

Handwriting

Strategy

January 2026

EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY WITH INTEGRITY

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| Date of Approval: | |
| Approved by: | |
| Date of next Review: | 2028 |



1. Rationale

The ability to write legibly, fluently and with confidence is a fundamental skill that underpins academic success across the curriculum. In line with the **2025 Writing Framework**, the Trust recognises that transcription skills, including handwriting, must be sufficiently secure so that students can focus on higher-order writing skills such as composition, structure and content. Throughout this strategy, students' individual special educational needs will be forefront and actions/interventions will be decided, as appropriate to consider them.

This strategy sets out a whole trust approach to a consistent, inclusive approach to improving handwriting, ensuring that all students are supported to produce clear, legible written work or are moved onto alternative methods of recording [AMOR] so they are not disadvantaged in assessments or examinations.

2. Aims

The Trust aims to:

- Ensure all students develop **legible, fluent handwriting**
- Identify and support students with handwriting difficulties early, particularly at **Year 4 [Evolve]/Year 7 transition or in year transition through the induction process**
- Reduce barriers to learning caused by poor handwriting or motor skill difficulties
- Provide reasonable adjustments or AMOR for students whose handwriting remains illegible despite intervention
- Ensure consistency of approach across all subjects
- Align handwriting practice with the expectations of the **2025 Writing Framework**

3. Identification of Handwriting Needs

3.1 Year 4 [Evolve]/Year 7 on in year admission screening

- All students are screened for handwriting legibility and fluency during **Year 4 [Evolve]/Year 7 or during the induction process for in-year admissions**.
- Students identified as having **illegible or semi-illegible handwriting** are referred for further analysis.
- Additional consideration is given to:
 - Left-handed students
 - Students with known or emerging fine motor skill difficulties
 - Students with SEND needs impacting writing

4. Handwriting Interventions

4.1 Small Group Handwriting Intervention (KS3)

- Identified students in **Year 4 [Evolve]/Year 7 and those identified via in year admissions** will receive **small group handwriting intervention**.
- Interventions might focus on:
 - Letter formation – upper and lower case
 - Spacing
 - Consistency of size
 - Writing fluency
 - Fine Motor Skills
 - Core strengthening and eye tracking control
 - Writing resilience and stamina
- Progress is reviewed regularly and shared with subject teachers.

4.2 Handwriting Exercise Books

- Where appropriate students receiving handwriting intervention will be issued with **handwriting exercise books** for use in the curriculum.

5. Classroom Practice (Whole Trust)

5.1 Teacher Modelling

- Teachers and additional adults will:
 - Model handwriting clearly during lessons in all formats used – e.g. whiteboards, paper etc.
 - Use **lined paper** when presenting worked examples
 - Use **printed handwriting**, not cursive or purely capitals, to support clarity and consistency
- This reflects the Writing Framework emphasis on explicit modelling of transcription skills.

5.2 Academy Environment

- **All Academy displays must reflect the handwriting strategy:**
 - Correct letter formation
 - Size and spacing expectations
- Displays serve as a constant visual reference for students.

5.3 Seating and Positioning

- Students identified as having **illegible or semi-illegible handwriting** who are **left-handed** will be seated:
 - With sufficient space to turn their books

- In positions that allow comfortable writing without restriction
- Adjustable desks/writing slopes/Laptop risers must be in place for those students that need them
- Teachers must be mindful of seating plans to support effective handwriting.

6. Resources and Reasonable Adjustments

6.1 Writing Aids

- Students identified as having **motor skill difficulties** will be issued with **pen grips**.
- Students with **semi-illegible or illegible handwriting** will be issued with **erasable pens**, enabling:
 - Easy correction
 - Reduced anxiety around mistakes
 - Improved presentation

6.2 Use of Technology (KS4)

- Students in **Key Stage 4 and some High need KS3/KS2 [Evolve]** whose handwriting remains illegible despite intervention will be issued with an **AMOR** for:
 - Classroom use
 - Formal assessments
 - Public examinations, in line with access arrangements
- This is a reasonable adjustment to ensure students are not disadvantaged.

6.3 Typing Programmes

- Students issued with laptops will be enrolled in a **typing programme** to develop:
 - Typing fluency
 - Accuracy
 - Confidence
- Progress in typing skills will be monitored to ensure effective use of technology.

6.4 Speech and text

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers and additional adults in the classroom will:

- Model clear handwriting consistently
- Reinforce handwriting expectations in all written work
- Implement seating and resource adjustments as required
- Use handwriting books where applicable

SENDCo / Inclusion Team

- Coordinate identification and intervention
- Monitor progress of students receiving support
- Manage access arrangements and assistive technology

Middle, Senior and Trust Leaders

- Ensure consistent implementation of the strategy; especially the identification and implementation of resources needed
- Monitor impact across departments/Academy/Trust
- Provide training where necessary

8. Monitoring and Review

- Handwriting standards are monitored through:
 - Book scrutiny
 - Lesson observations
 - Intervention reviews
 - Academy and Trust quality assurance cycle
 - Intervention tracker is scrutinised
- The strategy will be reviewed every **two years** or sooner if guidance changes.

9. Links to the 2025 Writing Framework

This policy aligns with the **2025 Writing Framework** by:

- Prioritising transcription skills as a foundation for effective writing
- Ensuring handwriting does not hinder composition or assessment
- Supporting students through explicit teaching, modelling and reasonable adjustments

[The writing framework](#)

Handwriting Audit

Audit – Handwriting:

| Handwriting routines | Current practice/Evidence |
|--|---------------------------|
| Handwriting is taught explicitly and regularly across the school to all pupils. This begins early in reception and is in addition to writing in phonics lessons. | |

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|---|---|
| <p>Pupils across the school are taught consistent routines for handwriting that support a comfortable writing position and enable them to form letters legibly and to develop fluency. Routines consider posture, paper positioning and pencil hold (including for left-handed pupils).</p> | |
| <p>Actions to be taken:</p> | <p>Term actions to be reviewed by:</p> |

Handwriting routines

| Handwriting routines | Current practice/Evidence |
|--|---|
| <p>All adults who work with pupils expect consistently high standards of handwriting and provide good models of handwriting that align with the school's agreed style, across all areas of the curriculum.</p> | |
| <p>Handwriting instruction focuses on letter formation, size, orientation, spacing and consistency.</p> | |
| <p>Teachers make sure all pupils in every year group regularly practise handwriting to develop physical skill and control, and maintain fluency and legibility.</p> | |
| <p>Teachers teach pupils how to hold the pencil using the tripod grip, and support and encourage them to use it when they write.</p> | |
| <p>Pupils who need support have access to appropriate resources and equipment to enable them to make progress in handwriting in line with their peers.</p> | |
| <p>Teachers routinely model handwriting in the writing lesson to enable pupils to see how letters are formed.</p> | |
| <p>Teachers seek advice and work with the SENCO and other adults to support pupils needing adaptations or further support.</p> | |
| <p>Actions to be taken:</p> | <p>Term actions to be reviewed by:</p> |

Handwriting progression

| Handwriting progression | Current practice/Evidence |
|---|---|
| <p>A consistent, school-wide approach to handwriting that follows a clearly sequenced progression and supports the gradual acquisition of skills is embedded across every year group. Once print handwriting is mastered, handwriting instruction encourages speed, legibility and consistency.</p> | |
| <p>Teachers begin teaching letter formation at the start of reception for all pupils.</p> | |
| <p>Joined handwriting is not taught until pupils have mastered print handwriting.</p> | |
| <p>Teachers monitor pupils' progress in handwriting and take action to support those who are not progressing in line with their peers.</p> | |
| <p>Pupils who struggle with handwriting and/or are at risk of falling behind are identified early on and are taught and practise the knowledge they are missing. Teachers focus on these pupils during the handwriting lesson and provide individual support.</p> | |
| <p>Teachers focus on the pupils who need the most support as they practise handwriting during the handwriting lesson. They observe them as they write and provide feedback and support, preventing them from practising letter formation incorrectly.</p> | |
| <p>Actions to be taken:</p> | <p>Term actions to be reviewed by:</p> |