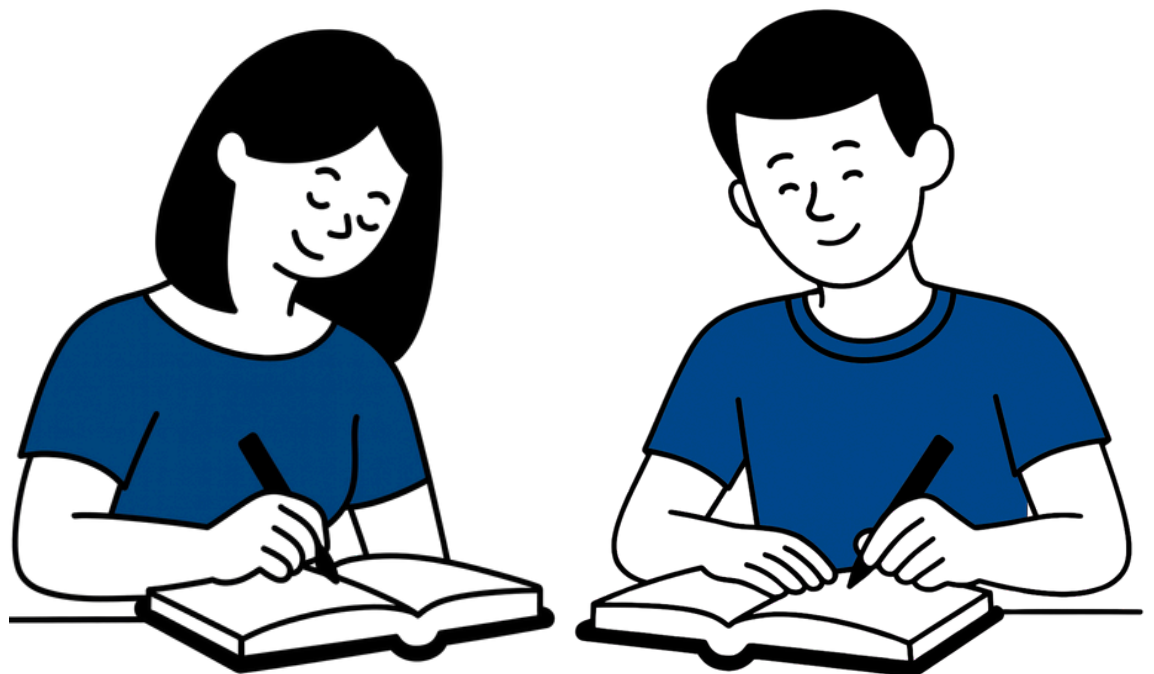




Ryecroft CE Middle School

Handwriting, Presentation & Expectation Guidance





Introduction

Handwriting remains a fundamental skill that supports students' learning, communication, and confidence. Despite the increasing use of digital tools, the ability to write clearly and fluently by hand continues to play an essential role in academic success and everyday life. There is a need for a consistent, whole-school approach to handwriting to ensure that all pupils develop legible, efficient, and enduring writing habits.

This guidance provides the rationale for teaching handwriting systematically, helping pupils build strong fine-motor skills, develop automaticity, and reduce barriers to expressing their ideas. When children can write confidently and competently, they are better able to focus on higher-order skills such as planning, vocabulary choice, and creativity, rather than being constrained by the mechanics of forming letters.

The intent of this guidance is to establish clear expectations, shared practices, and progressive teaching strategies that support every learner. It aims to ensure that handwriting is taught explicitly, practised regularly, and applied consistently across the curriculum. Through this guidance, RMS seeks to foster pride, clarity, and independence in writing, equipping pupils with a valuable skill that will benefit them throughout their education and beyond.

Lower-Case Letter Formations

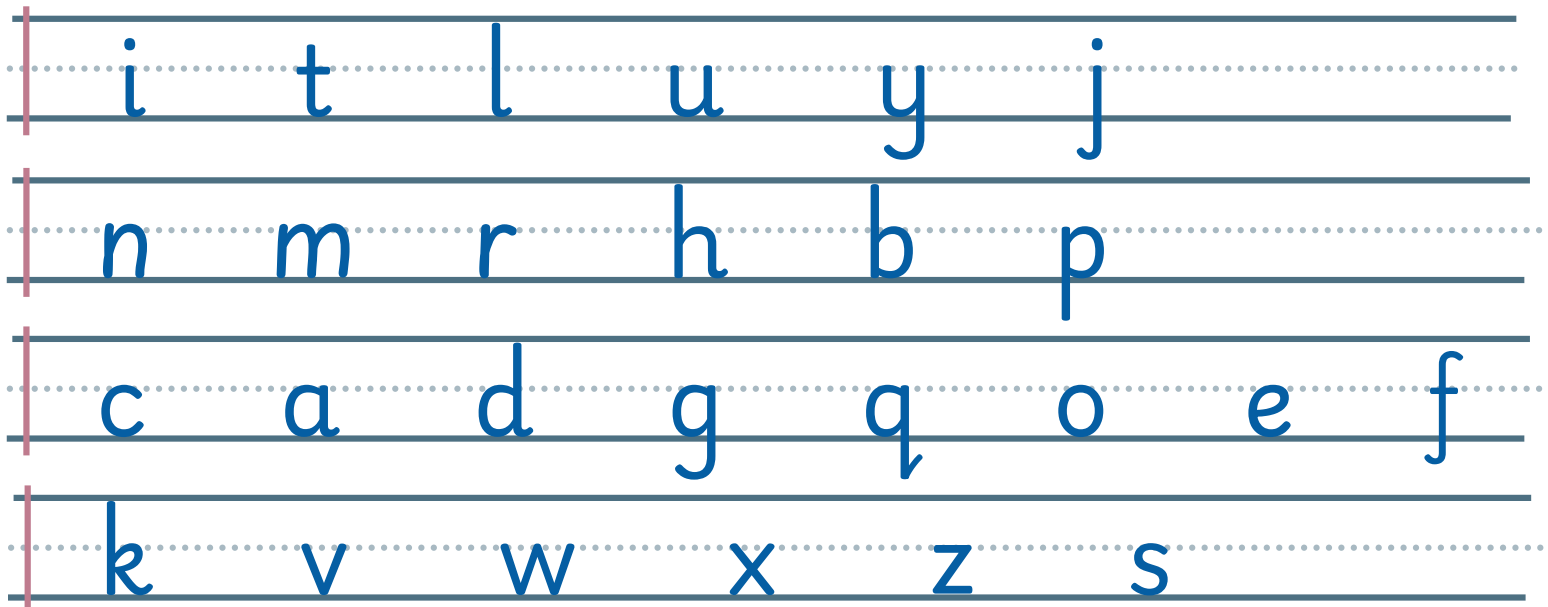
Letter families are groups of letters that share similar movement patterns, starting points, or stroke sequences. Organising letters this way helps children learn handwriting more effectively and build automaticity in their formations.

itluy(j) - line and anti-clockwise arch

nmrhbp - line and clockwise arch

cadgqo(e)(f)(s) - anti-clockwise circular letters

kvwxz(s) - letters with diagonal strokes





a

1. Start at the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Make a small “c” shape going anti-clockwise.
3. Continue the curve all the way around until you close the circle.
4. From the closing point, draw a short straight line down.
5. Finish the stroke just below the midline, on the baseline with a small flick, ready for a join.

This method reinforces that a belongs to the anti-clockwise circular letter family, beginning with the same movement as c.



b

1. Start at the top line (the ascender line).
2. Draw a straight vertical line down to the baseline.
3. Return to the midline (halfway up the vertical line).
4. From the midline, draw a clockwise arch that curves out and down to the right.
5. Finish the curve by touching the baseline and closing the shape neatly.

This formation shows that b belongs to the line + clockwise arch letter family, starting with a tall downstroke before moving into the rounded shape.



c

1. Start at the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Move your pencil slightly up and around, beginning an anti-clockwise curve.
3. Continue the curve down and around to form an open circle shape.
4. Finish on the baseline, leaving the letter open on the right side.

The letter c is the foundation of the anti-clockwise circular letter family, and many other letters (a, d, g, q, o) begin with this same starting stroke.



d

1. Start at the midline (the same place you begin c and a).
2. Begin with an anti-clockwise “c” shape, curving up, around, and down to the baseline.
3. Once you complete the “c”, continue the stroke up along the inside of the shape.
4. Go straight up to the top line (ascender line).
5. From the top line, draw a straight line back down to the baseline with a small flick, ready for a join.

This shows that d belongs to the anti-clockwise circular letter family. It starts exactly like c and a, with the tall vertical line added after the circle is formed.



e

1. Start below the midway point.
2. Move right a tiny bit to make a short horizontal line; this is the entry stroke.
3. From that tiny line, curve up and around anti-clockwise, creating a small circular shape.
4. Continue the curve down and around until you finish on the baseline, leaving the letter slightly open.

The letter **e** belongs to the anti-clockwise circular family, but begins with a small horizontal lead-in that helps the letter stay open and neat.



f

1. Start just below the top line (slightly beneath the ascender line).
2. Begin with a slightly curved downstroke, moving downwards.
3. As you approach the midline, curve gently to the left, then continue the stroke down to the baseline.
4. Let the stroke dip just below the baseline to make a small tail or hook.
5. Lift your pencil and add a short horizontal line across the middle of the letter at the midline.

The **f** is part of the anti-clockwise circular/curved family, because it begins with a curve similar to the start of **c**, **a**, or **d**, but extends upward and downward in a tall, flowing shape.



g

1. Start at the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Begin with an anti-clockwise “c” shape, curving up, around, and down to the baseline.
3. Close the circle to make the same shape as the letter **a** or **o**.
4. From the closing point, continue the stroke down below the baseline to make a straight descender.
5. At the bottom of the descender, curve the stroke left into a small tail or hook.

This formation keeps **g** consistent with the anti-clockwise circular letter family.



h

1. Start at the top line (the ascender line).
2. Draw a straight vertical line down to the baseline.
3. Lift slightly, then return to the midline (halfway up the downstroke).
4. From the midline, make a small clockwise arch that curves down to the baseline.
5. Finish the stroke neatly on the baseline with a small flick, ready for a join.

This shows that **h** belongs to the line + clockwise arch letter family.



1. Start at the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Draw a short straight vertical line down to the baseline, flicking at the end ready for a join.
3. Lift your pencil.
4. Place a small dot directly above the midline, centred over the downstroke.

The lowercase **i** belongs to the “line and anti-clockwise arch” letter family.



1. Start at the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Draw a straight vertical line down, passing through the baseline.
3. Continue below the baseline and curve the stroke to the left to make a small hook or tail.
4. Lift your pencil.
5. Place a small dot above the midline, centred over the downstroke.

j belongs to the “line and anti-clockwise arch” letter family.



1. Start at the top line (ascender line).
2. Draw a straight vertical line down to the baseline.
3. Lift your pencil and return to the midline (halfway up the downstroke).
4. From the midline, draw a small diagonal stroke down and out toward the baseline.
5. Without lifting your pencil, follow with a second diagonal stroke that goes down and out further, finishing on the baseline.

The lowercase **k** belongs to the diagonal-stroke letter family.



1. Start at the top line (the ascender line).
2. Draw a straight vertical line down to the baseline.
3. Finish neatly on the baseline with a flick ready for a join.

The lowercase **l** belongs to the “line and anti-clockwise arch” letter family



1. Start at the midline (middle writing line).
2. Draw a straight vertical line down to the baseline.
3. From the baseline, make a small clockwise arch up to the midline and back down to the baseline.
4. Repeat the movement to make a second small clockwise arch, finishing on the baseline with a flick, ready for a join.

The lowercase m belongs to the “line and clockwise arch” letter family



1. Start at the midline (middle writing line).
2. Draw a straight vertical line down to the baseline.
3. From the baseline, form a small clockwise arch up to the midline and back down to the baseline.
4. Finish neatly on the baseline with a flick, ready for a join.

The lowercase n belongs to the “line and clockwise arch” letter family.



1. Start at the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Move slightly up and around, beginning an anti-clockwise circular motion.
3. Continue the curve smoothly down to the baseline.
4. Complete the circle by curving back up to the starting point at the midline.
5. Finish by closing the shape neatly.

The lowercase o belongs to the anti-clockwise circular letter family



1. Start at the midline (middle writing line).
2. Draw a straight vertical line down through the baseline, extending **slightly** below it to create the descender.
3. Return your pencil to the midline (halfway up the downstroke).
4. From the midline, make a small clockwise arch that curves outwards and down to meet the descender line.
5. Finish neatly where the arch meets the main downstroke.

The lowercase p belongs to the “line and clockwise arch” letter family



1. Start at the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Begin with an anti-clockwise circular stroke, just like *o* or *a*.
3. Curve down to the baseline and close the circle neatly.
4. From the closing point, continue straight down below the baseline to form the descender.
5. At the bottom, make a short diagonal or curved flick to the right

The lowercase q belongs to the anti-clockwise circular letter family.



1. Start at the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Draw a straight vertical line down to the baseline.
3. Return to the midline on the downstroke.
4. From the midline, make a small clockwise hook that curves slightly outwards and ends just below the midway point.

The lowercase r belongs to the “line and clockwise arch” letter family.



1. Start just below the midline (slightly under the middle writing line).
2. Curve upwards to touch the midline.
3. Then curve over and around clockwise, moving downwards.
4. Continue the curve to finish on the baseline, creating a gentle, flowing “snake-like” shape.
5. The top and bottom curves should be balanced and smooth.

The lowercase s belongs to two different families; anti-clockwise circular family and diagonal-stroke family.



1. Start just above the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Draw a straight vertical line down to the baseline.
3. Finish neatly on the baseline with a tail/hook/flick ready for a join.
4. Lift your pencil and add a short horizontal crossbar across the vertical line.
5. The crossbar should sit on the midline.

The lowercase t belongs to the “line and anti-clockwise arch” letter family.



1. Start at the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Draw a straight vertical line down to the baseline.
3. At the baseline, curve the stroke up smoothly to return to the midline.
4. From the midline, draw a second straight vertical line down to the baseline.
5. Finish with a small upward curve or flick ready for a join.

The lowercase u belongs to the “line and anti-clockwise arch” letter family.



1. Start at the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Draw a slanted diagonal line down to the baseline.
3. From the baseline, draw a second slanted diagonal line up to the midline.
4. Finish neatly at the midline with a clean point at the bottom.

The lowercase v belongs to the diagonal-stroke letter family.



1. Start at the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Draw a slanted diagonal line down to the baseline.
3. From the baseline, draw a slanted diagonal line up to the midline.
4. Without lifting your pencil, draw a second slanted diagonal line down to the baseline.
5. Finish by drawing a final slanted diagonal line up to the midline. Essentially, it is two connected v shapes.

The lowercase w belongs to the diagonal-stroke letter family.



1. Start at the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Draw a slanted diagonal line down to the baseline.
3. Lift your pencil.
4. Return to the midline and draw a second slanted diagonal line that crosses the first, finishing on the baseline.

The lowercase x belongs to the diagonal-stroke letter family.



1. Start at the midline.
2. Draw a straight vertical line down to the baseline, then curve the stroke slightly up to return to the midline (just like the first part of u).
3. From the midline, draw a straight vertical stroke down through the baseline.
4. Finish with a small curve or hook **slightly** below the line.

The lowercase y belongs to the “line and anti-clockwise arch” family.

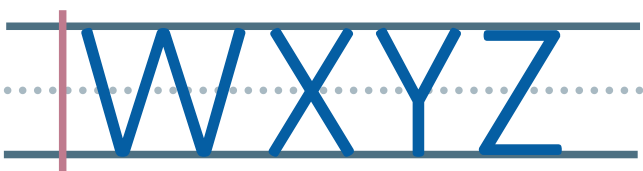


1. Start at the midline (the middle writing line).
2. Draw a short horizontal line to the right.
3. From the end of that line, draw a diagonal line down to the baseline.
4. Finish with another short horizontal line to the right along the baseline.

The letter z belongs to the diagonal-stroke letter family.

Upper-Case Letter Formations

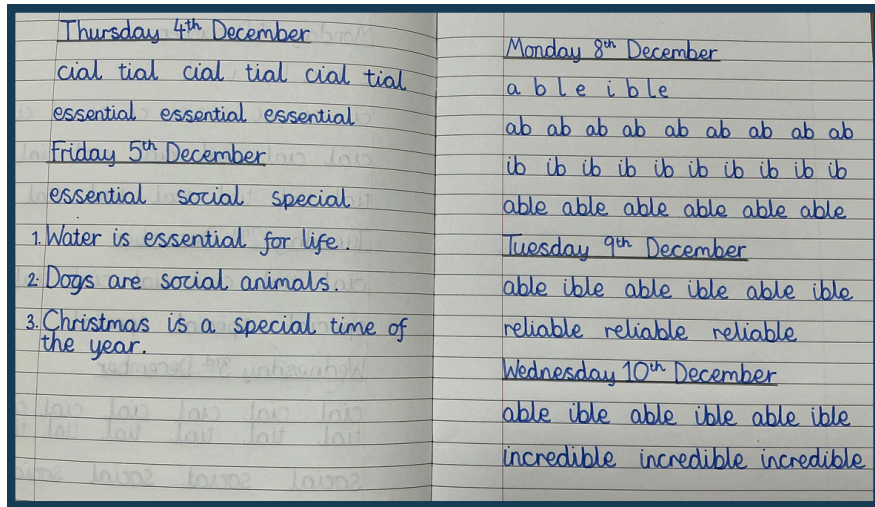
Capital letters should be tall, clear, and consistent, always starting at the top line and sitting firmly on the baseline. Each capital should be formed with controlled, deliberate strokes that avoid loops or embellishments, ensuring they remain distinct from their lowercase counterparts. All capitals should be the same height, evenly spaced, and used only where appropriate, at the beginning of sentences, names, and proper nouns.



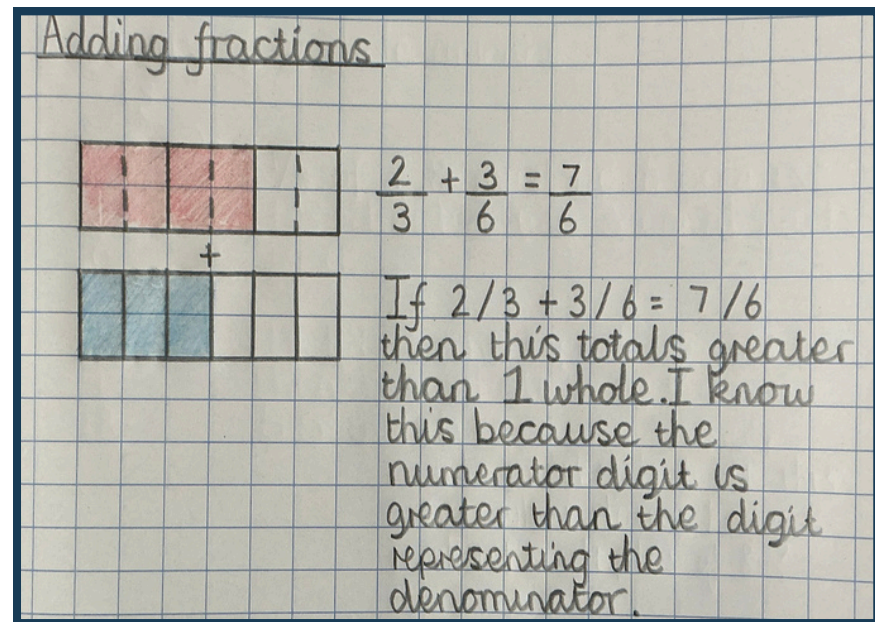


Pupil Expectations.

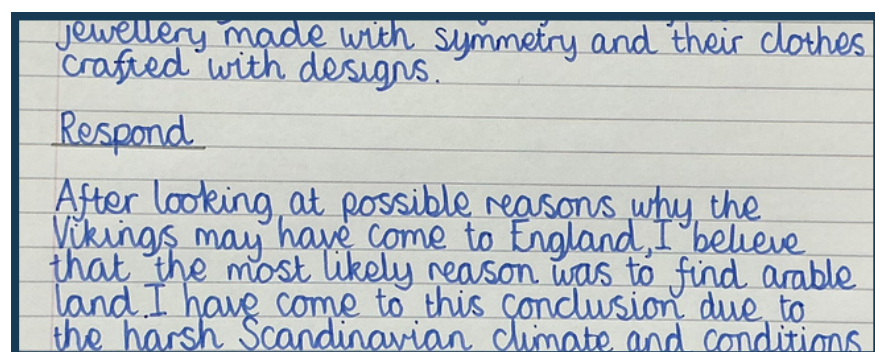
Pupils are expected to demonstrate consistent, well-formed handwriting across the entire curriculum, taking care to apply the same high standards in every subject, not only during handwriting lessons. This means writing with accuracy, control, and pride whether completing extended writing, labelling diagrams, solving maths problems, or recording notes. By approaching all written work with the same level of effort and attention to detail, pupils develop good habits, reinforce fluency, and present work that reflects their best learning. Consistency supports clear communication, strengthens progression over time, and helps pupils take ownership of their written presentation in all areas of school life.



Handwriting Lessons



Maths Lessons



Curriculum Lessons



Name: _____

Form: _____

Aa

Bb

Cc

Dd

Ee

Ff

Gg

Hh

Ii

Jj

Kk

Ll

Mm

Nn

Oo

Pp

Qq

Rr

Ss

Tt

Uu

Vv

Ww

Xx

Yy

Zz

Use this space to practise some lower-case letter joins.