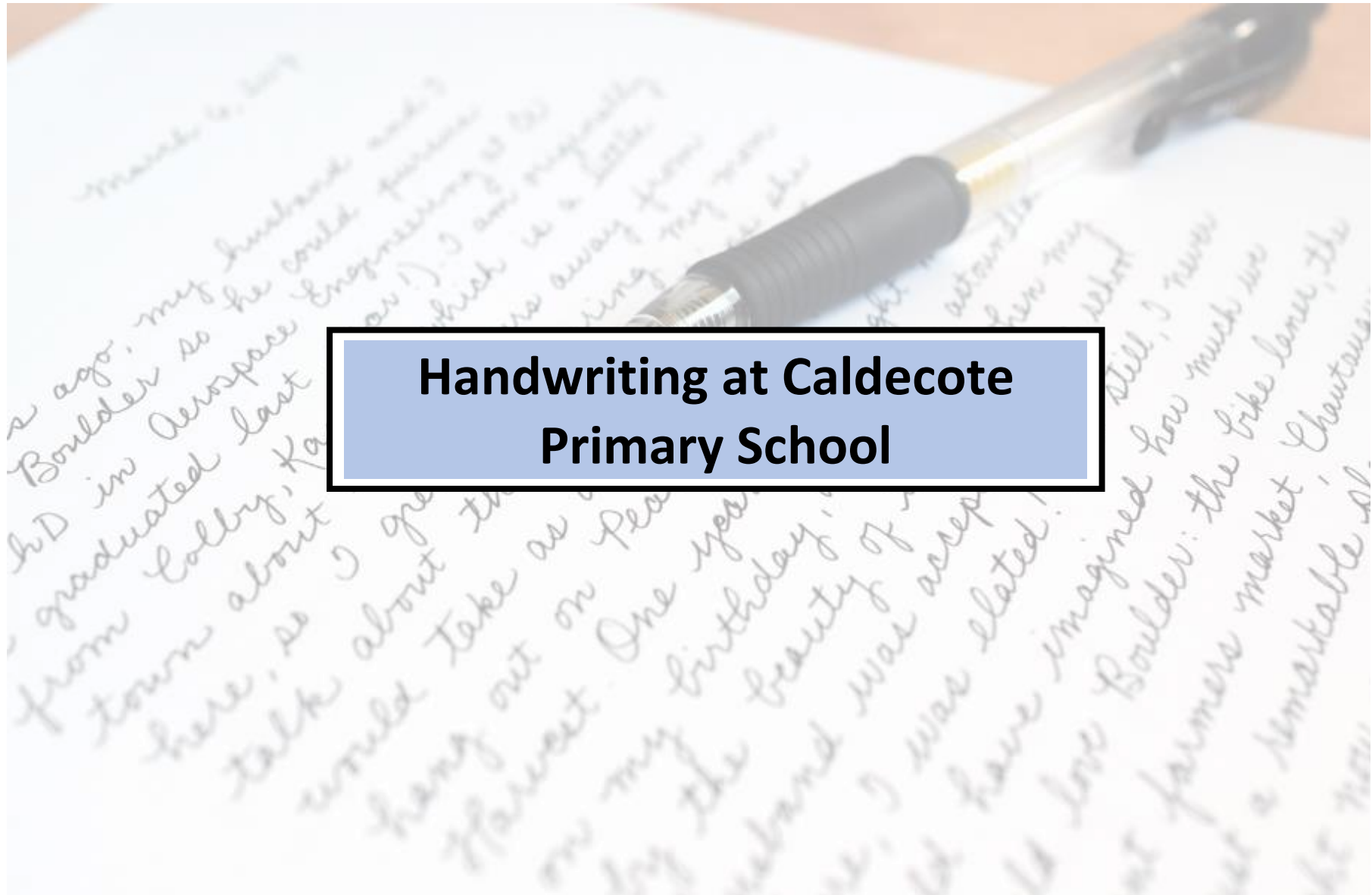




Handwriting at Caldecote Primary School



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Handwriting Curriculum Intent

At Caldecote Primary School, we believe that fluent, legible handwriting is a fundamental life skill and an essential component of becoming a successful writer. Handwriting is far more than neat presentation; it is the process through which pupils communicate, record and develop their ideas. When handwriting becomes fluent and automatic, pupils are able to devote greater attention to vocabulary, sentence construction, spelling and composition, rather than the mechanics of letter formation.

Our handwriting curriculum is carefully sequenced from the Early Years to the end of Key Stage 2, ensuring that pupils progressively develop the physical skills, knowledge and fluency required for confident written communication. We follow the **Teach Handwriting** programme, which provides a consistent whole-school approach to teaching posture, pencil grip, letter formation, joins, spacing, sizing and presentation. New learning is introduced through explicit teaching before being revisited regularly through purposeful practice, enabling pupils to develop confidence, automaticity and pride in their written work.

We recognise that successful handwriting begins long before children write their first recognisable letters. In the Early Years, children develop the gross and fine motor control, core stability, shoulder strength and hand coordination required for effective pencil control. These foundations are built upon progressively throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 as pupils develop increasingly fluent, efficient and joined handwriting.

Through consistent modelling, guided practice and high expectations across the curriculum, pupils understand that handwriting is a tool for communication rather than a skill used only during handwriting lessons. By the end of Year 6, our ambition is that pupils write with a fluent, legible and efficient handwriting style that supports rather than limits the quality of their written composition.

Handwriting and our personal development drivers

Our handwriting curriculum contributes positively to the development of the whole child and supports the school's four personal development drivers:

Successful Learners

Pupils develop perseverance, concentration and a commitment to improving their work through regular practice and refinement of handwriting skills. As handwriting becomes fluent and automatic, pupils can focus more effectively on expressing their ideas, applying their knowledge and producing high-quality written outcomes across the curriculum.



Responsible Citizens

Pupils learn to take pride in the presentation of their work and understand the importance of clear communication for different audiences and purposes. They develop responsibility for maintaining high standards, organising their work carefully and respecting shared expectations for learning.

Effective Contributors

Fluent handwriting enables pupils to communicate their ideas clearly and effectively in a range of contexts. Whether recording learning, collaborating on projects, sharing their thinking or presenting information to others, pupils use handwriting as a tool to contribute meaningfully to classroom discussions and wider school life.

Confident Individuals

As pupils develop confidence and fluency in their handwriting, they become more willing to record their ideas independently and share their learning with others. Success in handwriting supports self-esteem, resilience and a positive attitude towards writing, helping pupils to see themselves as capable and successful communicators.

Curriculum Design

Handwriting development begins in the Early Years through purposeful opportunities to develop gross and fine motor control, hand strength, coordination and pencil control. Children explore mark-making before progressing to correctly formed letters using the Little Wandle letter families. Explicit teaching focuses on correct posture, pencil grip, starting and finishing points and developing confidence when recording ideas independently.

In Key Stage 1, pupils develop secure letter formation, orientation, sizing and spacing. Once individual letter formation is secure, pupils are progressively introduced to entry strokes and joins. Daily handwriting sessions in Reception and Year 1 provide frequent opportunities to revisit previously taught learning, enabling pupils to build confidence and establish accurate habits from the outset.

From Year 2 onwards, handwriting is taught through three dedicated lessons each week. Teaching increasingly focuses on developing fluent joined handwriting, improving speed and stamina whilst maintaining legibility and consistency. Previously taught joins are revisited regularly to strengthen long-term retention and develop automaticity.

As pupils move through Key Stage 2, handwriting becomes increasingly embedded across the wider curriculum. Children are expected to apply the knowledge and skills developed during handwriting lessons within English and, as confidence develops, across all curriculum subjects. By reducing the cognitive effort required for transcription, pupils are increasingly able to focus on the quality, accuracy and organisation of their writing.



Handwriting Progression

The Teach Handwriting programme provides a carefully sequenced progression that ensures every new skill builds logically upon prior learning. This cumulative approach enables pupils to move confidently from early letter formation towards fluent, efficient and automatic handwriting by the end of primary school.

Year	Physical Development	Letter Formation	Joins	Fluency	Presentation
Reception	Develop gross and fine motor control, pencil grip, hand strength and coordination.	Form lower-case letters using Little Wandle letter families. Introduce capitals.	Not introduced.	Write recognisable letters, words and simple sentences with increasing confidence.	Begin to understand orientation, spacing and pride in presentation.
Year 1	Secure posture, tripod grip and paper position.	Accurate formation of lower-case letters, capitals and numbers with correct starting and finishing points.	Introduce entry strokes where appropriate.	Increasing confidence and control when writing independently.	Consistent size and orientation of letters.
Year 2	Motor skills increasingly secure and automatic.	Consistent formation of all letters.	Progressive introduction of diagonal and horizontal joins.	Begin using joined handwriting in independent writing.	Consistent sizing, spacing and alignment.
Year 3	Efficient pencil control requiring less conscious effort.	Letter formation automatic and accurate.	Joined handwriting used in most writing.	Increased fluency across longer writing tasks.	Clear presentation across curriculum books.
Year 4	Comfortable and relaxed handwriting.	Secure formation maintained.	Fluent joins embedded.	Greater speed whilst maintaining legibility.	High expectations across all curriculum subjects.
Year 5	Efficient handwriting supporting extended writing.	Mature and consistent formation.	Fluent joined handwriting used independently.	Increased stamina and writing efficiency.	Pupils adapt presentation appropriately for different purposes.
Year 6	Fully automatic handwriting.	Consistently accurate and legible.	Fluent, joined handwriting maintained independently.	Handwriting supports composition and note-taking without conscious effort.	High standards of presentation consistently demonstrated across the curriculum.



Curriculum Implementation

Handwriting is taught using the Teach Handwriting programme to ensure a consistent whole-school approach. Lessons are carefully sequenced so that new learning builds upon previously taught knowledge and skills. Teachers use consistent modelling, language and expectations to ensure that pupils experience the same approach throughout their primary education.

Reception and Year 1 pupils participate in daily handwriting sessions, reflecting the importance of establishing secure foundations during the earliest stages of writing development. From Year 2 onwards, pupils receive three dedicated handwriting lessons each week, alongside regular opportunities to apply these skills across the wider curriculum.

Each lesson follows a consistent structure:

Lesson Phase	Purpose
Connect	Retrieve previously taught letter formation or joins.
Explain (I do)	Teacher explicitly models new learning.
Practise (We Do)	Shared practice through air writing, tracing and guided practice.
Apply (You Do)	Independent practice with immediate feedback.
Deepen	Apply handwriting within words, sentences or curriculum writing.

Through explicit instruction and deliberate practice, pupils gradually develop handwriting that is accurate, fluent and automatic. Teachers provide immediate feedback to prevent misconceptions becoming embedded and regularly revisit previously taught joins to strengthen long-term retention.



Resources to Support Handwriting

Pencil grips

At Caldecote Primary School, we recognise that some pupils may require additional support to develop an efficient and comfortable pencil grip. Pencil grips may be introduced where appropriate following discussion between the class teacher, SENCO and parents. These should be used as a temporary intervention to support correct finger positioning, reduce fatigue and promote handwriting fluency. Staff will monitor pupils' progress regularly and encourage a gradual transition to an effective tripod grip without reliance on additional equipment wherever possible. The use of pencil grips will be tailored to individual need and reviewed periodically to ensure they continue to support handwriting development.

Posture support

The Handwriting Posture Rhyme

- **1, 2, 3, 4** – Are your feet flat on the floor?
- **5, 6, 7, 8** – Is your back nice and straight?
- **9, 10, 11, 12** – Show me how your pencil's held!
- **13, 14, 15, 16** – Is your page on a lean?
- **17, 18, 19, 20** – Now you're ready to write aplenty!

Key Posture Rules for Writing

- **Feet:** Keep both feet flat on the ground to build a stable base.
- **Knees and Hips:** Bend knees at a 90-degree angle, keeping thighs level.
- **Back:** Sit up straight with your bottom pushed all the way back in the chair.
- **Paper:** Tilt the paper slightly and hold it steady with your non-writing hand.

Handwriting Across the Curriculum

Dedicated handwriting lessons provide pupils with the knowledge and skills required to develop fluent handwriting. However, handwriting expectations extend beyond these lessons.



Children are expected to apply the handwriting knowledge they have been taught within English lessons and, as confidence and fluency develop, increasingly across all curriculum subjects. Teachers consistently model high standards of presentation and reinforce expectations regardless of the subject being taught.

By applying handwriting skills in meaningful contexts, pupils develop confidence, writing stamina and an understanding that handwriting is an essential tool for communication.

Assessment and Monitoring

Teachers assess handwriting continuously through day-to-day classroom practice, independent writing and pupils' application of handwriting across the curriculum. Assessment focuses on posture, pencil grip, letter formation, joins, spacing, sizing, legibility, fluency and presentation.

The Teach Handwriting assessment framework is used alongside teacher professional judgement to monitor pupils' progress and identify those requiring additional support or intervention. Regular scrutiny of pupils' work across subjects ensures that handwriting expectations are consistently applied beyond dedicated handwriting lessons.

For the vast majority of pupils, fluent joined handwriting is the expected outcome by the end of Key Stage 2. This aligns with the statutory Teacher Assessment Framework for writing, whilst recognising that reasonable adjustments may be appropriate for pupils with identified additional needs.



Teach
Handwriting
Cursive Letter
Formation
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