



Washington  
Academy

# Handwriting

## POLICY

2025

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The ability to write legibly, fluently and with confidence is a fundamental skill that underpins academic success across the curriculum. In line with the **2024 Writing Framework**, this school 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.

This policy sets out a consistent, inclusive, whole-school approach to improving handwriting, ensuring that all students are supported to produce clear, legible written work and are not disadvantaged in assessments or examinations.

## 2. Aims

The school aims to:

- Ensure all students develop **legible, fluent handwriting**
- Identify and support students with handwriting difficulties early, particularly at **Year 7 transition**
- Reduce barriers to learning caused by poor handwriting or motor skill difficulties
- Provide reasonable adjustments for students whose handwriting remains illegible despite intervention
- Ensure consistency of approach across all subjects
- Align handwriting practice with the expectations of the **2024 Writing Framework**

## 3. Identification of Handwriting Needs

### 3.1 Year 7 Screening

- All students are screened for handwriting legibility and fluency during **Year 7**.
- Students identified as having **illegible or semi-illegible handwriting** are referred for intervention.
- Additional consideration is given to:
  - Left-handed students
  - Students with known or emerging motor skill difficulties
  - Students with SEND needs impacting writing

## 4. Handwriting Interventions

### 4.1 Small Group Handwriting Intervention (KS3)

- Identified students in **Year 7** will receive **small group handwriting intervention**.
- Interventions focus on:
  - Letter formation
  - Spacing
  - Consistency of size
  - Writing fluency
- Progress is reviewed regularly and shared with subject teachers.



## 4.2 Handwriting Exercise Books

- Students receiving handwriting intervention will be issued with a **handwriting exercise book**.
- These books must be used in **all subjects**, with the **exception of Mathematics**.
- This ensures consistent practice and reinforcement across the curriculum.

## 5. Classroom Practice (Whole School)

### 5.1 Teacher Modelling

- Teachers will:
  - Model handwriting clearly during lessons
  - Use **lined paper** when presenting worked examples
  - Use **printed handwriting**, not cursive, to support clarity and consistency
- This reflects the Writing Framework emphasis on explicit modelling of transcription skills.

### 5.2 Classroom Environment

- **All classrooms** must display a **handwriting poster** showing:
  - Correct letter formation
  - Size and spacing expectations
- Posters 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
- 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 identified as having **dyspraxia or Dysgraphia** will be given differentiated pen grips to further support pen control and comfort when writing for extended periods of time.
- Students with **semi-illegible or illegible handwriting** will be issued with **erasable pens**, enabling:
  - Easy correction
  - Reduced anxiety around mistakes
  - Improved presentation
- Students will be taught the **'pinch and flip' method** of holding a pen to increase control and reduce discomfort when writing for extended periods.



## 6.2 Use of Technology (KS4)

- Students in **Key Stage 4** whose handwriting remains illegible despite intervention will be issued with a **laptop** 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.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

### Teachers

- 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

### Senior Leaders

- Ensure consistent implementation of the policy
- Monitor impact across departments
- Provide training where necessary

## 8. Monitoring and Review

- Handwriting standards are monitored through:
  - Book scrutiny
  - Lesson observations
  - Intervention reviews



- The policy will be reviewed every **two years** or sooner if guidance changes.

## 9. Links to the 2024 Writing Framework

This policy aligns with the **2024 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