# Leyland St. James' CE Primary School

# Handwriting Policy

# Reviewed June 2026

Headteacher – Mr J Atherton

English Lead – Mrs S Blundell

## Handwriting Rationale

At Leyland St James' we understand the importance of handwriting being a fundamental skill that underpins pupils' academic development and confidence as learners. Developing clear, fluent and legible handwriting enables pupils to communicate their ideas effectively across the curriculum and reduces the cognitive load associated with writing, allowing them to focus on spelling, vocabulary and composition. Good handwriting supports children's fine motor development, concentration and persistence, and plays an important role in fostering pride in their written work. By teaching handwriting systematically and consistently from an early age, we equip pupils with a lifelong skill that supports learning, self-expression and success both in school and beyond.

Our handwriting curriculum is underpinned by our Christian Values and our vision ***'Shine like stars as children of God' Philippians 2:15.*** We believe that handwriting is of upmost importance across all of our curriculum ensuring children take pride in the presentation of their writing.

## Intent

At Leyland St James' we are committed ensuring that all pupils develop a fluent, legible consistently joined handwriting style that enables them to communicate their ideas clearly and effectively by the end of Year 6.

Our handwriting curriculum builds confidence, fluency and stamina from the start of school life in Nursery. Handwriting is progressive and consistent so that children build strong fine motor control, correct letter formation and secure joins appropriate to their stage of development. By embedding good handwriting habits early, we support pupils in increasing writing speed and stamina, reducing barriers to learning, and fostering pride in their work. Our approach ensures that handwriting becomes an automatic skill, allowing children to focus on the content, creativity and purpose of their writing across the curriculum.

By the time pupils leave Year 6 they are able to meet the expectations of the ***National Curriculum*** and ***The Writing Framework (DFE 2025)*** taking pride in the presentation of their work across the curriculum.

## Implementation

### *EYFS (birth to 5) and Key Stage 1*

In Nursery, Reception and Key stage 1 handwriting is taught explicitly alongside Little Wandle Letters and Sounds, with phonics supporting correct letter formation. (Appendix A)

Pupils begin with gross and fine motor development, posture, grip and paper positioning before moving on to pattern making then accurate formation of lowercase and capital letters.

In Nursery and Pre-School, pupils follow Little Wandle Letters and Sounds foundations for phonics programme focusing on their gross motor and fine motor skills.

In Reception, pupils use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds workbooks to support them with their pattern making and letter formation using print.

In Years 1 and Year 2 dedicated handwriting books with handwriting lines are used to support ascenders and descenders In Year 1 children will refine their handwriting using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds print using words focusing on the progression of the letter families. In Year 2, children begin to learn some diagonal and horizontal strokes are used to join letters before moving onto writing words from the statutory word list using cursive letter formation without a lead in.

Examples:





### *Key Stage 2*

In Years 3 and 4 pupils will refine their joined-up handwriting by concentrating on the horizontal and diagonal joins using their statutory word list.

In Years 5 and 6 pupils will write fluently and legibly in their joined up style of cursive with no lead in.

## National Curriculum Aims

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

♣ read easily, fluently and with good understanding

♣ develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information

♣ acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language

♣ appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage

♣ write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences

♣ use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas

♣ are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

## EYFS (birth to 5 years)

**Physical Development ELG: Fine motor skills**

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold a pencil effectively, in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing

**Literacy 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 sound with a letter or letters

## Year 1

- Sit correctly at a table and hold pencil correctly.
- Hold a pencil with an effective grip.
- Form lower-case letters correctly – starting and finishing in the right place, going the right way round, correctly oriented.
- Form digits 0-9 correctly.
- Practise forming letters in handwriting families:

- 'Long ladders' – i, j, l, t, u,

-'One armed robots' – b, h, m, n p, r

-'Curly caterpillars' – c, a, d, e, g, o, q, f, s

-'Zig-zag letters' – k, v, w, x, y, z

- Have clear ascenders ('tall letters') and descenders ('tails').
- Form capital letters correctly.

## Year 2

- Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another.
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size relative to one another and to lower case letters.
- Use spacing between words which reflects the size of the letters.
- Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.
- Use capital letters appropriately, e.g. *not always writing A as a capital; not using capitals within words.*
- Orientate capital letters correctly.

## Year 3

- Write legibly.
- Form and use the four basic handwriting joins.
- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.

## Year 4

- Write with consistency in size and proportion of letters, e.g. *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.*
- Use a joined style throughout their independent writing.

## Year 5

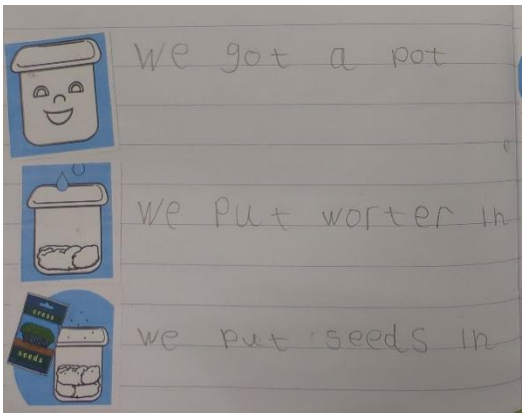
- Choose when it is appropriate to print (lower case or upper case) rather than to join writing, e.g. *printing for labelling a scientific diagram or data; filling in a form, writing an e mail address.*
- Write fluently using a joined style as appropriate for independent writing.

## Year 6

- Choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task, e.g. *pencil for quick notes, handwriting pen for letters, marker pens for posters.*
- Write, using a joined style, with increasing speed.

# Handwriting Progression

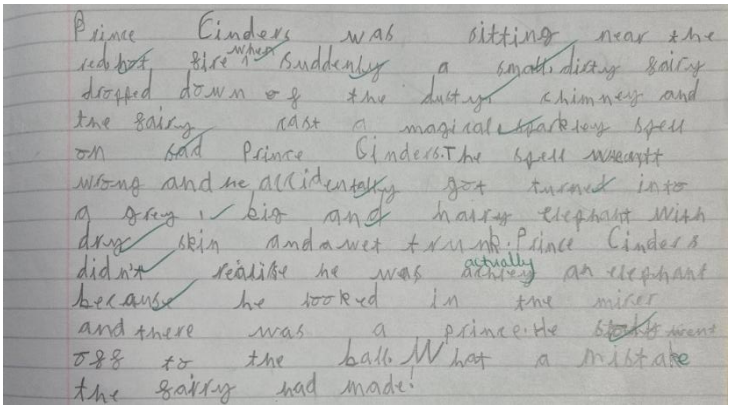
## EYFS



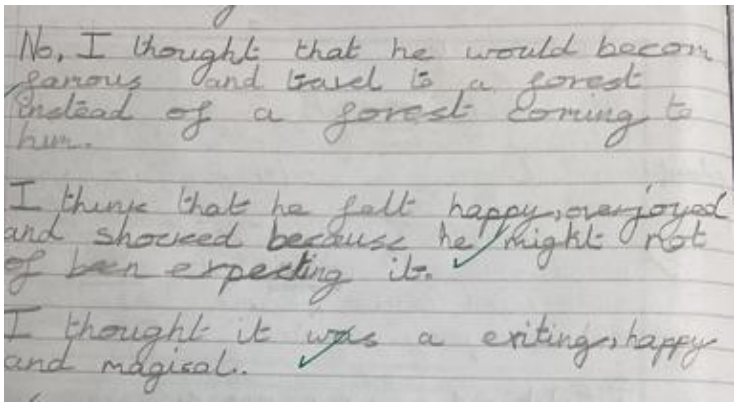

## Year 1




## Year 2



## Year 3

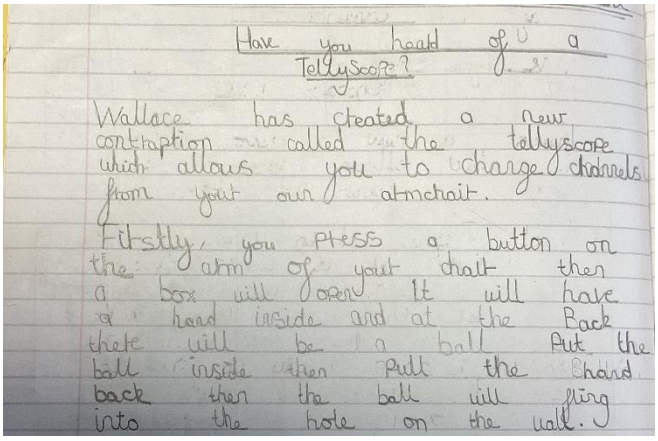


No, I thought that he would becom famous and travel to a forest instead of a forest coming to him.

I think that he felt happy, overjoyed and shocked because he might not of ben expecting it.

I thought it was a exiting, happy and magical.

## Year 4

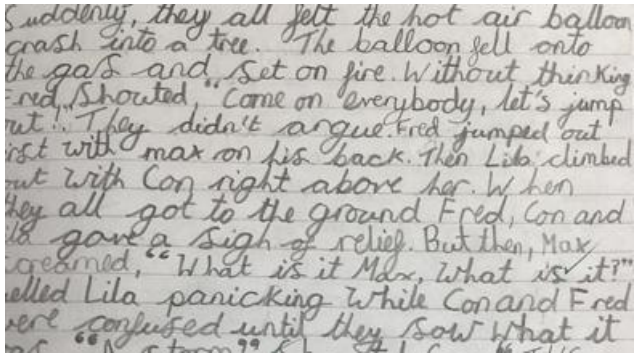


Have you heard of a Tellyscope?

Wallace has created a new contraption called the tellyscope which allows you to charge channels from your own armchair.

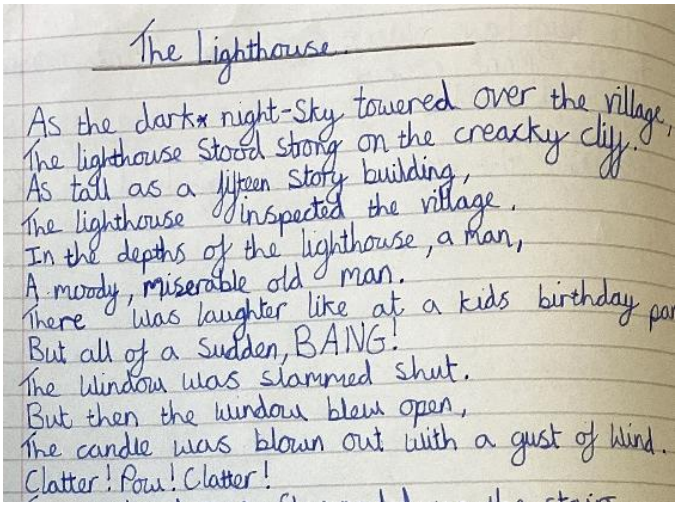
Firstly, you press a button on the arm of your chair then a box will open. It will have a hand inside and at the back there will be a ball. Put the ball inside then pull the hand back then the ball will fling into the hole on the wall.

## Year 5



Suddenly, they all felt the hot air balloon crash into a tree. The balloon fell onto the gas and set on fire. Without thinking Fred shouted, "Come on everybody, let's jump out!". They didn't argue. Fred jumped out first with max on his back. Then Lila climbed out with Con right above her. When they all got to the ground Fred, Con and Lila gave a sigh of relief. But then, Max screamed, "What is it Max, what is it?" yelled Lila panicking while Con and Fred were confused until they saw what it

## Year 6



The Lighthouse.

As the dark night-sky towered over the village,
The lighthouse stood strong on the creacky cliff.
As tall as a fifteen story building,
The lighthouse inspected the village.
In the depths of the lighthouse, a man,
A moody, miserable old man.
There was laughter like at a kids birthday pa
But all of a sudden, BANG!
The window was slammed shut.
But then the window blew open,
The candle was blown out with a gust of wind.
Clatter! Pow! Clatter!

## Handwriting Frequency

While The Writing Framework (DFE 2025) does not prescribe fixed timetables, it does recommend:

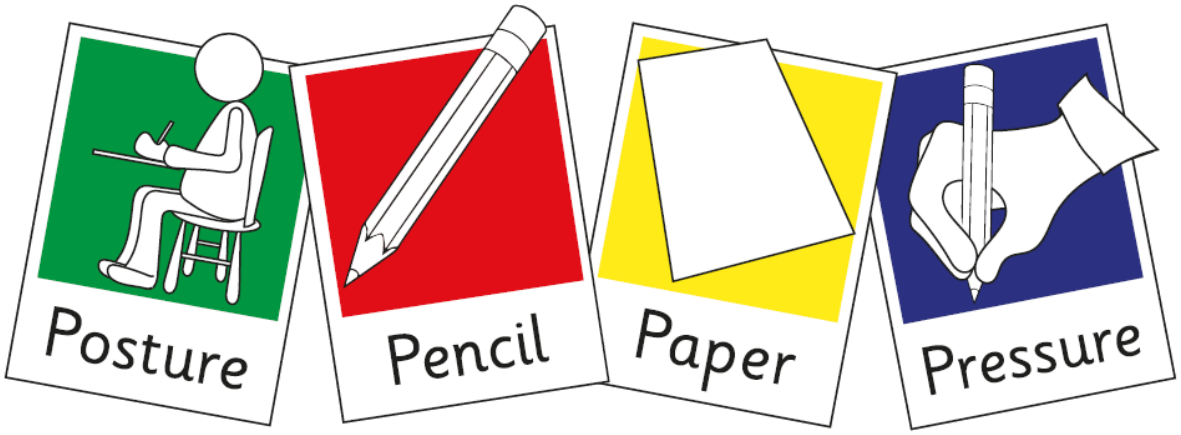
- Frequent, explicit and discrete handwriting lessons.
- Teaching that is in addition to phonics, not embedded in it.
- Daily handwriting in Reception and Year 1 to develop automaticity.

At Leyland St James', we follow a structured approach to the frequency of discrete handwriting lessons across the school. In Reception, children take part in ….

In Year 1, pupils receive three focused handwriting lessons each week.

In Years 2-6, pupils receive two discrete handwriting lessons each week, supported by consistent daily modelling and high expectations for handwriting across all areas of the curriculum.

## P Checks




## Posture



When writing across the curriculum all pupils must maintain a stable, comfortable position to support the process of handwriting.

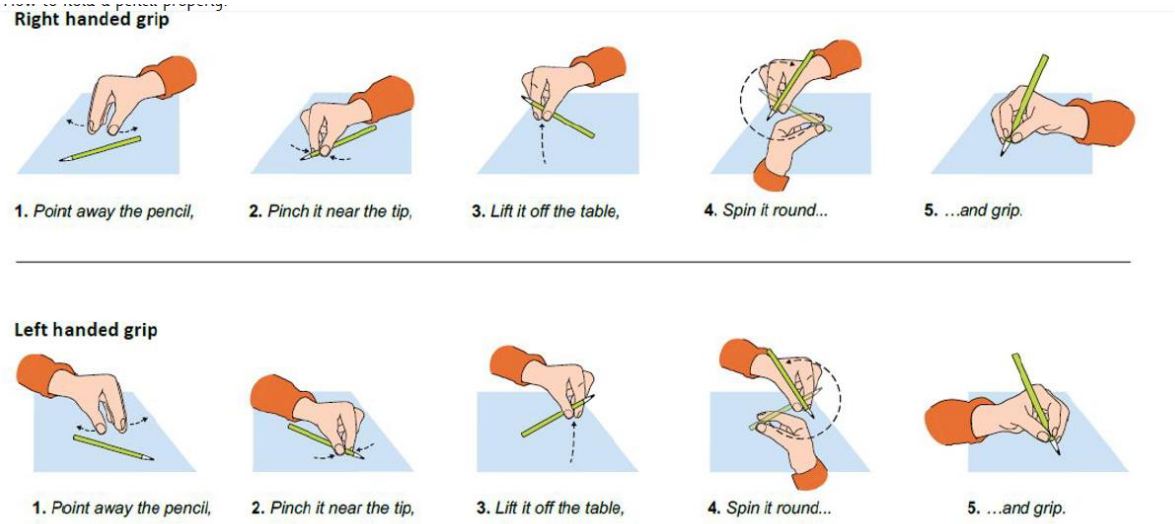
Back supported by the chair

- Slight tilt forwards
- Hips, knees and ankles at right angles
- Feet flat on the floor (or supported on a step)
- Arms resting comfortably on the table
- Tummy – a fist's distance from the table
- Other hand used to stabilise paper
- Eyes should be a ruler's length away from

the desk.

## Pencil

All pupils are encouraged to use the tripod grip from Reception. In Reception, triangular pencils are used before moving onto HB pencils towards the Summer term at the correct stage for the child. From Year 1 onwards, HB pencils are used. In Years 5 and 6, handwriting pens are used to develop a personal writing style while maintaining legibility.




Support for pencil grip is promoted through the use of wrist weights and a variety of pencil grips to suit the needs of the individual child.



## Impact

Pupils at Leyland St James' leave Year 6 with neat, fluent and consistently neat cursive handwriting (with no lead in). They write with confidence, stamina and pride, demonstrating presentation skills that reflect their effort and achievement. Pupils with additional needs benefit from targeted support and appropriate adaptations ensuring progress is made.

Teachers follow clear whole-school guidance on lesson frequency, language and style, ensuring that handwriting is taught and modelled consistently.

Leyland St James' meets National Curriculum expectations promoting a culture of pride in presentation. A consistent, whole-school approach supported by agreed resources, enables every pupil to become a confident, legible writer.

## Special Educational Needs and Disability

Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) will be fully included in the English curriculum. We acknowledge that some pupils may face difficulties with reading and writing due to their individual needs. A range of additional resources and support strategies may therefore be provided, including coloured overlays, large-print resources, iPads, or laptops. Where necessary, tasks will be appropriately adapted to enable pupils to access learning, participate confidently, and achieve success. Thoughtful and sensitive grouping will be used to remove barriers to learning and promote an inclusive classroom environment.

A variety of supportive equipment is available, such as pencil grips, sloped boards, wrist weights, and adapted lined paper, to further support pupils' learning needs

Interventions are well sequenced and planned by the class teachers to ensure those who need extra support receive this in timely manner with frequency to embed handwriting skills.

## Equal Opportunities

All teaching and support staff at Leyland St James' share a collective responsibility for ensuring equality of opportunity and high expectations for all pupils. Regardless of gender, ability, ethnicity or social background, pupils are supported to access the full curriculum and to make strong progress across all subject areas.

In English lessons, pupils are actively encouraged and supported to engage fully in learning. Staff promote inclusive participation and remove barriers so that all pupils can contribute, develop confidence and achieve well.

When planning educational visits, the school takes proactive steps, wherever possible, to support pupils who may experience financial disadvantage, ensuring that all pupils are able to participate and benefit from enrichment opportunities.

## Monitoring and Review

The English subject leader, in collaboration with the headteacher, is responsible for monitoring the effective implementation and impact of this policy. Monitoring

activities include lesson observations, review of planning, book monitoring across English and other curriculum subjects, and discussions with pupils.

Assessment information is reviewed on a termly basis to evaluate standards, identify strengths, and highlight areas for development, including consistency and progression in handwriting across the curriculum. Staff are supported through targeted professional development to ensure high-quality teaching and continuous improvement of handwriting are sustained.

## Appendix

Appendix A – Little Wandle Letters and Sounds

| Letter | Letter formation phrase |
|---|---|
| a | Around the astronaut's helmet and down into space. |
| b | Down the bear's back, up and around its tummy. |
| c | Curl around the cat. |
| d | Around the duck's body, up to its head and down to its feet. |
| e | Around the elephant's eye and curl down its trunk. |
| f | Down the flamingo to its foot and across its wings. |
| g | Around the goat's face and curl under its chin. |
| h | Down, up and over the helicopter. |
| i | Down the iguana and dot the leaf. |
| j | Down the jellyfish and dot its head. |
| k | Down the kite, up to the top corner and down to the bottom corner. |
| l | Down the lollipop stick. |
| m | Down, up and over the mouse's ears. |
| n | Down, up and over the net. |
| o | All around the octopus. |
| p | Down the penguin's back, up and around its head. |
| q | Around the queen's face, down her robe and a flick at the end. |
| r | From the cloud to the ground and over the rainbow. |
| s | Down the snake from head to tail. |
| t | Down the tiger and across its neck. |
| u | Down and around the umbrella and back to the ground. |
| v | Down to the bottom of the volcano and back up to the top. |
| w | Down and up and down and up the waves. |
| x | From the top, across the box to the bottom. From the top again, across the box to the bottom. |
| y | Down, around the yo-yo and curl around the string. |
| z | Across the top of the zebra's head, zig-zag down its neck and along. |

| | |
|---|---|
| ck | **c** Curl around the heel of the sock.<br>**k** Down the sock, up and back down to the toe. |

## Appendix B - Little Wandle Letters and Sounds

### Phase 2 grapheme information sheet — Autumn 1

| Grapheme and mnemonic | Picture card | Pronunciation phrase | Formation phrase |
|---|---|---|---|
| s s |  snake | Show your teeth and and let the s hiss out **ssssss ssssss** | Down the snake from head to tail. |
| a a |  astronaut | Open your mouth wide and make the **a** sound at the back of your mouth **a a a** | Around the astronaut's helmet and down into space. |
| t t |  tiger | Open your lips; put the tip of your tongue behind your teeth and press **t t t** | Down the tiger and across its neck. |
| p p |  penguin | Bring your lips together, push them open and say **p p p** | Down the penguin's back, up and around its head. |
| i i |  iguana | Pull your lips back and make the **i** sound at the back of your mouth **i i i** | Down the iguana and dot the leaf. |
| n n |  net | Open your lips a bit, put your tongue behind your teeth and make the **nnnnn** sound **nnnnn** | Down, up and over the net. |
| m m |  mouse | Put your lips together and make the **mmmmm** sound **mmmmm** | Down, up and over the mouse's ears. |

© 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

| Grapheme and mnemonic | Picture card | Pronunciation phrase | Formation phrase |
|---|---|---|---|
|  d |  duck | Put your tongue to the top and front of your mouth and make a quick **d** sound **d d d** | Around the duck's body, up to its head and down to its feet. |
|  g |  goat | Give me a big smile that shows your teeth; press the middle of your tongue to the top and back of your mouth; push your tongue down and forward to make the **g** sound **g g g** | Around the goat's face and curl under its chin. |
|  o |  octopus | Make your mouth into a round shape and say **o o o** | All around the octopus. |
|  c |  cat | Open your mouth into a little smile; make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say **c c c** | Curl around the cat. |
|  k |  kite | Open your mouth into a little smile; make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say **k k k** | Down the kite, up to the top corner and down to the bottom corner. |
|  ck |  sock | Open your mouth into a little smile, make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say **c c c** | **c** Curl around the heel of the sock. **k** Down the sock, up and back down to the toe.<br><br>**Catchphrase:** Rock that sock! |
|  e |  elephant | Open your mouth wide and say **e e e** | Around the elephant's eye and curl down its trunk. |

© 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

| Grapheme and mnemonic | Picture card | Pronunciation phrase | Formation phrase |
|---|---|---|---|
| u u |  umbrella | Open your mouth wide and say **u u u** | Down and around the umbrella and back to the ground. |
| r r |  rainbow | Show me your teeth to make a **rrrrr** sound **rrrrr rrrrr** | From the cloud to the ground and over the rainbow. |
| h h |  helicopter | Open your mouth and breathe out sharply **h h h** | Down, up and over the helicopter. |
| b b |  bear | Put your lips together and say **b** as you open them **b b b** | Down the bear's back, up and around its tummy. |
| f f |  flamingo | Open your lips a little; put your teeth on your bottom lip and push the air out to make the sound **fffff fffff** | Down the flamingo to its foot and across its wings. |
| l l |  lollipop | Open your mouth a little; put your tongue up to the top of your mouth, behind your teeth, and press **llllll llllll** | Down the lollipop stick. |

© 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

# Phase 2 grapheme information sheet

## Autumn 2

| Grapheme and mnemonic | Picture card | Pronunciation phrase | Formation phrase |
|---|---|---|---|
|  j |  jellyfish | Pucker your lips and show your teeth; use your tongue as you say **j j j** | Down the jellyfish and dot its head. |
|  v |  volcano | Put your teeth against your bottom lip and make a buzzing **vvvvv vvvvv** | Down to the bottom of the volcano and back up to the top. |
|  w |  wave | Pucker your lips and keep them small as you say **w w w** | Down and up and down and up the waves. |
|  x |  box | Mouth open, then push the **cs/x** sound through as you close your mouth **cs cs cs (x x x)** | From the top, across the box to the bottom. From the top again, across the box to the bottom. |
|  y |  yoyo | Smile, tongue to the top of your mouth, say **y** without opening your mouth **yyy** | Down, around the yo-yo and curl around the string. |
|  z |  zebra | Show me your teeth and buzz the **z** sound **zzzzz zzzzz** | Across the top of the zebra's head, zig-zag down its neck and along. |

© 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

| Grapheme and mnemonic | Picture card | Pronunciation phrase | Formation phrase/ Catchphrase |
|---|---|---|---|
| qu qu |  queen | Pucker your mouth, then open it as you say **qu qu qu** | **q** Around the queen's face, down her robe and a flick at the end.<br>**u** Down and around the umbrella and back to the ground.<br><br>qu Quick, it's the queen! |
| ch ch |  cherries | Pucker your lips and show your teeth; use your tongue as you say **ch ch ch** | ch Chew the cherries, children. |
| sh sh |  shells | Pucker your lips and show your teeth; push the air out **shshshshsh shshshshsh** | sh Share the shells. |
| th th |  thumb | **Voiced:** Tongue on your teeth, teeth almost closed to make a 'buzzing' **th th th**<br>**Unvoiced:** Tongue on your teeth; push the air out **th th th** | th Thumbs up, we're having fun. |
| ng ng |  ring | Open your mouth a bit and then use your tongue at the back of your mouth to say **ng ng ng** | ng Bling on a ring. |
| nk nk |  pink panda | Open your mouth a bit and then use your tongue at the back of your mouth to say **ngk ngk ngk** | nk I think I am pink. |

© 2025 Wandle Learning Trust. All rights reserved.

## Appendix C – National Handwriting Association

### Letter families

**For teaching letter formation**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Letter family 1**<br>Down and off in another direction | l i t j u y |
| **Letter family 2**<br>Down and retrace upwards | m n r b p h k |
| **Letter family 3**<br>Anticlockwise round | c a d o q g e f s |
| **Letter family 4**<br>Zig-zag letters | v w x z |