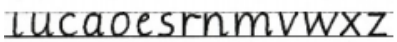
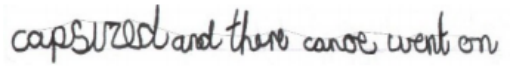
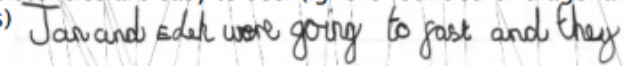
Shape, Space, Sitting on a line, Size, Stringing, Slant, Speed, Style

Year Group	S	Key information	Supporting Informaton
Year 5 and 6 Year 3 and 4 Year 2 Year 1 EYFS	Shape	**The first important task is to learn how to form the letters correctly.** • Letter formation is modelled across the curriculum • Children make the letters themselves in developmentally appropriate ways using just fingers – sand, paint, air-writing etc. before pencils. • Story Time Phonics rhymes are used • Letters are grouped into letter formation families • Letter formation is practised regularly and errors are picked up and acted upon • Letters are practised individually and in letter strings before being used in words (when appropriate) as part of the handwriting hit	***Set 1*** c a o d g q s f e ***Set 2*** i l t u j y ***Set 3*** r n m h k b p ***Set 4*** v w x z **We use Story Time Phonics rhymes** Click here
	Space	**Children need to understand that spaces need to be left between words so they can be easily read.** Gradually, children need to learn to leave an appropriately-sized space – about the size of 1 or 2 letter 'o's. Lolly sticks make good spacers for beginner writers, followed by coffee stirrers if necessary later.	Add different colour 'o's in to illustrate the point when modelling or show children where it has gone wrong.
	Sitting	**Once children are secure in forming letters correctly they need to know where to position them in relation to the base line.**	Modelling on lines for all writing is essential in all lessons. Lines should be provided/drawn when children are writing to allow this skill to be embedded.
	Size	**Children need to know the relative sizes of letters.** halfway letters/x-height letters e.g. a, e, o, s Tall letters/letters with ascenders e.g. h, l, b, k (plus all capitals) Tailed letters/letters with descenders e.g. p, g, y, j	While children are learning about size, it is helpful to use illustrate with paper marked with a base-line and a second line above for the tops of a, e, s, o etc.  Drawing a line over inconsistently sized writing can illustrate the point.  Check that lines are adequately spaced. Young writers need space to not squash words or letters. However, large spaces become a problem when children are writing smaller but attempting to use the lines as a guide. Line spacing may need to be adapted for key children.

					Stringing	**Children should be taught a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation (NC).** • By the end of year 2, some children will be joining some joins. • The expectation for Years 3 & 4 is that pupils will be using joined handwriting throughout their writing across the curriculum. This will encourage joined writing to become automatic. • Joins are taught in the Nelson Handwriting joining groups, practised as a join and in words before applying in their own handwriting **Joined Style** The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.	**The joins** Group Group The first join 1 → 2 in am The second join 1 → 3 ab ch The third join 4 → 2 oa wo The fourth join 4 → 3 wh ob The break letters bigger 1. Diagonal link 2. Hill join 3. Washing line join 4. Join to the sky ***Group 1*** a c d e h i k l m n s t u Thirteen letters with exit flicks plus s. ***Group 2*** a c d e g i j m n o p q r s u v w x y Nineteen letters which start at the top of the x-height. ***Group 3*** b f h k l t Six letters which start at the top of the ascender. ***Group 4*** f o r v w Five letters which finish at the top of the x-height. Break letters (not joined **from**): b g j p q x y s z
					Slant	**A consistent slant helps the appearance of handwriting.** A slightly forward slant is a natural movement for right-handers and helps to improve fluency and speed.	**Use a coloured pen to make all the down lines longer so inconsistencies are easy to see. (Ignore rounded or diagonal letters)**  If inconsistent (as above), practise writing small words using letters l,h,b,l,u,y: hill, little etc. and concentrate on parallel down strokes.
					Speed	**Students in KS2 & 3 need to be able to write legibly and quickly.** Children have regular practise to gradually build up the speed of legible writing by repeating words, then phrases, sentences & paragraphs in short regular periods of practice.	Pangrams are useful when repeating sentences. The five boxing wizards jump quickly. The quick brown fox jumps over a lazy dog. How vexingly quick daft zebras jump!

					Style	**Students should be encouraged to develop a style of writing that works for them.** Students can consider changes to their writing style that could increase speed and/or fluency, e.g. • Adding loops to g,y, j and possibly f to increase speed and flow. • Consider if there are any joins that do not flow well and would be better left un joined. • Consider joining break letters • Be aware that different implements, qualities and speeds of writing are required for different tasks: personal notes, exams, published work and adapt accordingly • They should also be aware of occasions when an un joined style is appropriate: for labelling diagrams/data, e-mail addresses etc.	Staff may offer advice to children about individual letters – all other 'S' principles apply to any stylistic changes.