

Handwriting Policy 2025 - 27



Policy Leader	Lee Price
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Harris Primary Curriculum Rationale

The Harris curriculum is designed to lead children on a journey of discovery and foster curious minds. Our enquire based approach puts children at the centre of their own learning, sparking their imagination; so they will develop a life-long love of learning. In our holistic approach independence will be encouraged while opportunities to work collaboratively will support the development of the whole child. We want our children to be brave and feel confident to take risks and embrace challenge now and for the future.

The desired outcome of the curriculum is that we want our pupils to learn how to be kind – to themselves and others, to be thankful for who they are and the world around them and to be ambitious – now and for in the future. Our curriculum is underpinned by our core values: Be kind Be thankful Be ambition

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*** Be Ambitious * Be Kind * Be Thankful**

National Curriculum English Aims

The overarching aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding;
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information;
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language;
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage;
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences;
- develop fluent, legible and increasingly speedy handwriting to support effective written communication;
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and

explain clearly their understanding and ideas;

➤ are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Early Years Foundation Stage

During the Foundation Stage, Harris children are given opportunities within the Early Learning Goals 'Communication and Language' and 'Literacy' to: experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations, developing their vocabulary and oracy. Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials.

Key Stage 1

At Key Stage One, Harris children learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They begin to use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

Key Stage 2

At Key Stage Two, children learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

The National Curriculum splits the English curriculum into 3 main areas: Spoken Language, Reading and Writing and Vocabulary Development.

1. Harris Handwriting Intent

At Harris Primary School we are committed to ensuring that every pupil develops **fluent, legible and consistently joined handwriting** by the end of Year 6. **Strong transcription skills**, including handwriting and spelling, are essential foundations for successful writing. Once handwriting is **secure and automatic**, pupils can focus on expressing their ideas with creativity, purpose and clarity.

Our handwriting curriculum **builds confidence, fluency and stamina** from the very start of school life. It provides **clear progression** from early mark-making in Reception to fluent joined writing in Key Stage 2. By the time pupils leave Year 6 they are able to **meet the expectations of the National Curriculum and The Writing Framework (DfE, 2025)** and they take **pride in the presentation** of their work across all subjects.

2. Implementation

Reception and Key Stage 1

In Reception and Key Stage 1 handwriting is taught explicitly alongside **Red Rose Letters and Sounds**, with phonics supporting correct letter formation.

Pupils begin with **gross and fine motor development**, posture, grip and paper positioning before moving on to accurate formation of lowercase and capital letters.

Letter families such as the long ladder and curly caterpillar are introduced to support directionality and consistency.

Pupils use **dedicated handwriting books** with handwriting lines, supplemented by **Letter-join resources** for additional practice.

By the end of **Year 1** most children can **sit correctly**, hold a pencil comfortably, form all letters in the correct direction and write digits 0 to 9.

By the end of **Year 2** pupils write with **consistent size and spacing** and are introduced to **joined handwriting** once secure in print formation.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 pupils refine their joined handwriting with emphasis on **fluency, stamina and legibility**.

Manuscript Handwriting Pens are introduced in Year 3 (when most children write using consistent cursive joins).



Handwriting is used across the curriculum and embedded into all written outcomes.

Years 5 and 6 develop **personal writing style** while maintaining legibility.

Handwriting Lesson Frequency

While **The Writing Framework (DfE, 2025)** does not prescribe fixed timetables, it does recommend:

- **Frequent, explicit and discrete handwriting lessons**
- Teaching that is **in addition to phonics**, not embedded in it
- Daily handwriting in **Reception and Year 1** to develop automaticity

At **Harris Primary School**, we follow a structured approach to the frequency of discrete handwriting lessons across the school. In **Reception**, children take part in daily handwriting sessions, totalling **five lessons per week**. In **Year 1**, pupils receive **three focused handwriting lessons each week**. This reduces slightly in **Year 2** to **two sessions per week**, as children begin to apply their handwriting skills more independently. From **Years 3 to 6**, pupils receive **one to two discrete handwriting lessons each week**, supported by consistent daily modelling and high expectations for handwriting across all areas of the curriculum.

Year Group	Discrete Handwriting Lessons
Reception	Daily (5 sessions per week)
Year 1	3 per week
Year 2	2 per week
Years 3–6	1–2 per week , plus daily modelling

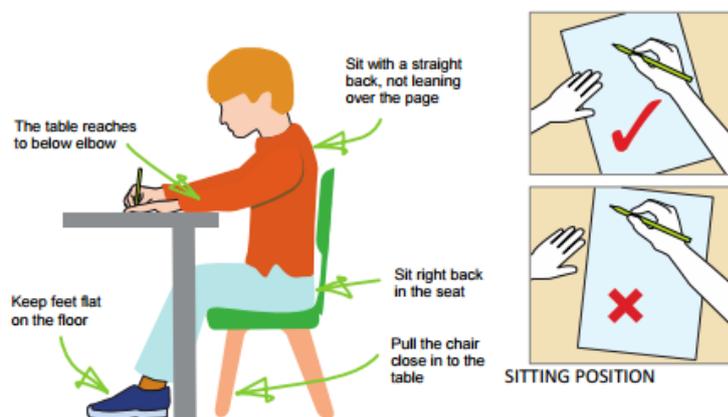
Handwriting is **modelled by all Harris staff across all subjects** and supported through **marking, displays and teacher demonstration**.

Posture and Pencil Grip

Pupils are taught correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting.

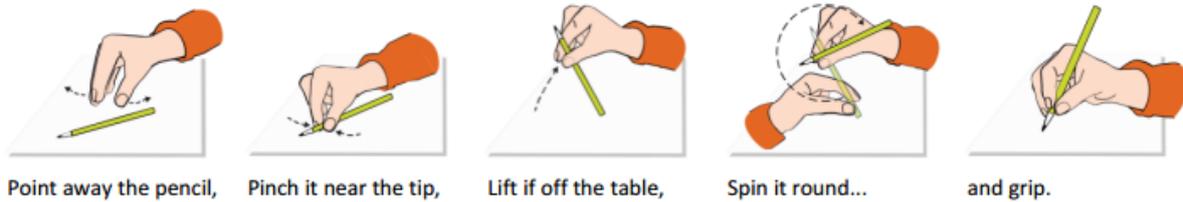
They should:

- Sit with a straight back, not leaning over the page
- Pull the chair close to the table, with feet flat on the floor
- Sit right back in the seat, with the table just below elbow height
- Position the paper correctly: slanted for right-handed pupils, to the left and slanted for left-handed pupils

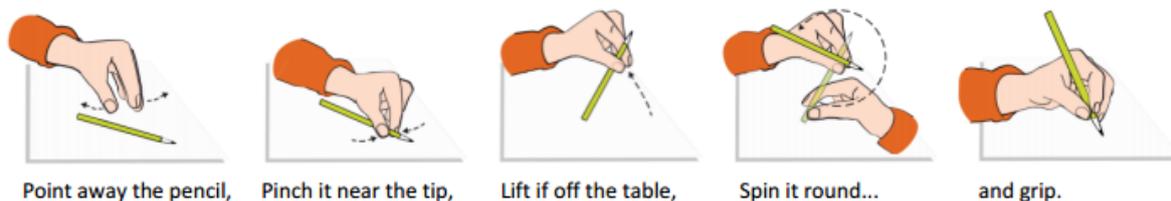


Both right- and left-handed pupils are encouraged to use the tripod grip, using the rhyme: 'Point away the pencil, pinch it near the tip, lift it off the table, spin it round... and grip.'

Right-handed pencil grip



Left-handed pencil grip



Consistency of Letter Formation, Language & Resources:

To ensure consistency and support children's motor memory and directionality in letter formation, **all teachers and support staff** from Reception to Year 6 will endeavour to use the same **Red Rose Letters and Sounds Formation Phrases** when modelling or teaching handwriting.

These phrases are carefully designed to embed correct **letter directionality** and support multisensory learning. As repetition and consistency aid memory and muscle control, all adults are encouraged to adopt this shared language.

This approach is supported by the **Red Rose Letters and Sounds Planning Programme**, which includes a complete **Formation Phrase Chart** (see [Appendix 1](#) & [Appendix 2](#)) e.g. **a** – “Round the anchor and down the rope.”

These phrases are introduced in **Reception** and should be reinforced throughout **KS1 and KS2**, especially when addressing handwriting misconceptions or during intervention work.

All staff are expected to use the agreed phrases when:

- Introducing new letters in phonics or handwriting
- Modelling on the board
- Supporting individuals or small groups during handwriting practice

Letter-join is used across all year groups for animations, worksheets and IWB modelling [Letter-join whole school handwriting scheme](#)

All teachers and support staff model the **school-agreed handwriting style** when writing in books or displays (see [Appendix 3](#) & [Appendix 4](#)).

Progression of Joined Handwriting at Harris Primary School

At Harris Primary School, we follow the progression set out in **The Writing Framework (DfE, 2025)**, which makes clear that handwriting foundations must be secure before joining is introduced. Pupils first develop posture, grip, letter formation and spacing so that print handwriting becomes automatic. Only then are joins taught and practised, moving from early introduction in Year 2 through to fluent, adaptable handwriting by the end of Year 6.

Reception – Secure print handwriting foundations: posture, tripod grip, paper position, accurate letter formation on the line. No joining taught.

Year 1 – Consolidate print handwriting: lowercase and capitals with correct size and spacing, digits 0–9, consistent letter families. No joining yet.

Year 2 – Begin joining once print is secure: diagonal joins (ai, ch, fl) and horizontal joins (or, ov, ow). Teachers make clear which letters are not joined.

Years 3 and 4 – Joined handwriting embedded across the curriculum: focus on fluency, stamina, consistent spacing and legibility. Handwriting pens introduced from Year 3.

Years 5 and 6 – Fluent, legible and adaptable handwriting: pupils develop a personal style suited to purpose, sustaining writing over extended tasks while maintaining legibility.

3. Assessment and Feedback

Teachers at Harris Primary School systematically monitor pupils' handwriting through regular book looks and targeted sample checks, and evaluate their progress in relation to the following expectations:

Reception (EYFS Early Learning Goals)

- Hold a pencil effectively (tripod grip).
- Form recognisable letters, most correctly shaped.
- Write simple words and phrases that can be read by others.

Year 1

- Sit correctly at a table and hold a pencil comfortably and correctly.
- Form lowercase 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 families (e.g. letters formed in similar ways).

Year 2

- Form lowercase letters of the correct size relative to one another.
- Use some diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.
- Know which letters should not be joined.
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to lowercase.
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Years 3 & 4

- Use diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters and understand which letters should not be joined.
- Increase legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting, for example by:
 - ensuring downstrokes of letters are parallel and evenly spaced
 - ensuring lines of writing are spaced so ascenders and descenders do not touch.

Years 5 & 6

- Write with increasing speed.
- Maintain legibility, fluency and an appropriate style so writing can be sustained over longer pieces.
- Choose which shape of a letter to use when given choices and decide whether or not to join specific letters.
- Choose the writing implement that is best suited for the task.

Constructive feedback is provided to support the ongoing development of pupils' handwriting. Teachers deliver precise guidance on letter formation, spacing and joins, acknowledging areas of strength and clearly identifying targets for improvement. Pupils are expected to engage in self-assessment and reflection, thereby promoting independence and accountability for their progress.

4. Impact

Pupils at Harris Primary School leave Year 6 with **neat, fluent and consistently joined handwriting**. They write with **confidence, stamina and pride**, demonstrating presentation skills that reflect their effort and achievement. Pupils with additional needs benefit from **targeted support and appropriate adaptations** so that they make progress alongside their peers.

Teachers follow **clear whole-school guidance** on lesson frequency, language and style, ensuring that handwriting is taught and modelled consistently. Handwriting is

monitored across all subjects, so high standards are maintained throughout the curriculum.

Harris Primary School meets **National Curriculum expectations** and promotes a **culture of pride in presentation**. A consistent, whole-school approach, supported by agreed resources, enables every pupil to become a **confident, legible writer**. This policy provides clarity for teachers, support for pupils and assurance that high standards are upheld across the school.

5. Special Educational Needs and Disability

Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) will have full access to the English curriculum. We recognise that some pupils may experience challenges with reading and writing as a result of their needs. To support them, a range of additional resources and strategies may be provided, such as coloured overlays, large-print materials, iPads, or laptops. Where appropriate, tasks will be adapted to ensure that pupils are able to participate fully and achieve success. Careful and sensitive grouping will also be used to reduce barriers to learning and promote inclusion.

Pencil grips, sloped boards and adaptive lined paper are available.

Pupils with fine motor difficulties access **targeted interventions** (e.g. dough disco, tracing, cutting).

Children struggling with letter formation or joins receive 1:1 or small-group boosters.

Letter-join resources are adaptable for children with SEND or motor delays.

Class teachers have the **flexibility** to decide if handwriting activities (e.g. Letter-join Tablet Edition or worksheets) are set as **homework** to best support their pupils.

6. Equal Opportunities

All teaching and non-teaching staff at Harris Primary School share responsibility for ensuring that every pupil, regardless of gender, ability, ethnic background, or social circumstances has full access to the curriculum and the opportunity to make the best possible progress across all subject areas.

Pupils will be supported and encouraged to take an active role in English activities, with staff fostering participation for all learners.

When organising educational visits, the school will, wherever possible, provide support to enable pupils who may face financial barriers to take part, ensuring inclusion for all.

7. Monitoring and Review

The English subject leader, alongside the senior leadership team, monitors the implementation and impact of this policy. Monitoring includes lesson observations,

planning reviews, book scrutiny and pupil interviews. Assessment data is analysed termly to identify strengths and areas for development. Staff receive professional development to ensure high-quality teaching is maintained.

Appendix 1:

Red Rose Letters and Sounds Formation Phrase Handwriting Patter

It is recommended that when teaching letter formation, a phrase is used in order to embed the directionality. All adults who teach letter formation are encouraged to use the same approach as children learn effectively through repetition.

This chart provides an overview of the formation phrases linked to the Red Rose Letters and Sounds Planning Programme.

a	Round the anchor and down the rope.
b	Down the bat and round the ball.
c	Curl round the cat.
d	Back round the dog's body, up to his ears and down to his tail.
e	Across the shelf and over the elf.
f	Follow down the flamingo and fly.
g	Go round the gorilla and swing from the vine.
h	Down the hill and over the hedge.
i	Down the insect and don't forget his cap.
j	Jump off the jetty and don't forget your cap.
k	Down the koala's body, arm and leg.
l	Down the long ladder.
m	Down the mound and over the moles.
n	Down the nose and over the nostril.
o	Back around the octopus.
p	Down the path, up the path and round the pond.
q	Quick! Back round the pond, down and splash.
r	Rain down to the ground and over the rainbow.
s	Slip down the slide.
t	Down the tree and across the branch.
u	Down under the sea, up for breath and down again.
v	Down the vase and up the vase.
w	Down the wave and up the wave. Down the wave and up the wave.
x	Cross the box and cross the box.
y	Down the yo-yo, up the yo-yo and swing.
z	Zip, zap, zoom!

Appendix 2:

<p>Round the anchor and down the rope.</p> 	<p>Down the hill and over the hedge.</p> 	<p>Back round the octopus.</p> 	<p>Down the vase and up the vase.</p> 	
<p>Down the bat and round the ball.</p> 	<p>Down the insect and don't forget his cap.</p> 	<p>Down the path, up the path and round the pond.</p> 	<p>Down the wave and up the wave. Down the wave and up the wave.</p> 	
<p>Curl round the cat.</p> 	<p>Jump off the jetty and don't forget your cap.</p> 	<p>Quick! Back round the pond, down and splash.</p> 	<p>Cross the box and cross the box.</p> 	
<p>Back round the dog's body, up to his ears and down to his tail.</p> 	<p>Down the koala's body, arm and leg.</p> 	<p>Rain down to the ground and over the rainbow.</p> 	<p>Down the go-go, up the go-go and swing.</p> 	
<p>Across the shelf and over the elf.</p> 	<p>Down the long ladder.</p> 	<p>Slip down the slide.</p> 	<p>Zip, zap, zoom!</p> 	
<p>Follow down the tigringo and fly.</p> 	<p>Down the mound and over the moles.</p> 	<p>Down the tree and across the branch.</p> 	<td> <p>Down under the sea, up for breath and down again.</p>  </td>	<p>Down under the sea, up for breath and down again.</p> 
<p>Go round the gorilla and swing from the vine.</p> 	<p>Down the nose and over the nostril.</p> 	<p>REDROSE LPDS Letters and Sounds</p>		

Appendix 3:

Cursive lowercase letters

a b c d e

f g h i j k

l m n o p

q r s t u

v w x y z

Appendix 4:

Capital Letters

A B C D E

F G H I J K

L M N O P

Q R S T U

V W X Y Z