



This policy sets out Torkington's approach to the teaching and development of handwriting using the Nelson Handwriting Scheme, adapted to meet the needs of all learners, including those who are left-handed. It aligns with the expectations set out in the National Curriculum in England (2014) and has been designed with reference to evidence-based guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and advice from Ofsted in supporting high standards in writing across the curriculum.

1. Intent

- To ensure all pupils develop a fluent, legible, and personalised handwriting style.
- To promote pride in the presentation of work across the curriculum.
- To ensure consistency in the teaching of handwriting from Early Years through to Year 6.
- To provide inclusive adaptations for left-handed pupils and those with additional needs.
- To foster understanding of the link between fluent handwriting and composition skills.

2. Statutory Requirements

Handwriting is a statutory requirement in the English programmes of study in the National Curriculum (2014). Pupils are expected to:

Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

Begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.

Form capital letters and digits 0-9 correctly.

Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' and to practise these.

Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by the end of Key Stage 2.

Ofsted's School Inspection Framework (2023) also highlights the importance of early literacy, including the foundations of writing and correct formation of letters as essential skills.

3. Implementation

3.1 Teaching Approach

Handwriting is taught explicitly in regular, dedicated sessions using the Nelson Handwriting Scheme, which:

Provides a structured, whole-school approach across EYFS, KS1 and KS2.

Follows correct letter formation, introduction of joins, and progression to a fluent, joined style.

Embeds handwriting into spelling, grammar, and wider writing tasks.

3.2 Frequency and Duration

EYFS: Daily fine motor and letter formation activities through continuous provision.



KS1: Minimum of four 20-minute handwriting sessions per week.

KS2: Minimum of three sessions per week, with additional intervention sessions as needed.

3.3 Progression Overview

Nursery

Fine motor control, mark-making, pencil grip, pattern work

Reception – Blue level Nelson

Correct letter formation, developing tripod grip, letter families

Year 1 – Blue level Nelson Yellow when ready

Introduction to lower-case and capital letters, writing on lines

Year 2 – Yellow and Red level when ready

Begin joined handwriting; ensure all letters are correctly formed

Year 3 – Red level

Securing joined writing style; writing with consistency and fluency

Year 4 – Purple level 1

Speed and legibility; developing a personalised style

Year 5/6 – Purple level 1 and 2

Automaticity, fluency, stamina for longer writing tasks

3.4 Pencil Grip and Posture

Correct pencil grip and seating posture are modelled and reinforced to support effective handwriting. This includes:

Sitting with both feet flat on the floor.

Using the non-writing hand to steady the paper.

Using the tripod grip (thumb, forefinger, and middle finger).

Use of Line Guides and Books

Writing books reflect the developmental stage of pupils:

Wide lines in Early Years and Year 1, with midlines where applicable.

Narrower lines and handwriting paper or guidelines as pupils move into KS2.

4. Inclusion: Support for Left-Handed Pupils and SEND

4.1 Adaptations for Left-Handed Pupils

As per the Writing Framework (STA, 2018) supporting statutory assessment and DfE guidance, the following adaptations are made for left-handed pupils:

Encouraging pupils to tilt their paper to the right to prevent smudging.



Ensuring the left hand is used to hold and stabilise the paper.

Positioning pupils on the left-hand side of shared desks to ensure free arm movement.

Avoiding 'hooked' wrist positions by modelling arm and wrist placement.

Providing quick-drying pens and pencils to reduce smudging once pen licences are awarded.

The Nelson Handwriting scheme accommodates these needs by including specific guidance and visual aids for teachers and pupils.

4.2 Support for Pupils with SEND

Pupils with motor skill difficulties, dyslexia, dyspraxia, or other SEND are supported through:

Use of fine motor skill programmes (e.g. Dough Disco, Squiggle while you Wiggle).

Access to pencil grips, adapted pens/pencils, sloped boards, and a range of lined paper.

Use of technology where appropriate (e.g. keyboards, tablets for scribing).

Tailored individual or group intervention using motor skills united and functional skills.

Universal reasonable adjustment all children use blue pen on white paper.

Support is aligned with advice from the school's SENCo and recommendations in DfE SEND Code of Practice (2015).

5. Impact

5.1 Ongoing Formative Assessment

Teachers assess handwriting through daily classwork and targeted activities.

Feedback includes reference to letter size, orientation, joins, spacing, and presentation.

5.2 Summative Assessment

Handwriting is moderated during termly writing assessments.

Pupils' progress is tracked through handwriting stages and through writing portfolios.

5.3 Achieving a Pen Licence

To motivate pupils and celebrate success, a "Pen Licence" is awarded when:

- Handwriting is consistently neat, correctly joined, legible, and appropriately sized.
- The pupil shows correct letter formation under time constraints.
- This is commonly introduced from Year 3 onwards.

6. Role of the Teacher

Teachers will:



- Consistently model correct handwriting.
- Plan and deliver regular, focused handwriting sessions.
- Provide scaffolding and resources for pupils with additional needs.
- Give specific feedback relating to handwriting in written work.
- Celebrate and display high-quality handwriting.

7. Role of Leaders

- Subject leaders and SLT will:
- Monitor teaching and progression against the Nelson Handwriting Scheme.
- Undertake book looks and learning walks to assess consistency across the school.
- Identify training needs and provide relevant CPD.
- Ensure inclusive practice for left-handed pupils and those with SEND.

8. Home–School Partnership

- Parents have an important role in supporting handwriting practice at home. The school:
 - Provides guidance leaflets on correct letter formation.
 - Signposts online tools and activities for reinforcement at home.

9. Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually by the English subject leader and SLT to ensure continuous improvement, consistency and adherence to statutory guidance.

Last Reviewed: October 2024

Next Review Due: October 2025

References:

Department for Education (2014). National Curriculum in England: English programmes of study.

Standards and Testing Agency (2018). Teacher Assessment Frameworks at the End of Key Stage 1 and 2.

Department for Education (2015). SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.

Ofsted (2023). School Inspection Handbook.

Oxford University Press. Nelson Handwriting Scheme Resources.