

Responsibility**Respect****Compassion****Courage**

9th January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Building Strong Foundations: Our Whole-School Focus on Handwriting

At Blackwell, we are committed to ensuring every child develops the essential tools they need to become confident, fluent writers. This academic year, we are placing a renewed emphasis on **handwriting** across all year groups.

You may wonder why, in an increasingly digital world, we continue to prioritise pen and paper. Our approach is guided by the Department for Education's **Writing Framework (July 2025)**, which highlights handwriting not just as a motor skill, but as a vital component of cognitive development.

Why Handwriting Matters

According to the latest educational research and the national framework, handwriting plays a critical role in a child's literacy journey for several key reasons:

- **Reducing Cognitive Load:** When a child can form letters automatically and legibly, they don't have to 'think' about how to write. This frees up their working memory to focus on higher-level skills like vocabulary choice, grammar, and creative composition.
- **The Reading-Writing Connection:** The physical act of forming letters helps children recognise them more deeply, which directly supports early reading and phonics acquisition.
- **Academic Confidence:** Fluency in handwriting allows students to get their thoughts down on paper quickly during assessments and creative tasks, preventing frustration and boosting self-esteem.

Our Whole-School Approach

To support your child, we are implementing a consistent strategy throughout the school:

1. **'Ready to Write' routine:** focusing on postures and pencil grip – ensuring children sit comfortably with their paper angled correctly (see attached poster).
2. **The 'Tripod' Grip:** Consistent coaching on the correct way to hold a writing tool to prevent hand fatigue.
3. **Direct Instruction:** Dedicated time each week for explicit handwriting practice, moving from letter formation to joining (cursive) when the child is developmentally ready (see attached letter formations and handwriting patter).
4. **High Expectations:** Encouraging pride in presentation across all subjects.
5. **How You Can Help at Home:** You are our most valuable partners in this initiative. You can support your child by:
 - Engaging in activities that build fine motor skills, such as using tweezers, playing with clay, or drawing, which strengthen the muscles needed for a steady grip.
 - Encouraging "real-world" writing, such as thank-you notes, shopping lists, or journals.
 - Our school is using the Letter-Join handwriting scheme and your child can **log in to the website at home** on iPads, tablets and computers. There you will find the same, easy-to-use handwriting resources that we use at school. Please find attached log-in details.

Thank you for your continued support in helping our pupils reach their full potential.

Kind regards,

Sarah Martin

Headteacher

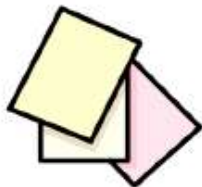
Ready to write



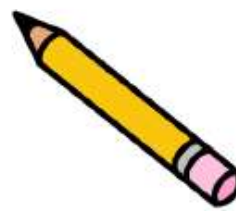
two feet on
the floor



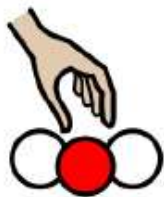
tuck your
chair in



position
your paper



pencil grip



pick, pinch,
flick



ready to
write

Letter-join Pupil log-in

PC DESKTOP AND LAPTOP LOG-IN

Log in at www.letterjoin.co.uk and use the Desktop log-in option with these details:

Username: ej33763

Password: home

PC Browsers:

Letter-join will work on the following browsers on PCs/Macs:

- Google Chrome
- Safari

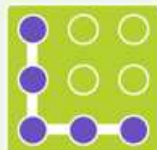
Do not use Internet Explorer.

IPAD AND TABLET LOG-IN

Go to www.letterjoin.co.uk and use the Tablet log-in option with these details:

Username: ej33763

Swipe code
(starting at top left):



Tablet/iPad Browsers:

Letter-join will run on the following tablets:

- iPads running iOS7 and above through the Safari browser.
- Windows 8 tablets (8 inch and bigger) using the built-in browser.
- Android tablets (8 inch and bigger) using Google Chrome.

Choose a Classroom

Once logged-in, choose your child's classroom and you can use Letter-join's resources and fun activities to reinforce the handwriting we teach at school. You can trace over the letters and words and play the games on your tablet.

We are limited to the number of users who can log in to this account, so please do not share these log-in details.

Printed 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

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

Verbal path for printed letters (ball and stick)



- a Around in a curve and a short line down.
- b A long line down from the top and around in a curve.
- c Around in a curve but don't join up.
- d Around in a curve and a long line down from the top.
- e Across the middle and around the outside.
- f Hook around from the top to the bottom, a line across the middle.
- g Around in a curve and a line with a hook underneath.
- h A long line down from the top, curve down from the middle.
- i A short line down and a dot up above.
- j A line with a hook underneath and a dot up above.
- k A long line down from the top, slope down to the middle, kick down.
- l A long line down from the top.
- m A short line down, curve down from the top, curve down from the top again.
- n A short line down, curve down from the top.
- o Around in a circle.
- p A long line down underneath and around in a curve.
- q Around in a curve, along line down underneath, kick up.
- r A short line down, a short curve from the top.
- s Curve around like a snake.
- t A line down from up above, a short line across the middle.
- u A short line down with a curve at the bottom and a short line down at the side.
- v A short slope down and a short slope up.
- w A short slope down and a short slope up, a short slope down and a short slope up.
- x A short slope down and a short slope down the other way.
- y A short slope down and a long slope down the other way.
- z A short line across, slope down, along the bottom.

Verbal path for cursive letters with lead-in lines

Letter-join 

- a Start on the line, go round in a curve, back down, up down and hook.
- b Start on the line, go right to the top, back down, up and over, join up and hook.
- c Start on the line, go round in a curve, back down, around and hook.
- d Start on the line, go round in a curve, back round, up to the top, back down and hook.
- e Start on the line, go up in a loop, back down and around and hook.
- ~~f1~~ Start on the line, go nearly to the top, hook, over, back down and under, loop and hook.
- ~~f2~~ Start on the line, go nearly to the top, loop round, back down, loop round to join and hook.
- f3 Start on the line, go nearly to the top, hook over, back down and under, loop and hook.
- g Start on the line, go round in a curve, back round, up, down under, loop and hook.
- h Start on the line, go right to the top, back down, up and over and hook.
- i Start on the line, go up down, hook, and dot.
- j Start on the line, go up down and under, loop, hook, and dot.
- kl Start on the line, go right to the top, back down, back up, loop, kick and hook.
- ~~l2~~ Start on the line, go right to the top, back down, curve up, curve down and hook.
- l Start on the line, go right to the top, all the way back down and hook.
- m Start on the line, go up, down, up and over, up and over and hook.
- n Start on the line, go up, down, up and over and hook.
- o Start on the line, go round in a curve, back all the way round, and hook.
- p Start on the line, go up, down under, back up and over, join up and hook.
- q Start on the line, go round in a curve, back round, up, down under and hook.
- r Start on the line, go up, down, up, a little way over and hook.
- s Start on the line, go round in a curve, back round, curve back and hook.
- t Start on the line, go nearly to the top, back down, hook, and then the stroke.
- u Start on the line, go up, down and round, up again, down and hook.
- v Start on the line, go up, down, up and hook.
- ~~w1~~ Start on the line, go up, down and round, up again, down and round, up again, and hook.
- w2 Start on the line, go up, down, up, down, up and hook.
- ~~x1~~ Start on the line, go up, curve back, curve up, curve down and hook.
- x2 Start on the line, go up, slope down, hook, and lift. Go to the top, slope back down.
- y Start on the line, go up, down and round, up, down, loop and hook.
- ~~z1~~ Start on the line, go up, across, slope down, loop under and hook.
- z2 Start on the line, go up, across, slope down, across and hook.