



Penpals for Handwriting and the 2014 National Curriculum for England



This table summarises how Penpals for Handwriting can help you deliver the National Curriculum for England and Early Years Outcomes.

Penpals uses a combination of DVD-ROMS for whole-class teaching and practice books and write-in workbooks for small group and individual work. Our approach has been tried and tested in schools and is proven to drive up handwriting standards.

- Five unique developmental phases provide clear progression for children aged 3 to 11.
- DVD-ROMs support interactive, direct teaching to the whole class using an interactive whiteboard.
- Practice books and Workbooks provide essential practice and reinforcement.
- Links to GPS (Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling) underpin essential learning.
- Sky-writing and lesson warm-ups develop the fine and gross motor skills that are crucial for handwriting.

Early Years outcomes (non-statutory guide)		Penpals for Handwriting
Age 30 to 50 months	Ascribes meanings to marks that they see in different places.	Raises awareness of patterns and shapes in the environment while developing the vocabulary for describing them.
	Gives meaning to marks they make as they draw, write and paint.	Children talk about their patterns, letter patterns, shapes and drawings. They develop pattern-making skills and basic letter movement through making, modelling, drawing, painting and music.
	Hears and says the initial sound in words.	Children identify the initial phonemes of words and think of other words beginning with the same sound.
Age 40 to 60+ months	Can segment the sounds in simple words and blend them together.	Children identify sounds in high-frequency decodable words and high-frequency 'tricky' words and blend them together.
	Links sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet.	Develops an ability to recognise all the letters of the alphabet as letters and phonemes and an understanding that capitals and lower-case letters represent the same phonemes.
	Uses some clearly identifiable letters to communicate meaning, representing some sounds correctly and in sequence.	Provides picture words for children to identify and write, establishing the phonemes.
	Writes own name and other things such as labels, captions.	Children learn to write their own name and think of other names that begin with the same phoneme.
	Attempts to write short sentences in meaningful contexts.	Children practise forming letters and write them in a context (e.g. a simple sentence).



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Programme of study (statutory requirement)

Penpals for Handwriting

Key Stage 1 Year 1

Pupils should be taught 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
- form digits 0–9
- understand which letters belong to which handwriting ‘families’ and to practise these.

- Supports children to have the correct posture and to experiment with different writing implements to help them find a hold that is comfortable and efficient.
- Practises lower-case letter and capital letter formation, with animations to show starting and finishing positions and the direction of movement.
- Practises joining two or three letters in a word.
- Revises the formation of digits 1 to 9.
- Provides letter formation practice for each of the four letter families.

Notes and guidance (non- statutory)

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil’s hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided. Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.

Penpals can be used flexibly to teach handwriting, with whole-class teaching and independent work. It develops the kinaesthetic movements needed for a legible, fast and fluent handwriting style, enabling children to form letters correctly and with confidence.

Develops a good pencil hold and helps left-handers to adopt a hold that is comfortable and efficient.

Key Stage 1 Year 2

Pupils should be taught to:

- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- 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
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

- Practises lower-case letter formation, with correct letter height and spacing, consistency of letter size and parallel ascenders and descenders.
- Introduces and practises joining letter sets. Children begin to join all the letters in a short word or to join letter patterns which can support spelling. They practise the joins and then write them in context (e.g. a simple sentence).
- Introduces break letters *b, g, j, p, y, x* and *z*, ensuring children join and break words in the right places.
- Children write the alphabet in capital letters. They also write the days of the week, the months of the year and short sentences and rhymes, ensuring the correct size of capital letters in relation to lower-case letters.
- Presents opportunities to practise writing digits (e.g. addresses, phone numbers).
- Demonstrates correct spacing between words, helping children to present their work well.



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	Programme of study (statutory requirement)	Penpals for Handwriting
Notes and guidance (non-statutory)	Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.	Provides revision and practise of correct letter formation. When the formation of capitals and lower-case letters is familiar and secure, children can begin to join all the letters in a short word or to join letter patterns.
Key Stage 2 Years 3 and 4	Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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• increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting (e.g. by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children are introduced to a sloped style of writing. They practise familiar and tricky diagonal and horizontal joins and learn about 'break letters' <i>g</i>, <i>j</i> and <i>y</i> and the letters <i>x</i> and <i>z</i>, which are never joined to or from.• Begins to develop fluent, even handwriting:<ul style="list-style-type: none">i) letters are consistently sizedii) known joins are used correctlyiii) ascenders and descenders are paralleliv) regular spaces within and between words.
Notes and guidance (non-statutory)	Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides practice so that children become secure at joining and are able to use joined-up writing for most of their work.• Children practise writing at increased speeds so they can produce longer pieces of writing with greater ease.• Continued emphasis on using the movements of handwriting to support spelling through the revision of common letter patterns.
Upper Key Stage 2 Years 5 and 6	Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:<ul style="list-style-type: none">i) choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific lettersii) choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children practise speed, fluency and presentation skills. They develop confidence in writing for different purposes, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">i) note-making (quick writing, often including abbreviations)ii) fast and fluent writing (neat and legible for all readers)iii) best writing (writing for presentations)iv) printing (e.g. labelling, captions, posters).• Encourages children to choose the writing implement best suited for a specific purpose.



Penpals for Handwriting and the 2014 National Curriculum for England



Programme of study (statutory requirement)

Notes and guidance (non- statutory)

Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.

Penpals for Handwriting

- Children complete short written tasks within a given time, to help them increase speed and fluency while maintaining legibility.
- Provides opportunities to practise handwriting for different purposes in both fiction and non-fiction projects.
- Children are introduced to the print alphabet for purposes such as captions, labels, headings and pos