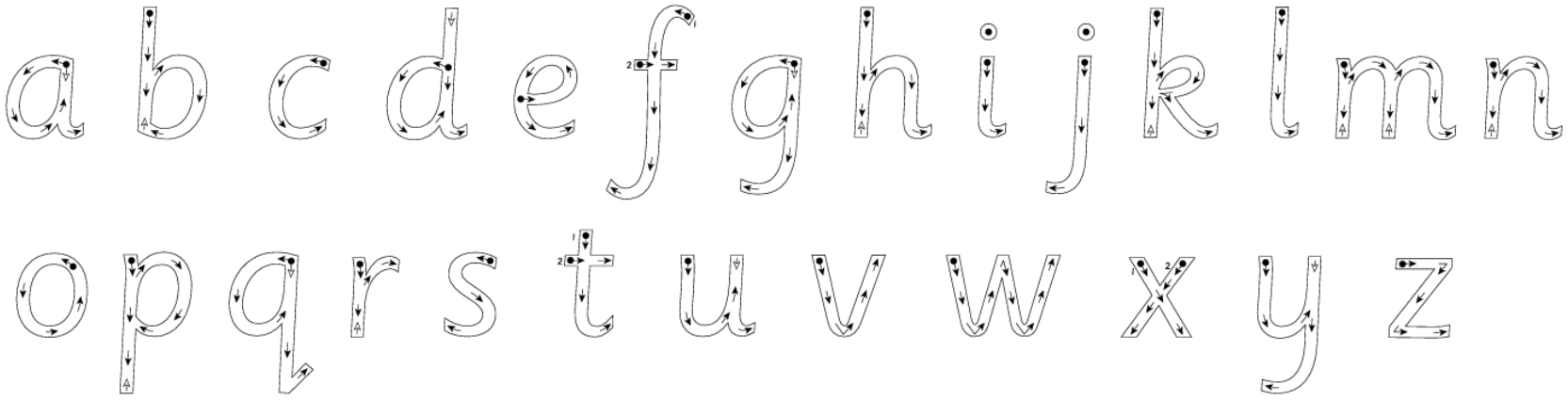
Term 2

13 Introducing long-legged giraffe letters: *l*
14 Practising long-legged giraffe letters: *l*, *i*
15 Practising long-legged giraffe letters: *u*, *t*
16 Practising long-legged giraffe letters: *j*, *y*
17 Practising all the long-legged giraffe letters: *l*, *i*, *t*, *u*, *j*, *y*
18 Introducing one-armed robot letters: *r*
19 Practising one-armed robot letters: *b*, *n*
20 Practising one-armed robot letters: *h*, *m*
21 Practising one-armed robot letters: *k*, *p*
22 Practising all the one-armed robot letters: *r*, *b*, *n*, *h*, *m*, *k*, *p*
23 Practising all the long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters
24 Reviewing all the long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters

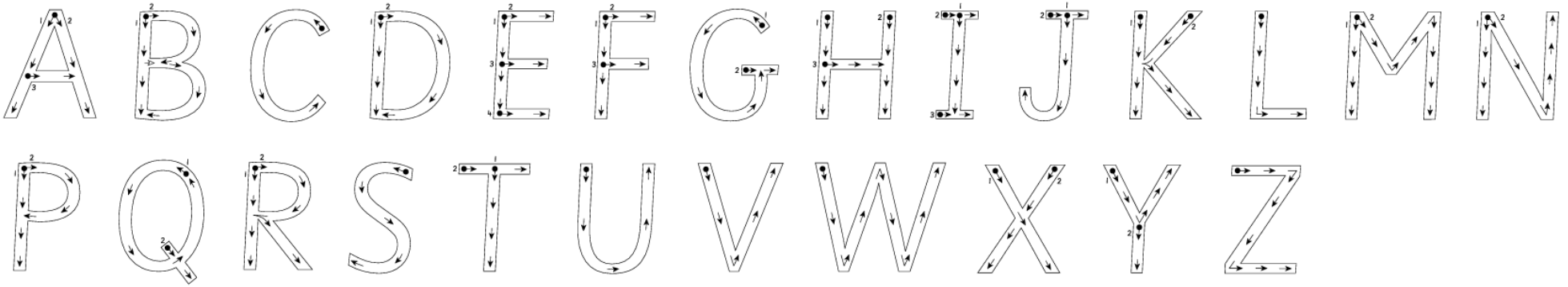
Term 3

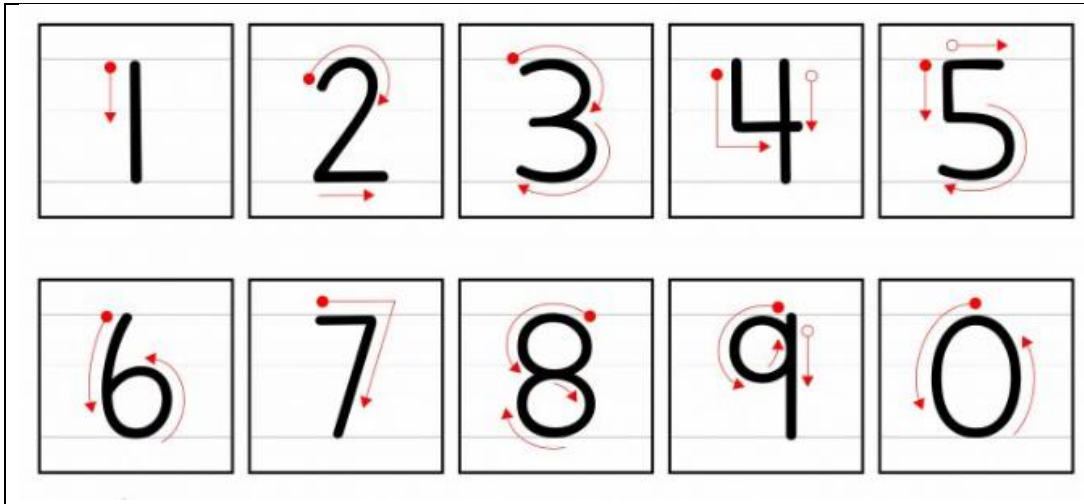
25 Introducing curly caterpillar letters: *c*
26 Practising curly caterpillar letters: *a*, *d*
27 Practising curly caterpillar letters: *o*, *s*
28 Practising curly caterpillar letters: *g*, *q*
29 Practising curly caterpillar letters: *e*, *f*
30 Practising all the curly caterpillar letters: *c*, *a*, *d*, *o*, *s*, *g*, *q*, *e*, *f*
31 Practising all the curly caterpillar, long-legged giraffe and one-armed robot letters
32 Introducing zig-zag monster letters: *z*
33 Practising zig-zag monster letters: *v*, *w*, *x*
34 Practising all the zig-zag monster letters: *z*, *v*, *w*, *x*
35 Practising all the curly caterpillar and zig-zag monster letters
36 Reviewing all the curly caterpillar and zig-zag monster letters

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



Capital letters are formed as follows:





Expected Outcomes

Children at Foundation 2 will be able to demonstrate-

- Confidence when following patterns with a pencil
- Typcially beginning to show correct formation of long-legged giraffe letters.
- Typcially beginning to show correct formation of one ramed robot letters.
- Typcially beginning to show correct formation of curly caterpillar letters.
- Typcially beginning to show correct formation of zig zag monster letters.
- Typcially beginning to show correct formation of digits 0-9.

Stage 2: Securing Correct Letter Formation

During this year, correct letter formation is the focus for learning and practice before double letter joins are intorudced in term 3. Children will practice the four letter families-long legged giraffe, one-armed robot, curly caterpillar and zig zag monster. Practiced is further developed by an awareness of the size and position of letters as well as spaces between words. Correct digit formation is consolidated.

Year 1/Primary 2

Term 1

1 Practising long-legged giraffe letters
2 Writing words with *ll*
● 3 Introducing capitals for long-legged giraffe letters
4 Practising one-armed robot letters
5 Practising long-legged giraffe letters and one-armed robot letters
● 6 Introducing capitals for one-armed robot letters
7 Practising curly caterpillar letters
8 Writing words with double *ff*
9 Writing words with double *ss*
● 10 Introducing capitals for curly caterpillar letters

Term 2

11 Practising long-legged giraffe letters, one-armed robot letters and curly caterpillar letters
12 Practising zig-zag monster letters
13 Writing words with double *zz*
14 Mixing all the letter families
15 Practising all the capital letters
16 Practising all the numbers 0–9
17 Writing words with *ck* and *qu*
18 Practising long vowel phonemes: *ai*, *igh*, *oo*
19 Practising vowels with adjacent consonants: *ee*, *oa*, *oo*
20 End-of-term check

Term 3

21 Numbers 10–20: spacing
22 Practising *ch* unjoined
● 23 Introducing diagonal join to ascender: *ch*
24 Practising *ai* unjoined
● 25 Introducing diagonal join, no ascender: *ai*
26 Practising *wh* unjoined
● 27 Introducing horizontal join to ascender: *wh*
28 Practising *ow* unjoined
● 29 Introducing horizontal join, no ascender: *ow*
30 Assessment

Expected Outcomes

Children at this stage will typically be able to demonstrate-

- Lower case letters correctly and consistently formed
- Upper case letters correctly and consistently formed
- Digits correctly and consistently formed
- Typcially beginning to show correct formation of diagonal join, ch and ai
- Typcially beginning to show correct formation of horizontal join, wh and ow

Stage 3: Beginning to join

At Stage 3 children will learn all of the basic handwriting joins. However, if a child is not confident forming all their letters yet this will be consolidated. Children will gradually be introduced to more pairs of letters that are joined in the same way. At first, children are asked to copy joins that they have seen before, but gradually they are encouraged to explore and experiment joining more and more letters with the joins they know. The movement for the join wh (i.e. horizontal join to ascender) is exactly the same as for joining oh, ol, ot, ob and so on.

Year 2/Primary 3

Term 1

1 Practising diagonal join to ascender: *th, ch*
2 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: *ai, ay*
3 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: *ir, er*
4 Practising horizontal join to ascender: *wh, oh*
5 Practising horizontal join, no ascender: *ow, ou*
● 6 Introducing diagonal join to e: *ie, ue*
● 7 Introducing horizontal join to e: *oe, ve*
● 8 Introducing *ee*
9 Practising diagonal join, no ascender: *le*
10 Writing numbers 1–100

Term 2

● 11 Introducing diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: *ea*
12 Practising diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: *igh*
13 Practising diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: *dg, ng*
● 14 Introducing horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: *oo, oa*
15 Practising horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: *wa, wo*
● 16 Introducing mixed joins for three letters: *air, ear*
17 Practising mixed joins for three letters: *oor, our*
18 Practising mixed joins for three letters: *ing*
19 Size and spacing
20 End-of-term check

Term 3

21 Building on diagonal join to ascender: *ck, al, el, at, il, ill*
22 Building on diagonal join, no ascender: *ui, ey, aw, ur, an, ip*
23 Building on horizontal join to ascender: *ok, ot, ob, ol*
24 Building on horizontal join, no ascender: *oi, oy, on, op, ov*
25 Building on diagonal join to anticlockwise letters: *ed, cc, eg, ic, ad, ug, dd, ag*
26 Building on horizontal join to anticlockwise letters: *oc, og, od, va, vo*
● 27 Introducing joins to s: *as, es, is, os, ws, ns, ds, ls, ts, ks*
28 Practising joining *ed* and *ing*
29 Assessment
30 Capitals

Join	Letters in this box	To letters in this box	Joins taught
Diagonal join to ascender	*a c e i l t*	*h k l t*	*ch, th, ck, al, el, at, il, ill, ok, ot, ob, ol*
Diagonal join, no ascender	*a c d e i k l n t u*	*e i n r y*	*ai, ay, ir, er, ie, ue, ee, le, ar, ur, in, ui, ey, aw, an, ip*
		a c d g s (anticlockwise letters)	*ea, ig, dg, ng, ed, cc, eg, ic, ad, ug, dd, ag, as, es, os, ns, ds, is, ls, ts, ks*
Horizontal join, no ascender	*o v w*	*e i n p r u v w y*	*ow, ou, oe, ve, or, oi, oy, on, op, ov*
		a c d g o s (anticlockwise letters)	*oo, oa, wa, wo, oc, og, od, va, vo*
Horizontal join, to ascender	*o w*	*h*	*wh, oh*

Break letters

These letters do not join: *g j x y z*

We do not join from these letters yet: *b f p q s r*

Expected Outcomes

Children at this stage will typically be able to demonstrate legible writing including:

- Lower case 'printed' letters formed correctly
- Forming lower-case letters correctly, using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.
- Writing capital letters of the correct size and relationship to lower-case letters.
- Spacing their words correctly.

Stage 4 : Securing the joins

Children will be introduced to the idea of joining most of the letters in a word and to developing their practice of joining from r, s and f. As the movement for joins becomes more familiar and fluent, the focus moves to develop a neat and even style by looking at size and proportion, parallel downwards strokes and spacing.

Year 3/Primary 4

Term 1

1 Practising joining through a word in stages: no ascenders or descenders
2 Practising joining through a word in stages: parallel ascenders
● 3 Introducing joining from s to ascender: *sh, sl, st, sk*
● 4 Introducing joining from s, no ascender: *sw, si, se, sm, sn, sp, su*
● 5 Introducing joining from s to an anticlockwise letter: *sa, sc, sd, sg, so, sq*
● 6 Introducing joining from r to an ascender: *rb, rh, rk, rl, rt*
● 7 Introducing joining from r, no ascender: *ri, ru, m, rp*
● 8 Introducing joining from r to an anticlockwise letter: *ra, rd, rg, ro*
● 9 Introducing joining from r to e: *are, ere, ure, ore, ire*
● 10 Introducing break letters: *g, j, y, f, b, p, x, z*

Term 2

● 11 Introducing joining to f: *if, ef, af, of*
● 12 Introducing joining from f to an ascender: *fl, ft*
● 13 Introducing joining from f, no ascender: *fe, fi, fu, fr, fy*
● 14 Introducing joining from f to an anticlockwise letter: *fo, fa*
● 15 Introducing *ff*
● 16 Introducing *rr*
● 17 Introducing *ss*
● 18 Introducing *qu*
19 Revising parallel ascenders and descenders
20 End-of-term check

Term 3

21 Revising joins: letter spacing
22 Revising joins: spacing between words
23 Revising joins: consistency of size
24 Revising joins: fluency
25 Revising joins: parallel ascenders
26 Revising joins: parallel ascenders and descenders
27 Revising horizontal join from r to an anticlockwise letter: *rs*
28 Revising break letters
29 Assessment
30 Revising capital letters

Break letters

These letters do not join.

g j x y z

These letters do not join yet.

b p

Expected Outcomes

Children at this stage will typically be able to demonstrate legible writing including:

- Lower case 'printed' letters formed correctly,
- Forming lower-case letters correctly, using most of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.
- Writing capital letters of the correct size and relationship to lower-case letters.
- Spacing their words correctly.
- Begin to 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).

Stage 4 : Securing the joins

Children will be practicing joining most of the letters in a word and to developing their practice of joining from r, s and f. As the movement for joins becomes more familiar and fluent, the focus moves to develop a neat and even style by looking at size and proportion, parallel downwards strokes and spacing.

Year 4/Primary 5

Term 1

1. Introducing diagonal join from p and b to ascender: *ph*, *pl*, *bl*
2. Introducing diagonal join from p and b, no ascender: *bu*, *bi*, *be*, *pu*, *pi*, *pe*
3. Introducing diagonal join from p and b to an anticlockwise letter: *pa*, *po*, *ps*, *ba*, *bo*, *bs*
4. Revising parallel ascenders and descenders: *bb*, *pp*
5. Break letters: *x*, *z*
6. Spacing in common exception words
7. Consistent size of letters
8. Relative size of capitals
9. Speed and fluency
10. End-of-term check

Term 2

11. Revising parallel ascenders
12. Revising parallel ascenders and break letters
13. Relative sizes of letters
14. Proportion of letters
15. Spacing between letters
16. Spacing between words
17. Writing at speed
18. Improving fluency
19. Speed and fluency
20. End-of-term check

Term 3

21. Consistency of size
22. Proportion
23. Spacing between letters and words
24. Size, proportion and spacing
25. Fluency: writing longer words
26. Speed and fluency
27. Revising break letters
28. Print alphabet: presentation
29. Assessment
30. Capital letters: presentation

Break letters

These letters do not join.

g j y

These letters do not join yet.

x z

Expected Outcomes

Children at this stage will typically be able to demonstrate legible writing including:

- Lower case 'printed' letters formed correctly,
- Forming lower-case letters correctly, using the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join most letters.
- Writing capital letters of the correct size and relationship to lower-case letters.
- Spacing their words correctly.
- Begin to 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).

Stage 5: Speed, fluency and developing a personal style

Typically, children are developing a more sloped style to enable speedier writing. All the letters and joins taught previously will be revisited to enable children to practise the slope in familiar contexts. Learning begins to focus on issues of proportion, size, legibility, and different styles for different purposes.

Year 5/Primary 6

Term 1

1 Introducing sloped writing in letter families
2 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join to ascender: *th, sh, nb, nd, ht, st*
3 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join, no ascender: *ai, ay, kn, er, ie, en*
4 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join to an anticlockwise letter: *ac, sc, bo, da, ea, ho*
5 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join to ascender: *wh, wl, oh, ol, of, ob*
6 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join, no ascender: *oi, oy, ou, op, ve*
7 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join to an anticlockwise letter: *oo, oa, wa, wo, va, vo*
8 Practising sloped writing: joining from r: *ra, re, ri, ro, ru*
9 Practising sloped writing: joining from s: *sh, su, sc, sl, sw, sp*
10 End-of-term check

Term 2

11 Practising sloped writing: proportion – joining from f to ascender: *fl, ft*
12 Practising sloped writing: size – joining from f, no ascender: *fa, fe, fi, fo, fu*
13 Different styles for different purposes: writing a paragraph
14 Practising sloped writing: speed: *ff*
15 Practising sloped writing: speed and legibility: *rr*
16 Practising sloped writing: size, proportion and spacing: *ss*
17 Practising sloped writing: building speed: *qu*
18 Different styles for different purposes: decorative alphabets
19 Different styles for different purposes
20 End-of-term check

Term 3

21 Sloped writing: proportion, joining p and b to ascenders: *ph, pl, bl*
22 Handwriting for different purposes: joining from p and b, no ascender: *bu, bi, pe, pu, pi, pr*
23 Practising sloped writing: parallel downstrokes: *pp, bb*
24 Practising sloped writing: all double letters
25 Practising sloped writing for speed: *tial, cial*
26 Practising sloped writing for fluency
27 Personal style
28 Handwriting for different purposes: print alphabet
29 Assessment
30 Capitals

Break letters

These letters do not join.

g j y

These letters do not join yet.

x z

Expected Outcomes

Children at this stage will typically be able to demonstrate legible handwriting with increasing fluency:

- Lower case 'printed' letters formed correctly,
- Forming lower-case letters correctly, using the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join most letters.
- Writing capital letters of the correct size and relationship to lower-case letters.
- 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).
- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by choosing to slope letters when given choices
- Choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

Stage 5: Speed, fluency and developing a personal style

The emphasis is on developing a personal, fast, fluent and legible handwriting style. Children are given opportunities to practise a range of ways of joining, with the expectation that they will develop a style that 'works' for them. Additionally, children continue to focus on key issues for legibility and speed as well as styles and writing tools for different purposes.

Year 6/Primary 7

Term 1

- 1 Style for speed: crossbar join from t: *th, ti, tr, ta, tt*
- 2 Style for speed: looping from g: *gl, gi, gr, ga, gg*
- 3 Style for speed: looping from j and y: *je, jo, ye, yr, yo*
- 4 Style for speed: looping from f
- 5 Style for speed: different joins to s
- 6 Style for speed: looping from b
- 7 Style for speed: joining from v, w, x and z
- 8 Handwriting for different purposes: abbreviations
- 9 Spacing between words
- 10 End-of-term check

Term 2

11 Improving handwriting: the importance of consistent sizing
12 Improving handwriting: the importance of proportion
13 Improving handwriting: the importance of spacing
14 Improving handwriting: the importance of consistent sizing of parallel ascenders and descenders
15 Improving handwriting: the importance of closed and open letters
16 Improving handwriting: pen breaks in longer words
17 Handwriting for different purposes: annotations
18 Handwriting for different purposes
19 Choice of handwriting tools
20 End-of-term check

Term 3

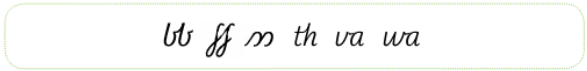
21 Handwriting for different purposes: fast-joined and print letters
22 Handwriting for different purposes: note making
23 Handwriting for different purposes: neat writing
24 Handwriting for different purposes: print letters for personal details
25 Different styles of writing
26 Handwriting for different purposes: presentation
27 Handwriting for different purposes: decorated capitals
28 Handwriting for different purposes: layout
29 Assessment
30 Handwriting for different purposes: handwriting patterns

Personal style
It is possible to experiment with new letter formations and joins to develop a personal style.

Break letters
Joins are not usually made from these letters, but you may wish to try.

Joins are not usually made to or from these letters, but you may wish to try these style variations:

Alternative letter shapes and joins



Expected Outcomes

Children at this stage will typically be able to demonstrate legible handwriting with increasing speed and fluency:

- Lower case 'printed' letters formed correctly,
- Writing capital letters of the correct size and relationship to lower-case letters.
- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by choosing to slope letters when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
- Choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task.
- Some children may experiment with new letter formations and joins to develop a personal style.