



Read Write Inc. Handwriting Expectations

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2

Handwriting Essentials for All Stages

- Feet flat on floor, tummy to table, bottom back of chair, hand on paper, sharp pencil
- Comfortable tripod grip.
- Daily 5-10-minute handwriting practice.
- Teachers model and children practise using RWI visual cues and mnemonics.

Stage	What is Taught	Typical Year Group	Paper/Lines
Stage 1:	Letter formation. Children connect the sounds they read with the shapes they write using mnemonic phrases e.g. round the apple and down the leaf for the letter a. It focuses on pencil grip and basic accuracy. Once most children are secure with this, letters are grouped and taught in letter families.	Reception	Plain paper
Stage 2:	Readiness to Join (The Letter Village) Typically beginning in Year 1, this stage shifts focus to relative size and positioning of letters alongside daily 10 minute animated films. Children learn how to refine letter sizes so that they can flow easily into a mature style ready for cursive text.	Year 1	Wide handwriting lines (15mm)
Stage 3:	Learning the Joins Following directly from stage 2, children are introduced to the core mechanics of joined handwriting. The program focuses entirely on mastering two basic joins- the bridge (horizontal) and hill (diagonal arm).	Year 2	Narrow handwriting lines (8mm)
Stage 4:	Fluent and speedy style The final stage focuses on building automaticity, legibility and stamina. Children practise writing at speed while maintaining their cursive style to meet National Curriculum standards for cursive writing.	Year 2 and beyond	Narrow handwriting lines (8mm)

*Children progress when secure, not simply according to age or year group

Key 2025 teaching principle

Visualise to memorise rather than asking children to copy joins or words. The staff should use the Letter Village as the visual model and intervene during practice.

Moderation- What should I look for?

	Reception	Year 1	Year 2
Formation	Correct basic formation	Consistent formation	Formation remains accurate when joined
Size/ position	Developing	Relative size secure, letters sit in the correct zone	Size and position maintained through joins
Ascenders/ descenders	Not expected	Clear and proportionate	Clear and proportionate.
Fluency	Developing	Increasing control	Becoming smooth and automatic.
Teacher response	Reteach formation if needed	Pause and consolidate before stage 3	Reteach the specific join rather than asking children to copy it