Handwriting Policy

Vision: Grow - Flourish - Succeed
Mission: Together we inspire creative, mindful learners who value diversity, support one another and strive for success.

1. Introduction

Handwriting is a taught skill and it is important that teachers are seen to put a high value on teaching and sustaining good handwriting, letter formation and correct pencil grip. We believe that children's self-esteem and pride in their work can be raised by good quality presentation.

2. Purpose of policy

There are four main purposes to this policy:

- To establish an entitlement for all students;
- To establish expectations for teachers of this subject;
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school;
- To state the school's approaches to this subject in order to promote public and parents' understanding of the curriculum.

3. Aims and objectives

For teachers to:

- To raise standards in writing across the school;
- To have a consistent approach across the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 when teaching handwriting and presentation of work throughout the school;
- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources

For students to:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in joined handwriting;
- Develop flow and speed, so that eventually they are able to produce the letters automatically in their independent writing;
- Increase their stamina for sustained writing through fluent handwriting;
- Improve their recognition of spelling patterns through joined handwriting

4. Learning and teaching style

a. Effective learning

- The whole school approach begins in FS1 where children will use a variety of materials to engage in mark making, e.g. crayons.
- In FS2, students will use pens and pencils as they continue to develop their fine motor skills.
- Before starting to write there should be a focus on posture: two feet on the floor, the back to the chair, elbows down, etc. Left handed children should be seated so there is adequate room to write.
- Students must use a sharp HB pencil and learn to hold the pencil/pen correctly between the index finger, middle finger and thumb.
- With the use of handwriting books, students will be expected to note letter spacing, correct letter formation and that ascenders and descenders are at the correct height. They will use handwriting books with lined paper to support them, e.g. the height between the red and blue lines for the formation of letters.
- Students will also practise handwriting patterns to ensure the correct letter formations and joins and to develop fluency.
- Handwriting is an explicit element to the phonics programme, Floppy's Phonics.
- It is important that in the Early Years and at Key Stage 1 children are observed closely during lessons to ensure that letter formation is correct.
- Displays both written and computer generated need to model the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters. Students should learn and understand which letters, when adjacent to another one, are best left unjoined.

b. Effective teaching

- Teachers from Years 1 – Year 6 will use Nelson Handwriting to support the planning and delivery of handwriting sessions. Thus meeting the aims of the NCfE. Teachers should use the guidance from the Teacher's Book to guide teaching approaches.
- Teachers in the first instance should model this style of writing in all writing across the school, including handwritten or typed displays, labels and in marking.
- In handwriting lessons, teachers will first let the students warm up, e.g. hand warm up exercises, then model the letter formations. This may initially be done through gross motor movements (e.g. exaggerating the direction or where ascenders and descenders occur). This is before the students put pen to whiteboard or pencil/pen to paper.
- Student success in handwriting will be celebrated in lessons.
- In EYFS and KS1 the font *NTPreCursivefk* should be used in all teacher created resources to model the print lettering as per Nelson Handwriting and DfE recommendations.
- In EYFS the teachers will refer to the GFS rhymes that support letter formation, see appendix 1.
- In KS2 the font *XCCW* Joined 1C should be used in all teacher created resources to model the joins as per Nelson Handwriting and DfE recommendations.

5. English curriculum planning (handwriting)

We seek to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum 2014 and EYFS Curriculum. Planning is based on objectives taken from these, which ensures a progressive structure. In their short-term planning teachers outline specific objectives for groups of children and individuals in order to ensure progress.

- Handwriting will be taught as part of the English curriculum and will be included explicitly in the weekly planning schedule.
- In the Foundation Stage, this will be taught through Floppy's Phonics.
- In the Foundation Stage, students will be taught how to form letters, in conjunction with their phonics input.
- Students should also be encouraged to explore handwriting formations using different mediums particularly in the Early Years e.g. writing in sand, with gel pads, with foam, etc.

6. The contribution of handwriting to teaching in other curriculum areas

a. English

- Handwriting is seen as an integral part of the English curriculum (see above).

b. Mathematics

- Students will always write in pencil. They will be taught how to form numerals correctly: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10

c. Information and communication technology (ICT)

- Teachers will use ICT as an integral part of the teaching of handwriting, using demonstration video clips through SeeSaw, modelling the correct formation and spacing on the Clevertouch boards.

7. Inclusion including reference to SENDo, EAL, G&T

The vast majority of students are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some students need more support and a specific individual or group programme is drawn up in consultation with the SENDo co-ordinator. Thicker triangular pencils, pencil grips and wider lines will be used by children experiencing problems writing alongside other activities to develop their fine motor skills.

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed students and make appropriate provision:

- paper should be positioned to the left for right-handed students and to the right for left-handed students and slanted to suit the individual in either case;
- pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt students' line of vision;
- students should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- left-handed students should sit to the left of a right-handed child, so that they are not competing for space;
- extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before students write left-to-right automatically.
- Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed students to follow handwriting movements when they are modelled by a right-handed teacher.
- Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

8. Parental involvement

The Foundation Stage teachers play an important role in communicating this at an early stage, for example, to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to their students by using only capital letters for the beginning of their names, practising drawing patterns together, playing joining up games

which encourage left to right directionality. All members of staff (including teaching assistants, supply teachers, students) are provided with appropriate handwriting models and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example.

- The font *NT Precursive fk* should be used to model the handwriting in teacher created resources.

9. Assessment and recording

Teachers will observe good handwriting practice as part of students' continuous assessment (and especially in English). Students will also be encouraged to self and peer-assess, e.g. celebrating success within lessons, etc. If students are struggling beyond normal class teaching, then the teacher should follow the school's Inclusion Policy for referral for targeted support from the Inclusion Team.

Handwriting and presentation should be reported on in the annual report statement to parents as part of the English commentary.

10. Roles and responsibilities

- **Local Advisory Board/GEMS** - Will support the school with implementation of the Handwriting Policy.
- **Senior Leadership Team** - Will be responsible for the overall implementation of the Handwriting Policy across the school.
- **Teachers** - have a duty to teach handwriting explicitly during English curriculum time but should also support students across the curriculum in implementing high standards for good handwriting and presentation.

11. Monitoring and review

This policy has been discussed and agreed by the GEMS Founders School teaching staff and leadership teams for implementation.

Signed ..... Date .....11 August 2026 .....
Head of Primary

Signed ..... Date .....11 August 2026.....
Whole School Vice Principal

Signed ..... Date .....11 August 2026.....
Associate Principal

Signed ..... Date .....11 August 2026.....

Executive Principal/CEO/Executive Vice President of Education

Next policy review date:
August 2027

Appendix 1

GEMS Founders Handwriting Policy

EYFS & KS1

The Handwriting Sequence

Below is the letter sequence. Please note that links should not be taught until children are secure in the formation of all their letters.

Stick letters	**l i t j**
The anti-clockwise letters	**c o f a d g q**
The clockwise letters	**n m r h b p**
The diagonal letters	**v w x k z**
Letters that join (lead in, lead out)	**a b c d e h i k l m n s t u**
Letters with no lead out	**g o p r b**
Break letters	**Capital letters, f j v w x y z**

Handwriting Warm-Up

Handwriting is a movement skill. These activities aim to warm-up the children to prepare them for handwriting. We have included the direction terms and imagery of the 'bee', as used when teaching letter formation.

1. Whilst standing: ask the children to copy you making the image of a bee with your hands.

"Get the bees ready – clench and open fists 5 times."

2. “Buzzzzzz – flutter the fingers Buzzy Writing Bees!”

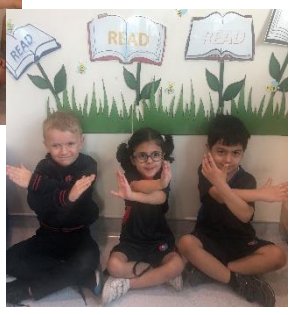
3.

“Fly the bees up!”

4.

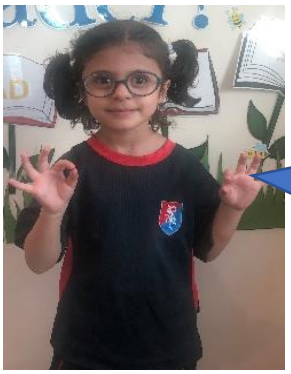
“Fly the bees down and sit!”

5.



“Fly the bees DIAGONALLY across your body - Buzzzz!” Fly the other bee DIAGONALLY- Buzzzzz CROSS!

6.



"Bees flying to the flower, each finger touches the thumb- buzzzz, buzzzz!"

7. Rotating hands with arms on lap

"Bees wings beating- buzzzz!"

Handwriting Script

Stick Letters l i t j	
Lowercase l	Fly the bee down and curl.
Lowercase i	Fly the bee down, jump and dot.
Lowercase t	Fly the bee down, jump and cross.
Lowercase j	Fly the bee down, curl, jump and dot.

Anti-clockwise letters c, o, f, a, d, g, q, u, y, s, e	
Lowercase c	Curl the bee around.
Lowercase o	Curl the bee around and bump.
Lowercase f	Curl the bee round, down, jump, cross.

Lowercase a	Curl the bee around, up, bump, slide down.
Lowercase d	Curl the bee round, fly up, slide down.
Lowercase g	Fly the bee round, up, bump, down, curl.
Lowercase q	Fly around, up, bump, down, flick.
Lowercase u	Fly the bee down, around, up, slide back down.
Lowercase y	Fly the bee down, around, up, slide back down, curl.
Lowercase s	Fly the bee around and back the other way.
Lowercase e	Fly out, up, curl around.

Handwriting Script

Clockwise Letters n, m, r, h, b, p	
Lowercase n	Fly the bee down, up, around and down.
Lowercase m	Fly the bee down, up, around, up and around.
Lowercase r	Fly the bee down, up, curl.
Lowercase h	Fly the bee down, around and down.
Lowercase b	Fly the be down, up, around and bump.
Lowercase p	Fly the bee down, up, around and bump.

Handwriting Script

Diagonal Letters v, w, x, k, z	
Lowercase v	Fly the bee diagonally down and up.
Lowercase w	Fly the bee diagonally down, up, down, down, up.
Lowercase x	Fly down and across, jump, fly down and across the other way.
Lowercase k	Fly the bee down, diagonally kick up, then kick down.
Lowercase z	Fly out, across and out.