



Wood End Park Academy

Handwriting Policy April 2016

Last updated March 2017

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Rationale

Teaching handwriting is a priority at Wood End Park Academy. In order for children to be able to concentrate on their *quality* of what they are writing, they need to be able to write legibly and fluently. It is recommended that joined handwriting should only be taught as soon as children have learnt to form their letters correctly.

Handwriting Scheme used by WEPA: Nelson Thornes Handwriting Scheme



Key points about joining letters (the Nelson handwriting scheme)

- ❖ Letters that end at the top join horizontally: f o r t v w x
- ❖ Letters that end at the bottom join diagonally: a c d e h i k l m n u
- ❖ Letters that are traditionally not joined: b j p s q y z. These are not joined because they end in the opposite direction (left) to the direction of writing (right).
- ❖ The letters g and y can be looped, but these letters end to the left so it is therefore more consistent for them not to be joined. Children who loop these letters often then contrive other unsuitable loops, such as for the letter s.
- ❖ Capital letters should not be huge. They should be no higher than ascenders.

Expectations by the end of each key stage

By the end of EYFS, children should be able to:

- print and focus on correct letter formation.
- hold pencil effectively (taught through 'Funky Fingers', see appendix)
- form recognisable letters
- begin to recognise some letter families (see examples in appendix).

(The Early learning goal does not state that children need to join letters at this stage)

Early Years

In Early Years, children participate in a wide range of multi-sensory activities in order to develop fine and gross motor skills through 'Funky Fingers' (see pages 5-6)

In Early Years, children should be taught to

- Hold a pencil correctly and adopt the correct posture when writing
- Write from left to right and from top to bottom of the page
- Start and finish letters correctly
- Form regular sized and shaped letters
- Use regular spacing between letters and words
- Be aware of the need for clear and neat presentation
- Take a pride in their written work

In **Nursery** the children are encouraged to:

- Develop gross motor control
- Develop fine motor control
- Use a range of mark making tools such as pencils, pens and crayons, with confidence and enjoyment
- Develop a recognition of pattern
- Develop a language to talk about shapes and movements
- The main handwriting movements involved in the three basic letter shapes; l, c, and r
- Make marks on their planning cards of the appropriate colour
- Develop letter-like shapes on their planning cards e.g. 's' for sand
- Produce letter-like shapes on planning cards for the appropriate session
- Their first name, using a Capital letter for the beginning and correct letter formation

On entry, Reception children are involved in a variety of activities to develop essential pre-writing skills in line with the Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage.

Activities to develop gross motor control, for example rolling hoops and running with a hoop, ribbon movement, chalking, painting on a large scale, Interactive White Board.

Funky Fingers: A General Introduction (see appendices for how Funky Fingers is adopted at WEPA)

Activities to develop fine motor control:

- tracing
- colouring within guide lines and pictures
- pattern work
- using glue spreaders in small pots
- painting with the tips of the fingers, cotton buds, plasticine, threading.

This is taught through a five minute intervention program in reception called Funky Fingers. All these activities develop spatial awareness (e.g. "P.E. on paper.") Children develop the basic handwriting patterns found in letter formation and are introduced to actual letter formation in conjunction with the introduction of phonic skills. Sounds are closely linked in handwriting patterns and the children's visual awareness of words is harnessed e.g. 'cat', 'hat'.

Practise of particular High Frequency Words helps to develop good visual and writing habits e.g. 'the', 'and'. Usually by the end of the Reception Year all children will have been introduced to all letters of the alphabet through patterns as shown above and introduced to more independent writing.

Additional examples of Funky Fingers activities:

- using padlocks and keys – how quickly can your child unlock them?
- clothes pegs – how many can your child peg around a box in one minute?
- how many small beads can (s)he pick up in one minute using tweezers?
- mix pasta and dried peas – can your child separate them using tweezers?
- how many bubble wrap bubbles can (s)he pop?
- Climbing walls and outdoor games, including carrying, pushing, pulling.

Key Stage 1 and 2

The objectives below state what children should be able to do by the end of each year group. The codes in brackets refer to each Rising Stars objective and is linked to The National Curriculum: Handbook for Primary Teachers (KS1 and 2)

Below the objectives, the guidance shows what 'meeting expectations' will look like for each year group.

By the end of Year 1, children should be able to:

- (1.1.d.1) Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- (1.1.d.2) Begin to form lower- case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- (1.1.d.3) Form capital letters
- (1.1.d.4) Form digits 0–9

- (1.1.d.5) Understand which letters belong to which handwriting ‘families’ (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

What to look for guidance (meeting expectations):

Pupil can sit correctly at a table and holds the pencil using the correct pencil grip in preferred hand. Pupil can write letters, most of which are correctly formed. Pupil can correctly form most capital letters.

Pupil can independently write all digits 0–9, most of which are correctly formed. Pupil can correctly identify all handwriting families and sort most letters into them: e.g. pupil can say that ‘the long ladder family’ contains the letters: l, b, l, j, t, u. and uses this knowledge to remember correct letter formation when writing.

By the end of Year 2, children should be able to:

- (2.1.d.1) Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- (2.1.d.2) 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
- (2.1.d.3) Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters
- (2.1.d.4) Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

What to look for guidance (meeting expectations):

Pupil can correctly form most lower-case letters as outlined in the school’s handwriting policy, showing some consistency and control over their size. Presentation is neat. Pupil can sit correctly at a table, hold a pencil with correct grip and correctly form and join some letters in accordance with the school’s writing policy. Pupil can form most capital letters, digits and lower-case letters showing good control over the orientation and size. Pupil can usually leave appropriately sized spaces between words: e.g. knows to leave room for own lower-case letter a between words.

By the end of Year 3, children should be able to:

- (3.1.d.1) 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
- (3.1.d.2) Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting: 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

What to look for guidance (meeting expectations):

Pupil can usually sit correctly at a table, hold a writing implement comfortably and correctly form and join most letters in accordance with the school’s agreed house style. Pupil’s writing can be read, is usually consistent and beginning to be pleasing in appearance.

By the end of Year 4, children should be able to:

- (4.1.d.1) 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
- (4.1.d.2) Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting: 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

What to look for guidance (meeting expectations):

Pupil can correctly form and join most letters in accordance with the school's agreed house style. There is some consistency in decisions to join letters or leave letters unjoined. Pupil's writing can almost always be read; joined handwriting is the norm, written at a pace that usually keeps up with what pupils want to say.

By the end of Year 5, children should be able to:

- (5.1.d.1) 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
- (5.1.d.2) Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task

What to look for guidance (meeting expectations):

Pupil can usually make choices over letter shapes and joins to ensure fluency, legibility and good presentation. Pupil can usually select the appropriate writing instrument: e.g. a pencil for making notes, a pen for formal writing.

By the end of Year 6, children should be able to:

- (6.1.d.1) 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
- (6.1.d.2) Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task

What to look for guidance (meeting expectations):

Pupil can make choices over letter shapes and joins to ensure fluency, legibility and good presentation and is increasing the pace of writing while sustaining neatness and accuracy: e.g. chooses unjoined style for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address or algebra. Pupil can select the appropriate writing instrument: e.g. colour-coded markers for explaining keys on maps or labelling axes on a graph and is increasing the pace of writing while sustaining neatness and legibility across longer passages.

When should handwriting be taught?

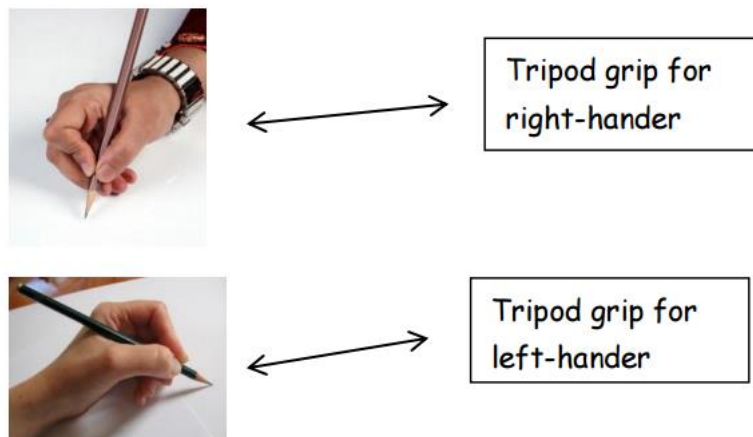
Handwriting should take place on a daily basis in order for children to reinforce this skill. As handwriting is a fine motor activity, the more practice children get, the more they will be able to write with speed and fluency.

In EYFS, children are practising their fine gross and motor skills throughout the day and are learning to hold the pencil correctly and forming basic letters. Letter formation is also taught through the phonics programme in EYFS.

Expectations of Staff:

- All teachers and LSAs should ensure that they are modelling cursive handwriting to children throughout the school day. It is also good practice if all notices, displays, titles and signs in the classroom and around the school to be in joined script if they are hand written. More examples of cursive script around the school environment – including word joined word processing - will assist pupils to appreciate this writing convention.
- When marking children’s work, always write in a cursive hand that the children can read. Staff should equally ensure that children can read the adult’s handwriting: if it isn’t legible to the child, what kind of message are you giving to him or her?
- It is important that staff praise children regularly for cursive handwriting. We must remind children that ‘Practice makes perfect’.
- It is important that children have the opportunity daily to watch how the teacher demonstrates cursive handwriting and that there is time set aside each day for children to reinforce this skill. As handwriting is a movement skill, demonstration by a competent teacher is essential.
- As staff, we must check and correct bad habits such as children having a poor pencil grip, poor posture at the desk, poor book/paper positioning and incorrect letter formation (e.g. starting particular letters at the bottom)

Photos showing correct pencil grips



- Teachers should also monitor and check that children are consistently writing in cursive style when completing any homework.
- Teachers should monitor and remind all children in upper key stage 2 (years 5 and 6) that they must complete any writing in the handwriting pens given by their teacher and it must be in blue ink.

- Teachers must ensure that modelled writing during teaching is not typed and should be handwritten onto sugar paper. The teacher should also verbally discuss and highlighting specific joins (e.g. 'think out loud')
- When marking children's work, the 'PH' mark is used to refer to presentation and handwriting. For example, PH* for excellent presentation and handwriting, PH/ for a good attempt with next steps to improve and PH? for poorly presented handwriting.
- For children with special educational needs, it is crucial that children are able to develop their confidence through handwriting activities that they are familiar with (e.g. through repetition). Where possible, children should also be encouraged to develop their handwriting skills through tangible and multisensory activities such as drawing letters in the air, drawing letters in sand etc. Teacher demonstration and child imitation are the keys to successful handwriting. Providing children with a modified pencil grasp may also be helpful.

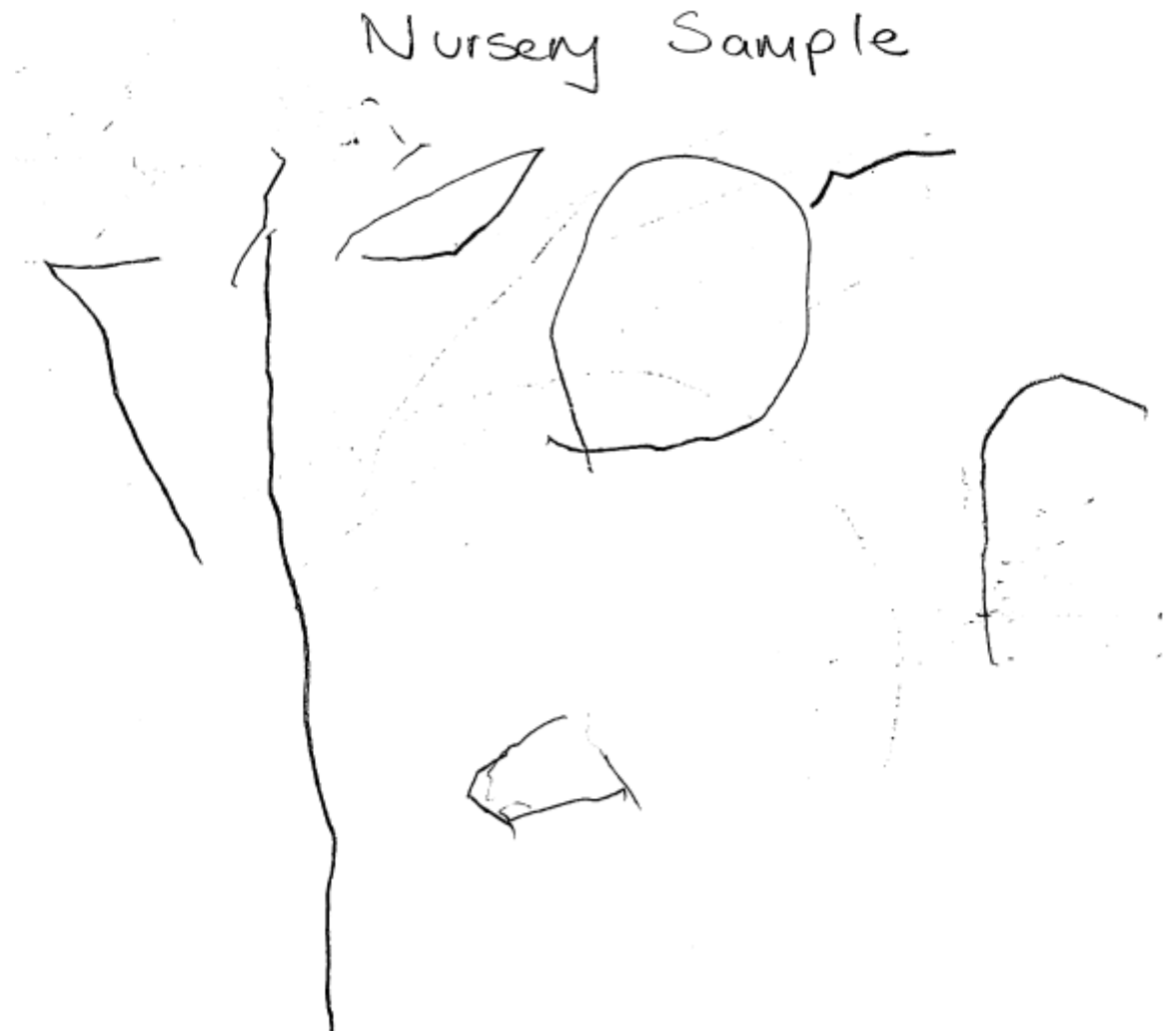
APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Funky Fingers at Wood End Park Academy

- Funky fingers is an intervention program that was set up in reception to ensure that every child in reception received a daily fine motor intervention.
- The children are grouped based on their pencil grip which is observed during child initiated play.
- There is usually 4 groups and each group does a specific activity that is planned for based on their fine motor level. The children complete this activity to music that lasts between 3 and 4 minutes.
- In terms of challenge, children can be challenged to complete the activity a specific number of times or in a shorter time frame.
- The activities are planned to support palm strength, pincer grip, joint flexibility, wrist and arm rotation and finally pincer movement.
- The groups are flexible and children move through these groups throughout the year.
- The activity stays the same all week and then gets changed each week to a different activity.
- In reception this happens after phonics but before the literacy session has started at 9.20 – 9.25 each morning.

Appendix 2- Samples of handwriting for children working at age related expectations in each year group

Nursery Sample



Reception sample 1



I K S U

I K a n o z e e

a d a o

Reception sample 2

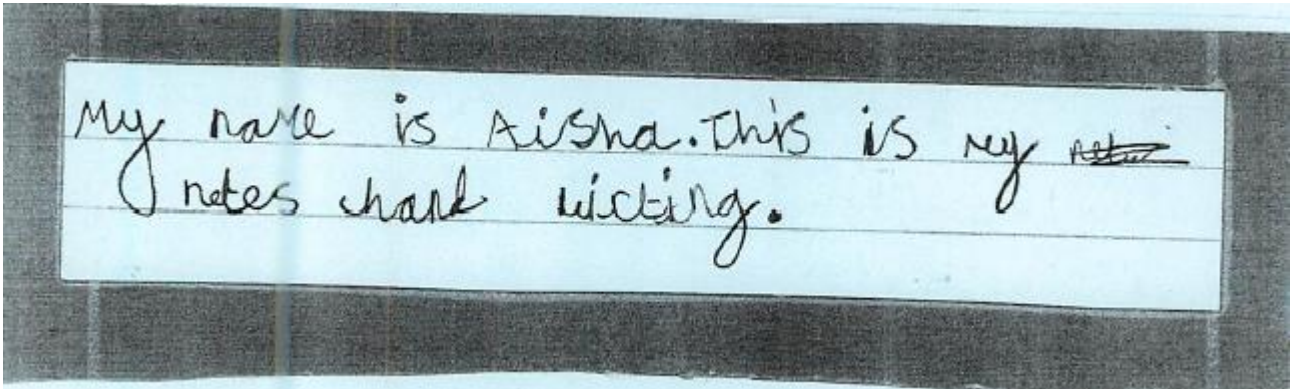


I can see a man

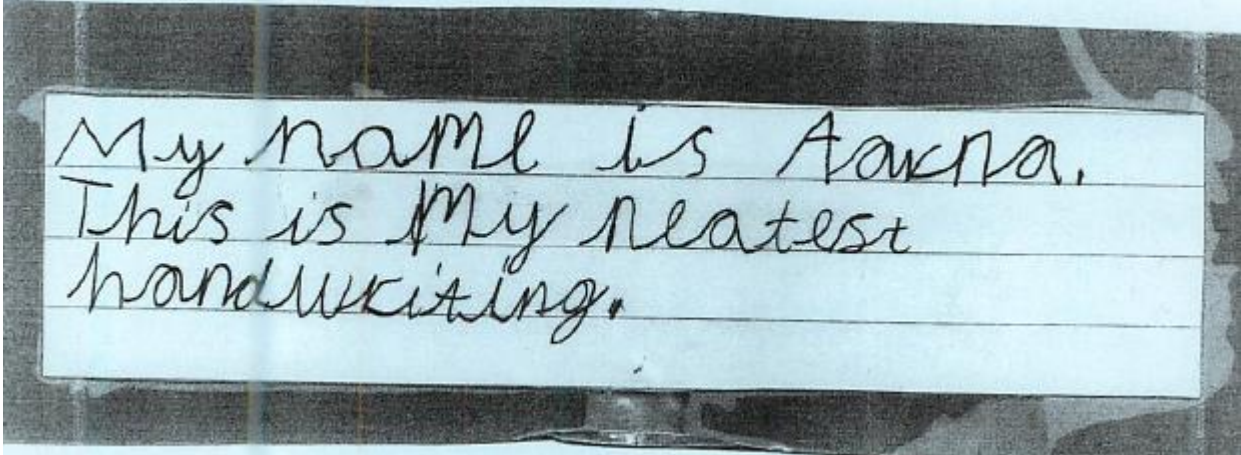
sitting. The girl is reading

The man is planting a flower

Year 1 sample 1



Year 1 sample 2



Year 2 sample 1

My name is _____
My name is Thimachio.

This is my best handwriting
This is my best handwriting.

I will use it in my work.
I will use it in my work.

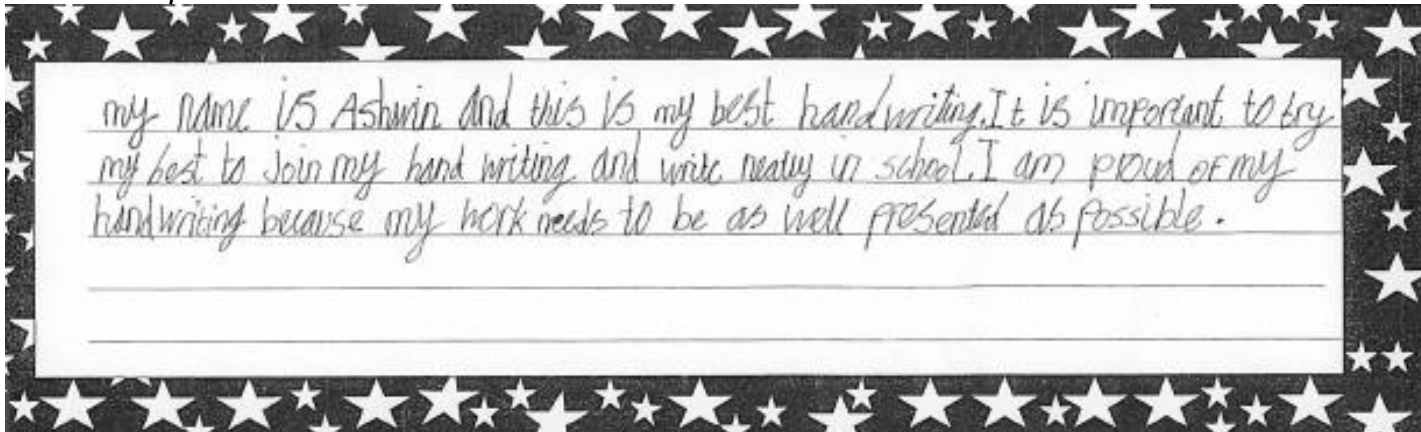
Year 2 sample 2

My name is _____
My name is Nourallah.

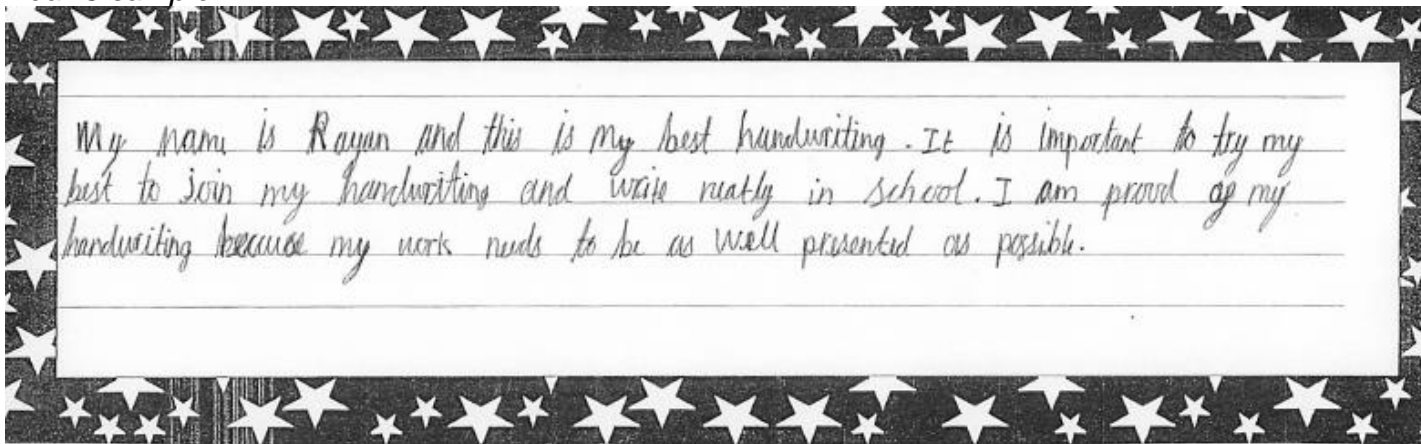
This is my best handwriting
This is my best handwriting.

I will use it in my work.
I will use it in my work.

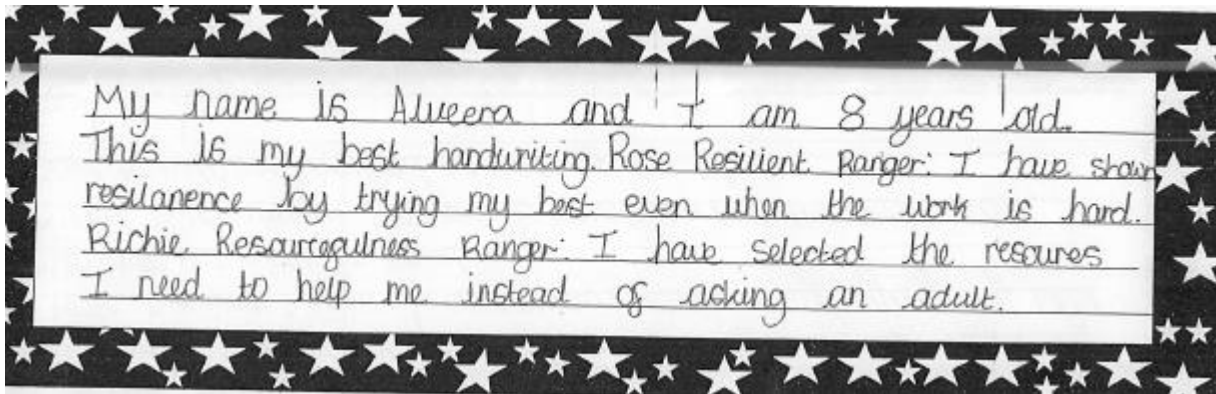
Year 3 sample 1



Year 3 sample 2

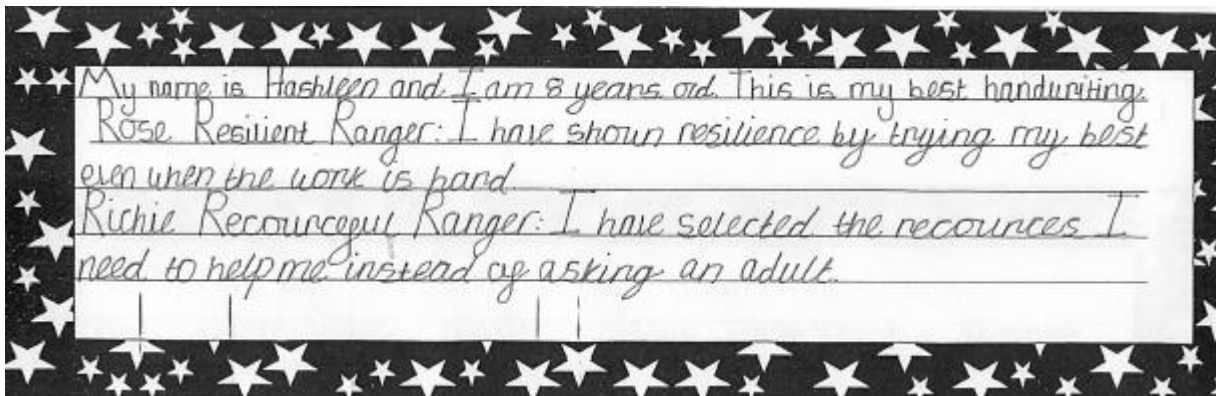


Year 4 sample 1



My name is Alveera and I am 8 years old.
This is my best handwriting. Rose Resilient Ranger: I have shown resilience by trying my best even when the work is hard.
Richie Resourcefulness Ranger: I have selected the resources I need to help me instead of asking an adult.

Year 4 sample 2



My name is Hashleen and I am 8 years old. This is my best handwriting.
Rose Resilient Ranger: I have shown resilience by trying my best even when the work is hard.
Richie Resourceful Ranger: I have selected the resources I need to help me instead of asking an adult.

Year 5 sample 1

Learning Power Rangers! Year 5

Every letter and word has it's place.
Between each word belongs a space.
Tall letters touch the line at the top.
Short letters stop at the imaginary line with the dots.
Letters with tails drop below.
This is how handwriting must go in order to be neat!

Year 5 sample 2

Learning Power Rangers!

Letters have their proper places.
Just like you and yours.
Don't stick them through the ceiling or drop them through the floor!
Remember that they don't have wings and can't suspend in space! You stand upon the good firm ground. So please give them a place.

Year 6 sample 1

Learning Power Rangers! Year 6

This is my neatest handwriting - it is joined and legible.

In my writing I will also include:

- better vocabulary
- a range of cohesive devices eg adverbials
- a wide range of clause structures
- punctuation ; - : , ()
- correct spellings

Year 6 sample 2

Learning Power Rangers!

This is my neatest handwriting - it is joined and legible.

In my writing I will also include:

- better vocabulary
- A range of cohesive devices
- a wide range of clause structures
- punctuation ; - : , ()
- correct spellings

Jagjeet

Appendix 3) Letter Families

Letter families

For teaching letter formation

Letter family 1

Down and off in another direction

l i t j u y

Letter family 2

Down and retrace upwards

m n r b p h k

Letter family 3

Anticlockwise round

c a d o q g e f s

Letter family 4

Zig-zag letters

v w x z

Appendix 4) handwriting expectations in the classroom

