



Handwriting Skills Progression



Birth to 3 3-4 years Reception Early Learning Goals	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Enjoy drawing freely. Add some marks to their drawings, which they give meaning to. For example: "That says mummy." Make marks on their picture to stand for their name Use large-muscle movements to wave flags and streamers, paint and make marks. • Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors. • Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils • Shows a preference for a dominant hand. • Use some of their print and letter knowledge in their early writing. For example: writing a pretend shopping list that starts at the top of the page; write 'm' for mummy. • Write some letters accurately. Develop their small motor skills so that they can use a range of tools competently, safely and confidently. Suggested tools: pencils for drawing and writing, paintbrushes, scissors, knives, forks and spoons. • Use their core muscle strength to achieve a good posture when sitting at a table or sitting on the floor. • Develop the foundations of a handwriting style which is fast, accurate and efficient. • Form lower case and capital letters correctly. • Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases. • Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed	• To write lower case and capital letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place with a good level of consistency. • To sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly. • To form the digits 0-9. • To understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.	• To write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters. • To form lower case letters of the correct size, relative to one another. • To use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters. To begin to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters	• To use a neat, joined handwriting style with increasing accuracy and speed. To continue to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and to understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.	• To increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant and by ensuring that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch. To confidently use diagonal and horizontal joining strokes throughout their independent writing to increase fluency.	• To increase the speed of their handwriting so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of writing down what they want to say. • To be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, e.g. quick notes or a final handwritten version To confidently use diagonal and horizontal joining strokes throughout their independent writing in a legible, fluent and speedy way.	• To write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters and by choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task. To recognise when to use an unjoined style (e.g. for labelling a diagram, for writing an email address or for algebra) and capital letters (e.g. for filling in a form).