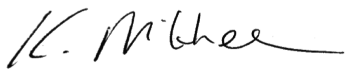




POLICY DOCUMENT

Handwriting Policy

Princess May Primary School's approach to handwriting — 2026–2027

Governing Body Representative (GBR)	Kristofer McGhee (Chair of Governors)
Signed by (GBR)	
Date approved	4 September 2026
Next review due by	September 2027
Related policies	EYFS Policy; Marking and Feedback Policy; Teaching and Learning Policy; SEND Policy and SEND Information Report
Aligned to	The National Curriculum programmes of study for English, Key Stages 1–2; the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2026 edition (in force from 1 September 2026)

1. Aims and rationale

Handwriting is an integral part of the English programmes of study for Key Stages 1 and 2. The National Curriculum describes two dimensions of writing — transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating and structuring ideas) — and requires that both are taught, since fluent transcription is what allows children to write down their ideas fluently.

At Princess May Primary School we want every child to write legibly, fluently and at a reasonable speed, giving them the best possible chance of reaching and demonstrating their true potential throughout their school career and beyond.

2. Our handwriting schemes

For 2026–2027, Princess May uses the **Read Write Inc (RWI) handwriting program** across the school.

All children are expected to write with correctly formed, joined, cursive handwriting by the end of Year 4.

Reception — RWI Handwriting

Handwriting in the early years is taught both through the RWI Phonics scheme, but also in separate daily ten minute sessions following the RWI Handwriting scheme. Children learn correct pencil grip, posture and paper position (the 3 'P's — see Section 3), and are explicitly taught the correct formation of each letter and numeral. Children write in handwriting books with unlined pages, as per the scheme.

Year 1 to Year 6 — RWI Handwriting

Handwriting continues to be taught following the RWI Handwriting Scheme three times a week for fifteen minutes. Children use handwriting books to record and practise their handwriting. Children in Years 1 and 2 use 15mm lines and children from years 3 to 6 use 8mm lines, as per their Literacy books. The aim is to achieve fluency and automaticity and to transfer skills learned in the Handwriting sessions, to their Literacy sessions.

Handwriting is carefully modelled by the teacher, and a high standard of presentation is expected in children's written work across the wider curriculum, not just in handwriting or literacy books. Sassoon font is available on all school PCs so that all communication for children uses the Sassoon digital font. This is widely agreed to be the best font for helping children read and write.

In Year 2 and throughout KS2, children progress to write legibly in a cursive style, using the 4 joins and learning the break letters (letters not joined from): b g j q x y z. Joins are never made to or from the letter z. Children progress towards writing in a joined style, practising printing, slanting and speed-writing, and eventually developing an individual joined style suited to different purposes.

3. Teaching and learning: the 3 'P's

Whichever scheme applies to their year group, all staff ensure children are concentrating on the 3 'P's during handwriting teaching:

- **Paper:** angled slightly away from the writing hand.
- **Posture:** sitting up straight, both feet on the floor, bottom at the back of the chair, adequate desk space.
- **Pencil grip:** a tripod grip is most efficient — held lightly between thumb and forefinger, about 3cm from the point, with the middle finger providing additional support.

4. Left-handed pupils

Left-handed children, like right-handed children, need to be shown as early as possible how to hold a writing implement correctly. If a child already has a 'hooked' pencil hold, we do not force them to change, as this can easily undermine confidence; instead we encourage them to angle their paper 8° to the left, the same angle used for a right-handed child. Where possible, staff demonstrate how to hold a pen and form and join letters using their left hand, holding the pencil between thumb and forefinger, resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger, about 3cm from the tip, with the hand kept below the writing line.

Teachers must be aware of left-handed pupils when planning seating, and should avoid seating a right-handed child immediately to the left of a left-handed child, as their elbows will collide. A visual aid for left-handed pupils is provided at Appendix 2, and the Nelson Handwriting scheme's online teaching software and Resources and Assessment books include further left-handed resources for Years 3–6.

5. Equal opportunities and inclusion

All children have equal opportunities to reach their full potential in handwriting, regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability, or any physical or sensory disability.

Children with English as an additional language

Children with EAL are encouraged to make the same outstanding progress in handwriting as their peers. To support their understanding of letter formation, handwriting should be consistently modelled by the class teacher.

Children with Special Educational Needs

Some children experience difficulties making good progress in handwriting. They may need additional support with fine motor development, pencil grip or letter formation. The class teacher should liaise with the Literacy Lead and SENDCO to put in place the most appropriate support, which could include a pencil grip or jumbo triangular pencil, fine motor skills intervention, an additional handwriting group, or additional handwriting homework.

More able pupils

Children with advanced handwriting skills are supported and given opportunities for extension work.

Exemptions for handwriting difficulties

Teachers may use their professional discretion so that a particular handwriting weakness does not prevent an accurate judgement of a pupil's overall attainment in writing, where that pupil is secure in all other aspects of writing.

6. Assessment

Teacher assessment

Teachers assess children's handwriting progression during lessons, as they write and once they have finished. Criteria may include whether the child adopts the correct posture, holds the pencil correctly, uses the correct movements when forming or joining letters, writes fluently, and whether the writing is legible, appropriate, and developing in line with the statutory curriculum.

Pupil assessment

Children are encouraged to assess their own handwriting throughout the writing process, using the 'Getting Ready to Write' visual prompt and Handwriting Checklist found in their books (Appendix 3). Neat presentation is always recognised and praised by the class teacher.

Whole-school assessment

The Literacy Lead monitors children's writing and presentation in books at least half-termly, checking that handwriting is generally legible and pleasant, letters and joins are correctly formed, spacing is correct, writing size is appropriate, and standards are in line with the statutory curriculum across the school.

7. Marking

Teachers model exemplary handwriting whenever marking pupils' work, in line with the Marking and Feedback Policy, which sets out that teachers mark in green pen and pupils respond in blue pen. Consistent, legible modelling by adults is one of the most powerful ways children learn correct letter formation.

8. Role of the Literacy Lead

The Literacy Lead coordinates the teaching of handwriting across all phases of the school, to secure a consistent approach and ensure progression is outstanding. Key duties over the course of the year include:

- Monitoring handwriting in RWI resources and literacy books
- Monitoring the application of handwriting across other exercise books, such as humanities work booklets and reading journals
- Helping identify and facilitate the professional development needs of staff
- Liaising with the SENDCO to best support children with handwriting difficulties
- Organising, maintaining and cataloguing handwriting resources
- Keeping abreast of new initiatives in the teaching of handwriting

9. Links to other policies

- EYFS Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- SEND Policy and SEND Information Report

Appendix 1: Resources by year group

Year	Scheme	Key resources
Nursery	RWI (pre-formal)	Continuous provision; fine motor activities; letter formation introduced informally
Reception	RWI handwriting	Taught within daily phonics sessions and in a separate 10 minute slot, RWI Letter Village videos, Handwriting books
Year 1	RWI handwriting	RWI Letter Village videos, Handwriting books
Year 2	RWI handwriting	RWI Letter Village videos, Handwriting books
Year 3	RWI handwriting	RWI Letter Village videos, Handwriting books
Year 4	RWI handwriting	RWI Letter Village videos, Handwriting books
Year 5	RWI handwriting	RWI Letter Village videos, Handwriting books
Year 6	RWI handwriting	RWI Letter Village videos, Handwriting books

Appendix 2: Left-handed pupils — visual aid

A photocopiable visual aid is displayed for pupils who use their left hand, prompting them to check:

- Are you sitting comfortably with both feet on the floor?
- Are you holding your pencil correctly?
- Is your paper at the correct angle?

Appendix 3: 'Getting Ready to Write' and Handwriting Checklist

Getting ready to write

- Are you sitting comfortably with both feet on the floor?
- Are you holding your pencil correctly?
- Is your paper at the correct angle?

Handwriting checklist

- Are you forming your letters correctly?
- Are any letters too tall or too short?
- Are any descenders too long or too curly?
- Is there a space between your letters?
- Is there a space between your words?
- Are you making the four joins correctly? (diagonal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ai, ar, un; diagonal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ab, ul, it; horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ou, vi, wi; horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ol, wh, ot)