

Fulwood and Cadley Primary School



Handwriting Policy

September 2026

Wish it. Dream it. Do it. Be Unique.

Policy information	
Policy owner	Leesa Pearce
Approved by	Governors
Review cycle	Annual
Next review	September 2027

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1. Rationale

At Fulwood and Cadley Primary School, we believe that handwriting is an essential skill which supports children to communicate their ideas clearly, confidently and effectively.

Fluent, legible handwriting allows pupils to concentrate on the composition and content of their writing rather than the physical process of recording it. We therefore recognise handwriting as an important component of becoming a successful writer.

We also believe that the presentation of children's work communicates the value that they place upon their learning. We want every child to develop pride in their work and to understand that care, effort and presentation matter.

Handwriting is not confined to English lessons or discrete handwriting sessions. The skills taught during handwriting lessons should be applied appropriately across the curriculum.

2. Intent

Our intention is that every child develops handwriting which is legible, fluent, increasingly efficient, correctly formed, appropriately sized and spaced, comfortable to produce, appropriate for the purpose and audience and something in which the child can take pride.

Children will be taught how to:

- sit appropriately when writing
- position their paper effectively
- hold a pencil or pen comfortably and efficiently
- form letters and numerals correctly
- control letter size and orientation
- position letters correctly in relation to the line
- leave appropriate spaces between words
- develop appropriate joins
- write with increasing fluency and speed
- select an appropriate writing implement
- adapt handwriting according to the purpose of the task
- present work carefully and consistently.

Every child's best will look different at different stages of development, but everyone is expected to take pride in their work.

3. Implementation

Handwriting is explicitly taught throughout school. Teachers model handwriting carefully and use consistent terminology when discussing letter formation, positioning, spacing and joins.

Handwriting sessions should be short, focused and purposeful and should include preparation for writing, explicit teacher modelling, guided practice, independent practice, immediate feedback and opportunities to apply the skill in meaningful writing.

Teachers should actively monitor pupils while they are writing. Where misconceptions in formation or joins are identified, these should be addressed promptly before incorrect habits become embedded.

4. The Fulwood and Cadley Handwriting Journey

EYFS – Developing the Foundations

In EYFS, handwriting begins with physical development. Children are provided with frequent opportunities to develop gross motor control, shoulder and arm strength, fine motor control, hand-eye coordination, finger strength and dexterity, manipulation of writing tools, appropriate pencil grip, mark making, pattern making and correct letter formation.

Letter formation is closely linked to the teaching of phonics through Red Rose Phonics. Children are taught correct formation from the outset and writing opportunities are available throughout continuous provision so that children understand that writing has a purpose.

Key Stage 1

During Key Stage 1, children continue to develop accurate letter and numeral formation. Teaching focuses particularly upon secure pencil grip, correct starting and finishing points, consistent orientation, lower-case and capital letter formation, appropriate relative letter size, ascenders and descenders, spacing between words, positioning letters on the line and correct numeral formation.

Children should not be rushed into joining before letter formation is secure. When pupils demonstrate secure formation and sufficient control, appropriate joins are introduced systematically.

Key Stage 2

Throughout Key Stage 2, children continue to refine their handwriting. Teaching increasingly focuses upon consistency, proportion, spacing, appropriate joins, fluency, stamina, speed, presentation and developing an increasingly individual but legible style.

By Upper Key Stage 2, pupils should increasingly make appropriate decisions about whether particular letters should be joined and which writing implement is most suitable for a particular task.

Agreed Letter Formation and Joining Conventions

To ensure consistency across school, the letters g, y, j and q are formed without loops. The letters b, p and s are not joined in EYFS, Key Stage 1 or Lower Key Stage 2. Joining to and from b, p and s is introduced only in Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6), where pupils have secure letter formation and can maintain legibility and fluency. Staff should model these agreed conventions consistently in handwriting teaching and across the curriculum.

5. Frequency of Teaching

EYFS: Fine motor, gross motor and letter formation opportunities should occur daily as appropriate.

Years 1 and 2: Explicit handwriting teaching should take place at least three times each week.

Years 3 and 4: Explicit handwriting teaching should take place at least twice each week.

Years 5 and 6: Explicit handwriting teaching should take place at least once each week, with additional teaching for pupils who have not yet achieved the expected standard.

Teachers may temporarily increase the frequency of handwriting teaching where standards within a class or group require improvement. Following extended school holidays, teachers should revisit handwriting expectations explicitly.

6. Preparing to Write

Children should develop good physical habits for writing. Staff should explicitly teach and reinforce comfortable posture, appropriate paper position and an efficient pencil grip. Children should sit comfortably with their body facing their work, have appropriate support for their feet where physically appropriate and be close enough to the table to write comfortably.

Paper may be positioned at a slight angle according to whether a child is right or left-handed. The aim of pencil grip is an efficient and comfortable hold which enables accurate writing without excessive fatigue.

7. Left-Handed Writers

Left-handed pupils should receive appropriate support. Staff should ensure sufficient writing space, appropriate seating to avoid elbows colliding, explicit teaching of paper position, a clear view of teacher modelling and access to suitable pens and pencils. Being left-handed should never be viewed as a barrier to fluent and attractive handwriting.

8. Teacher Modelling

Adults are important handwriting role models. When handwriting is explicitly modelled, teachers should demonstrate the school's agreed formation and joins. Handwriting displayed on whiteboards, flipcharts, working walls, handwritten labels, pupil books and displays should be clear and legible. Where handwriting is the teaching focus, modelling should be particularly precise.

9. Applying Handwriting Across the Curriculum

The purpose of handwriting teaching is for pupils to apply their skills independently. High standards should therefore be evident across the curriculum and not solely within English or handwriting books.

Presentation Level 1 – Showcase: used for published writing, final pieces, display work and responses to a curriculum Big Question. Children should demonstrate their highest standard of handwriting and presentation.

Presentation Level 2 – Everyday: the normal expectation within exercise books. Writing should be legible, appropriately formed, positioned correctly, reasonably consistent in size, appropriately spaced and joined where expected.

Presentation Level 3 – Working: used where speed, experimentation or thinking is more important than presentation, such as planning, drafting, brainstorming, notes, collaborative work and rapid responses. Writing must remain readable but editing and alteration are a normal part of learning.

10. Presentation Expectations

Across school, children are taught to begin writing in the appropriate place, write on the line where lines are provided, use margins appropriately, write dates and titles according to agreed school expectations, use a ruler where straight lines are required, avoid unnecessary blank pages, treat books and resources with respect and cross out mistakes appropriately rather than attempting to disguise them.

When writing in pen, errors should normally be crossed through with one neat line. Correction fluid should not be used. Presentation should support learning rather than become a barrier to it.

11. Writing Implements

Children will use high-quality writing tools appropriate to their stage of development. Pencils should be appropriately sized, sharp enough to support accurate writing and comfortable to use. Alternative pencils, grips or writing implements may be provided where appropriate. Pens used following the award of a Pen Licence should be the agreed school handwriting pen.

12. Fulwood and Cadley Pen Licences

The Pen Licence system recognises children who demonstrate increasing independence, consistency and pride in their handwriting. A Pen Licence is earned through consistent application rather than being awarded automatically because a pupil reaches a particular year group.

PROVISIONAL

A supported transition from pencil to pen.

FULL LICENCE

Consistent, independent handwriting across the curriculum.

Stage 1 – Provisional Pen Licence

A pupil may be awarded a Provisional Pen Licence when they consistently demonstrate correct letter formation, appropriate letter size, clear and consistent spacing, appropriate positioning on the line, correct joins where appropriate and pride in the presentation of their work.

The Provisional Pen Licence allows the pupil to begin using the agreed handwriting pen for identified pieces of work. This period allows the pupil to demonstrate that they can maintain their handwriting standard when moving from pencil to pen.

Pupils receive a Provisional Pen Licence Certificate and Provisional Wallet Licence.

Stage 2 – Full Pen Licence

A Full Pen Licence may be awarded when a pupil demonstrates consistently accurate letter formation, appropriate size and proportion, clear spacing, fluent and appropriate joins, legible and increasingly fluent handwriting, neat presentation across curriculum subjects, independence, pride in written work and the ability to maintain their handwriting standard when using pen.

Pupils receive a Full Pen Licence Certificate and Official Wallet Pen Licence. Pen Licences should be celebrated publicly through an appropriate whole-school or class celebration.

13. Maintaining a Pen Licence

A Pen Licence represents a standard rather than simply a reward. Once awarded, children are expected to maintain that standard.

If handwriting begins to deteriorate, the first response should be support, feedback and an opportunity to improve. Where a pupil repeatedly fails to maintain the expected standard despite appropriate support, the teacher may temporarily return the pupil to pencil. This should not be presented as a punishment. The child should understand exactly what needs to improve and should be supported to regain their pen status quickly.

14. Assessment and Feedback

Handwriting is assessed primarily through children's everyday writing. Teachers consider pencil grip and physical comfort, letter formation, orientation, positioning, size, proportion, spacing, joins, legibility, fluency, speed, independence and application across subjects.

Feedback should be immediate wherever possible. Adults may model a formation or join, identify a successful example, ask a pupil to repeat a successful example or provide one precise improvement. Feedback should not overwhelm children with numerous handwriting targets simultaneously.

15. Inclusion and Adaptive Practice

We recognise that handwriting develops at different rates and that some pupils experience significant barriers to handwriting. Reasonable adjustments will always take precedence over uniform presentation expectations.

Support may include larger line spacing, alternative paper, pencil grips, triangular pencils, alternative writing implements, sloped writing boards, adapted seating, fine and gross motor activities, additional modelling, tracing or pattern activities, reduced copying, additional time, targeted handwriting intervention and assistive technology where appropriate.

The class teacher should work with the SENDCo where handwriting difficulties persist or significantly affect a child's ability to record learning. A child should not be prevented from demonstrating knowledge because of difficulties with handwriting. Expectations should remain ambitious but appropriate.

16. Handwriting Intervention

Intervention should be targeted according to identified need and should not simply consist of additional copying. It may focus upon gross motor development, fine motor control, pencil grip, letter formation, particular letter families, spacing, size, positioning, joins, fluency or speed. Progress should be reviewed so that intervention does not continue indefinitely without measurable impact.

17. Celebrating Handwriting

High-quality handwriting and improvement should be visible and valued. This may be celebrated through Provisional Pen Licences, Full Pen Licences, celebration assemblies, displays, classroom working walls, sharing work with other classes, recognition from senior leaders and communication with parents and carers. Recognition should celebrate progress and effort as well as attainment.

18. Responsibilities of Staff

All teaching staff are responsible for implementing this policy consistently. Staff should teach handwriting explicitly, model agreed formations, reinforce appropriate posture and grip, maintain high but appropriate expectations, address misconceptions promptly, provide additional support where required, expect skills to transfer across subjects, celebrate improvement and ensure reasonable adjustments are made where appropriate.

19. Leadership and Monitoring

The English Lead, supported by senior leaders, will monitor implementation and impact through book scrutiny, handwriting scrutiny, learning walks, pupil voice, discussion with staff, review of handwriting teaching, examination of handwriting across curriculum subjects, monitoring pupils receiving additional support and review of Pen Licence implementation.

When monitoring their subjects, subject leaders should consider the quality of presentation and whether pupils appropriately transfer handwriting skills into their subject. Handwriting should not overshadow subject-specific learning and expectations should remain appropriate to the purpose of the task.

20. Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are important partners in developing positive handwriting habits. Where additional practice at home would benefit a pupil, school will provide appropriate guidance so that

home practice reinforces rather than contradicts the formation taught in school. Parents will be encouraged to recognise progress and effort and promote pride in written work.

21. Monitoring Impact

The impact of this policy will be evident when pupils demonstrate increasingly fluent and legible handwriting; letter formation is secure; handwriting progresses appropriately between year groups; children can write at an appropriate speed; pupils take pride in their work; children understand different expectations for different types of recording; skills transfer across the curriculum; pupils can explain how they improve; adults consistently model agreed expectations; pupils requiring additional support are identified promptly; and presentation across school reflects consistently high expectations.

22. Our Whole-School Commitment

At Fulwood and Cadley, handwriting is everyone's responsibility.

We will teach it explicitly. We will model it carefully. We will adapt our teaching when children need additional support. We will celebrate improvement. We will expect children to transfer what they have learned.

Most importantly, we will help every child develop pride in communicating their ideas clearly and confidently.

Appendix A – Pen Licence Certificates

The following certificates form part of the Fulwood and Cadley handwriting recognition system. They should be used alongside the criteria in Section 12.

Provisional Pen Licence Certificate



**FULWOOD
& CADLEY**
PRIMARY SCHOOL

PROVISIONAL

PEN LICENCE

This certificate is proudly awarded to

for showing great progress and care with their handwriting.

YOU HAVE DEMONSTRATED THAT YOU CAN:

- ✓ form your letters correctly and consistently
- ✓ use appropriate letter size
- ✓ leave clear and consistent spaces between words
- ✓ position your writing carefully on the line
- ✓ join letters correctly when appropriate
- ✓ take pride in the presentation of your work

YOU ARE NOW A PROVISIONAL PEN LICENCE HOLDER!

You may use a handwriting pen in your work while you continue to develop consistently beautiful, fluent handwriting.

Keep it up – your full Pen Licence is within reach!

AWARDED ON: _____ **TEACHER:** _____ **HEADTEACHER/DEPUTY HEADTEACHER:** _____

PROVISIONAL PEN LICENCE

Write with pride ★ Present with care ★ Be consistent

Full Pen Licence Certificate



**FULWOOD
& CADLEY**
PRIMARY SCHOOL

PEN LICENCE

★ FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL ★

THIS CERTIFICATE IS PROUDLY AWARDED TO

*in recognition of consistently demonstrating an excellent
standard of handwriting and presentation.*

• YOU HAVE SHOWN THAT YOU CAN: •

✓ form letters accurately and consistently	✓ join letters fluently and correctly when appropriate
✓ maintain consistent letter size and proportion	✓ present your work neatly across the curriculum
✓ use clear and appropriate spacing	✓ maintain your handwriting standard independently
✓ position your writing accurately on the line	✓ take pride in everything you write

≡ *Congratulations!* ≡

YOU ARE NOW AN OFFICIAL FULWOOD & CADLEY PEN LICENCE HOLDER!
You have earned the privilege of using a handwriting pen in your school work.

★ YOUR CHALLENGE NOW IS TO MAINTAIN THIS EXCELLENT STANDARD IN EVERY PIECE OF WORK. ★

 LICENCE AWARDED: _____

 TEACHER: _____

 HEADTEACHER / DEPUTY HEADTEACHER: _____

PLEASE REMEMBER
Your Pen Licence is a privilege.
It can be withdrawn if your
handwriting and presentation do
not consistently meet our standards.

★ WRITE WITH PRIDE ★ PRESENT WITH CARE ★ BE CONSISTENT ★



Fulwood and Cadley Primary School • Handwriting Policy • September 2026

Appendix B – Wallet-Sized Pen Licences

These print-ready sheets contain eight wallet-sized licences for cutting and laminating.

Provisional Wallet Licences – 8 per sheet

 FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL	PROVISIONAL ★ PEN LICENCE ★ PROUDLY AWARDED TO <i>for showing great progress and care with their handwriting.</i> DATE: _____ TEACHER: _____	 FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL	PROVISIONAL ★ PEN LICENCE ★ PROUDLY AWARDED TO <i>for showing great progress and care with their handwriting.</i> DATE: _____ TEACHER: _____
 FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL	PROVISIONAL ★ PEN LICENCE ★ PROUDLY AWARDED TO <i>for showing great progress and care with their handwriting.</i> DATE: _____ TEACHER: _____	 FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL	PROVISIONAL ★ PEN LICENCE ★ PROUDLY AWARDED TO <i>for showing great progress and care with their handwriting.</i> DATE: _____ TEACHER: _____
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 FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL	PROVISIONAL ★ PEN LICENCE ★ PROUDLY AWARDED TO <i>for showing great progress and care with their handwriting.</i> DATE: _____ TEACHER: _____	 FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL	PROVISIONAL ★ PEN LICENCE ★ PROUDLY AWARDED TO <i>for showing great progress and care with their handwriting.</i> DATE: _____ TEACHER: _____



Where to sit the lines

Write with pride • Present with care • Be consistent

-----	← Top broken line
_____	← Top solid line
_____	← Bottom solid line
-----	← Bottom broken line

Full Wallet Pen Licences – 8 per sheet

 PEN LICENCE FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL THIS CERTIFICATE IS PROUDLY AWARDED TO _____ <i>in recognition of consistently demonstrating an excellent standard of handwriting and presentation.</i> LICENCE AWARDED: _____ TEACHER: _____ HEADTEACHER / DEPUTY HEADTEACHER: _____ ★ WRITE WITH PRIDE ★ PRESENT WITH CARE ★ BE CONSISTENT ★	 PEN LICENCE FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL THIS CERTIFICATE IS PROUDLY AWARDED TO _____ <i>in recognition of consistently demonstrating an excellent standard of handwriting and presentation.</i> LICENCE AWARDED: _____ TEACHER: _____ HEADTEACHER / DEPUTY HEADTEACHER: _____ ★ WRITE WITH PRIDE ★ PRESENT WITH CARE ★ BE CONSISTENT ★
 PEN LICENCE FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL THIS CERTIFICATE IS PROUDLY AWARDED TO _____ <i>in recognition of consistently demonstrating an excellent standard of handwriting and presentation.</i> LICENCE AWARDED: _____ TEACHER: _____ HEADTEACHER / DEPUTY HEADTEACHER: _____ ★ WRITE WITH PRIDE ★ PRESENT WITH CARE ★ BE CONSISTENT ★	 PEN LICENCE FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL THIS CERTIFICATE IS PROUDLY AWARDED TO _____ <i>in recognition of consistently demonstrating an excellent standard of handwriting and presentation.</i> LICENCE AWARDED: _____ TEACHER: _____ HEADTEACHER / DEPUTY HEADTEACHER: _____ ★ WRITE WITH PRIDE ★ PRESENT WITH CARE ★ BE CONSISTENT ★
 PEN LICENCE FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL THIS CERTIFICATE IS PROUDLY AWARDED TO _____ <i>in recognition of consistently demonstrating an excellent standard of handwriting and presentation.</i> LICENCE AWARDED: _____ TEACHER: _____ HEADTEACHER / DEPUTY HEADTEACHER: _____ ★ WRITE WITH PRIDE ★ PRESENT WITH CARE ★ BE CONSISTENT ★	 PEN LICENCE FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL THIS CERTIFICATE IS PROUDLY AWARDED TO _____ <i>in recognition of consistently demonstrating an excellent standard of handwriting and presentation.</i> LICENCE AWARDED: _____ TEACHER: _____ HEADTEACHER / DEPUTY HEADTEACHER: _____ ★ WRITE WITH PRIDE ★ PRESENT WITH CARE ★ BE CONSISTENT ★
 PEN LICENCE FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL THIS CERTIFICATE IS PROUDLY AWARDED TO _____ <i>in recognition of consistently demonstrating an excellent standard of handwriting and presentation.</i> LICENCE AWARDED: _____ TEACHER: _____ HEADTEACHER / DEPUTY HEADTEACHER: _____ ★ WRITE WITH PRIDE ★ PRESENT WITH CARE ★ BE CONSISTENT ★	 PEN LICENCE FULWOOD & CADLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL THIS CERTIFICATE IS PROUDLY AWARDED TO _____ <i>in recognition of consistently demonstrating an excellent standard of handwriting and presentation.</i> LICENCE AWARDED: _____ TEACHER: _____ HEADTEACHER / DEPUTY HEADTEACHER: _____ ★ WRITE WITH PRIDE ★ PRESENT WITH CARE ★ BE CONSISTENT ★

Write with pride • Present with care • Be consistent