





**Contents:**

1. Introduction and context
2. National curriculum and statutory expectations
3. Policy intent
4. Principles of development
5. Barriers to recording and readiness for learning
6. Foundational knowledge
7. Progression
8. Implementation
9. SEMH and SEND adaptations
10. Impact
11. Assessment
12. Monitoring and review
13. Partnership with families
14. Links with other policies





## 1. Introduction and context

At Storybrook, handwriting is viewed as part of communication, confidence and access to learning. We recognise that pupils may experience difficulties with fine motor development, sensory processing, emotional regulation, executive functioning and previous interrupted learning experiences. Teaching therefore remains ambitious whilst providing carefully scaffolded support.

Handwriting development therefore extends beyond letter formation alone. It forms part of a wider approach to developing independence, self-esteem, communication and successful curriculum access.

## 2. National Curriculum and Statutory Expectations

Storybrook recognises the statutory expectations outlined within the National Curriculum for English, which require pupils to develop fluent, legible and efficient handwriting that increasingly supports successful written communication. Pupils are supported to develop accurate letter formation, joined handwriting where appropriate, writing stamina and presentation skills whilst recognising that progression may vary according to individual needs and starting points. Appropriate adaptations and reasonable adjustments are implemented where required to ensure all pupils can successfully access learning.

### Legislative and Guidance Framework

This policy has been developed with reference to:

- National Curriculum for English
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Independent School Standards Regulations (where applicable)
- Teacher Standards
- Storybrook Teaching and Learning Policy
- Storybrook SEND Policy

National Curriculum Area	Storybrook Approach	Where Evidenced Within This Policy
Form lower-case letters correctly	Explicit teaching of letter formation through progressive stages	Foundational Knowledge; Progression Stages 1-2
Develop consistent size, orientation and spacing	Direct teaching and repeated practice of spatial awareness and presentation	Foundational Knowledge; Progression Stage 3





National Curriculum Area	Storyybrook Approach	Where Evidenced Within This Policy
Begin joining handwriting where appropriate	Progressive development of fluency and efficient movement patterns	Progression Stage 4
Develop increasingly fluent and legible handwriting	Small-step progression supported through modelling, repetition and feedback	Policy Intent; Progression; Impact
Increase speed and stamina for writing	Development of writing stamina through supported practice and increasing independence	Foundational Knowledge; Progression Stage 5; Impact
Present work clearly and appropriately	Explicit expectations for presentation and organisation across subjects	Foundational Knowledge; Assessment; Monitoring
Access the wider curriculum through written communication	Removal of barriers through adaptive approaches and reasonable adjustments	SEMH and SEND Adaptations; Assessment; Links with Other Policies

Storyybrook recognises that pupils with SEMH and associated SEND needs may progress through these expectations at different rates. Teaching therefore remains ambitious whilst ensuring that reasonable adjustments and adaptive approaches enable all pupils to develop increasingly successful and independent approaches to written communication.

### SEND and Inclusion Considerations

Potential barrier	Examples of support
Fine motor difficulties	pencil grips, strengthening activities, adapted tools
Sensory processing needs	sensory supports, movement breaks
Executive functioning difficulties	chunked tasks, visual prompts
Emotional regulation needs	co-regulation strategies, low-arousal approaches
Communication difficulties	oral rehearsal, vocabulary support
Writing stamina difficulties	reduced recording load, gradual increase in expectations

Storyybrook will make reasonable adjustments where required in accordance with duties under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure pupils can access learning successfully.

### 3. Policy intent

At Storyybrook, handwriting and recording development are viewed as essential components of communication, independence and curriculum access. We recognise that pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs and associated Special Educational Needs may experience a range of barriers which affect written





recording, including difficulties with fine motor development, sensory processing, executive functioning, regulation and confidence. Our approach therefore remains ambitious whilst providing carefully planned support, ensuring that pupils develop the knowledge, skills and confidence required to communicate effectively and participate successfully across the curriculum.

**The intent of handwriting and recording development at Storybrook is to ensure that:**

- pupils develop increasingly fluent, legible and efficient handwriting
- barriers to recording are identified and reduced
- pupils develop confidence and independence as writers
- handwriting supports rather than limits curriculum access
- staff provide ambitious expectations alongside appropriate support
- pupils develop increasing stamina for written recording
- pupils experience success and ownership within written tasks

#### **4. Principles of development**

At Storybrook, handwriting and recording development are understood as developmental processes that are closely linked to emotional safety, confidence, communication and successful access to learning. We recognise that pupils with SEMH and associated SEND needs may follow varied and non-linear pathways of development and that progress may be influenced by emotional regulation, sensory needs, motor development and previous educational experiences. Handwriting development therefore requires consistent, responsive and inclusive approaches that remove barriers whilst maintaining high expectations for all pupils. Development values pupil voice - pupils are encouraged to contribute to decisions regarding resources, support strategies and approaches that help them learn successfully.

**Handwriting and recording development at Storybrook is underpinned by the following principles:**

- **Development is progressive** - handwriting skills are built through small, sequential steps that support increasing fluency, automaticity and independence over time.
- **Development is responsive** - teaching is adapted to reflect individual strengths, barriers and starting points.
- **Development is relational** - strong relationships, emotional safety and trust support pupils to take risks and develop confidence in recording.
- **Development is inclusive** - pupils are provided with appropriate support and reasonable adjustments so that difficulties with recording do not prevent curriculum access.
- **Development is ambitious** - all pupils are supported and challenged to achieve increasingly independent, fluent and legible written communication.
- **Development is multi-dimensional** - progress reflects not only handwriting outcomes, but also improvements in confidence, engagement, regulation, motor development and learning stamina.





- **Development is consistent** - staff use agreed approaches and expectations across the school to promote familiarity and reduce cognitive load.
- **Development supports independence** - pupils are encouraged to increasingly select and use strategies and resources that support successful recording.

## Teaching Environment and Classroom Expectations

### Staff will promote:

- correct posture and seating position
- consistent modelling of letter formation
- high expectations for presentation
- opportunities for oral rehearsal before recording
- accessible resources and visual prompts
- positive reinforcement and encouragement
- calm and predictable learning environments
- consistent approaches across classrooms

## 5. Barriers to recording and readiness for learning

At Storybrook, we recognise that difficulties with handwriting and recording are not always caused by handwriting skills themselves. Pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs and associated Special Educational Needs may experience a range of barriers that influence their ability to engage successfully in written tasks. These barriers may fluctuate over time and can affect pupils differently across contexts and learning experiences. Staff therefore seek to identify and understand barriers to recording so that appropriate support, adaptations and interventions can be implemented whilst maintaining ambitious expectations for all pupils.

### Potential barriers may include:

- emotional regulation difficulties and heightened anxiety
- sensory processing differences
- fine and gross motor difficulties
- executive functioning challenges
- attention and concentration difficulties
- visual perception or visual-motor integration difficulties
- language and communication needs
- low confidence or negative experiences of previous learning
- difficulties with working memory and processing
- reduced writing stamina and fatigue

### To support readiness for learning, staff may provide:

- regulation opportunities and movement breaks
- visual supports and scaffolds
- adapted recording expectations
- oral rehearsal opportunities
- sensory resources where appropriate
- alternative recording methods





- adult support and modelling
- environmental adjustments to reduce cognitive overload

## 6. Foundational knowledge

Area	Pupils develop
Gross motor	posture, shoulder stability, core strength
Fine motor	finger strength, hand control
Visual tracking	left-right movement, spacing
Pencil control	grip and pressure
Letter formation	correct orientation
Joining	fluency
Stamina	sustained recording
Presentation	pride and organisation
Executive functioning	planning, organisation, initiation and self-monitoring
Sensory regulation	awareness and self-regulation strategies

## 7. Progression

Handwriting and recording skills develop progressively over time and are taught through carefully sequenced stages. Progression is not solely measured through handwriting outcomes but also through increasing independence, confidence, fluency and successful curriculum access. Staff recognise that pupils with SEMH and associated SEND needs may move through stages at different rates and that development may not always be linear.

Stage	Knowledge and skills	Examples of what this may look like
Stage 1: Readiness for Writing	Develop posture, body awareness, core strength, shoulder stability and fine motor control	mark making, tracing, sensory patterns, dough activities, threading, gross motor movement
Stage 2: Letter Formation	Recognise and form letters correctly using consistent orientation and direction	correctly formed lower-case letters, starting points, pencil control
Stage 3: Size and Spatial Awareness	Develop consistency in size, spacing and placement on lines	appropriately sized letters, finger spaces, orientation on page
Stage 4: Joining and Fluency	Begin joining letters and increase efficiency of movement	simple joins, reduced pencil lifting, smoother movement
Stage 5: Automaticity and Stamina	Develop fluency and sustain writing for longer periods with reduced cognitive effort	longer written tasks, reduced fatigue, increased pace
Stage 6: Independence and Presentation	Apply handwriting skills independently across subjects and contexts	organised presentation, legibility, confidence, selecting supports independently





Progression is supported through:

- explicit modelling
- guided practice
- repetition and retrieval
- oral rehearsal
- adaptive support
- opportunities for independent application
- regular feedback
- increasing expectations over time

Leaders recognise that transitions between classes, key stages and educational placements may affect pupils’ confidence and recording development. Information relating to successful approaches, adaptations and strategies will therefore be shared to support continuity and reduce disruption.

## **8. Implementation**

Handwriting and recording development are implemented through consistent, high-quality teaching approaches that recognise pupils’ varying starting points and individual needs. Staff provide explicit instruction, carefully sequenced practice opportunities and adaptive support to ensure pupils experience success whilst maintaining ambitious expectations.

**Implementation includes:**

- explicit modelling
- guided practice
- repetition and retrieval
- oral rehearsal
- scaffolded support
- independent application
- adaptive approaches
- consistent presentation expectations
- opportunities for cross-curricular application
- regular feedback and review

## **9. SEMH and SEND adaptations**

At Storyybrook, staff recognise that pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs and associated Special Educational Needs may experience barriers which affect their ability to engage successfully in handwriting and recording activities. Difficulties may arise from emotional regulation needs, sensory processing differences, fine or gross motor development, executive functioning challenges, communication difficulties, previous interrupted learning experiences or low confidence as learners. Adaptations are implemented to reduce barriers and increase successful participation whilst maintaining ambitious expectations and promoting increasing independence over time.

**Examples of adaptation may include:**





## Regulation and emotional support

- emotional check-ins and regulation opportunities before recording tasks
- movement breaks and sensory regulation activities
- predictable routines and visual timetables
- low-arousal environments where appropriate
- supportive adult relationships and co-regulation strategies

## Physical and motor adaptations

- pencil grips where appropriate
- writing slopes and adapted seating
- alternative writing tools
- fine motor interventions and strengthening activities
- adapted paper, line spacing or visual supports

## Cognitive and learning adaptations

- chunked instructions and reduced cognitive load
- visual prompts and task breakdown
- sentence stems and scaffolds
- explicit modelling and worked examples
- repetition and retrieval opportunities

## Communication and recording adaptations

- oral rehearsal before written recording
- alternative methods of recording including:
  - drawing
  - practical outcomes
  - verbal responses
  - technology-assisted recording where appropriate
- reduced copying demands
- use of word banks and vocabulary supports

## Independence and progression adaptations

- gradual reduction of adult support
- increasing opportunities for independent application
- explicit teaching of self-help strategies
- encouragement of pupil voice and choice where appropriate
- development of confidence and ownership within written tasks

## Assistive Technology and Alternative Recording

Storyybrook recognises that for some pupils, barriers to recording may remain significant despite targeted support and intervention. Appropriate technology and alternative recording approaches may therefore be used to support curriculum access whilst continuing to develop handwriting skills where appropriate.





Examples may include:

- speech-to-text technology
- typing and keyboard skills
- visual recording tools
- recording devices
- supported software
- adapted digital resources
- communication aids where appropriate

Use of alternative recording methods does not replace the development of handwriting skills unless this forms part of an agreed personalised approach or specialist recommendation.

Adaptations are not intended to reduce curriculum ambition or replace the development of handwriting skills. Instead, they provide pupils with appropriate support and reasonable adjustments that enable successful access to learning whilst progressively developing independence, confidence and increasingly fluent written communication.

## **10. Impact**

The impact of handwriting and recording development at Storybrook is evidenced through pupils' increasing ability to communicate ideas successfully, access the curriculum with greater independence and demonstrate confidence within written learning tasks. Leaders recognise that progress for pupils with SEMH and associated SEND needs may be developmental and non-linear; therefore, impact is considered across academic, emotional, behavioural and developmental domains.

**Impact may be demonstrated through:**

### **Pupil outcomes**

- increasingly fluent, legible and efficient handwriting
- improved letter formation, spacing and presentation
- increased writing stamina and sustained engagement
- improved organisation and recording of ideas
- increasing independence within written tasks
- improved use of handwriting skills across different curriculum subjects

### **Communication and learning outcomes**

- increased confidence when recording ideas
- reduced avoidance of written tasks
- improved ability to organise and communicate thinking
- greater use of ambitious vocabulary and written expression
- increasing application of skills within independent learning





## SEMH and developmental outcomes

- increased resilience when completing challenging tasks
- improved self-esteem and confidence as learners
- increased regulation and engagement during recording activities
- improved ability to identify and use appropriate support strategies
- increasing ownership and pride in learning

## Leaders monitor impact through:

- work scrutiny and handwriting samples over time
- pupil voice discussions
- lesson visits and observations
- presentation and recording across subjects
- writing stamina and independence
- EHCP outcomes where relevant
- intervention records and impact measures
- staff discussion and professional judgement
- assessment information and baseline comparisons

## 11. Assessment

Successful impact is demonstrated when pupils increasingly view themselves as capable learners and writers, accessing the curriculum with confidence, reduced barriers and growing independence.

Assessment and monitoring of handwriting and recording development at Storyybrook are designed to reflect the needs of pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs and associated Special Educational Needs. Leaders recognise that progress in handwriting and recording development may be developmental and non-linear and may be influenced by emotional regulation, sensory processing, confidence, engagement and previous educational experiences. Assessment therefore extends beyond handwriting outcomes alone and seeks to provide a holistic understanding of pupils' development over time.

Assessment is used diagnostically and formatively to identify barriers, inform adaptive teaching and evaluate the effectiveness of provision. Information gathered is used to support pupils in developing increasingly fluent, independent and successful approaches to written communication.

### Assessment in Practice

Handwriting and recording development are assessed continuously through everyday teaching and learning activities.

### Assessment approaches may include:

- teacher observation
- discussion and questioning
- handwriting samples over time





- practical recording tasks
- work scrutiny
- pupil voice
- presentation across curriculum subjects
- fine motor observations
- engagement and learning behaviours
- independence within recording tasks
- professional judgement
- information from external professionals where appropriate

## Assessment information is used to:

- identify barriers to recording
- inform adaptive teaching approaches
- identify pupils requiring additional intervention
- monitor the effectiveness of support strategies
- identify next steps in development
- support EHCP outcomes where relevant
- identify emerging needs at an early stage

## Progress Indicators

### Progress may be evidenced through:

#### Handwriting outcomes

- increasingly accurate letter formation
- improved joins where appropriate
- increased consistency in size and spacing
- improved presentation and organisation

#### Learning outcomes

- increasing writing stamina
- increased independence in recording
- reduced reliance on adult support
- greater transfer of skills across curriculum areas

#### SEMH and developmental outcomes

- improved confidence when recording ideas
- reduced task avoidance
- increased resilience during challenging activities
- increasing engagement within written tasks
- greater ownership and pride in learning

## Intervention and Targeted Support

Where assessment identifies ongoing difficulties, additional support may be implemented, including:





- fine motor intervention activities
- handwriting intervention programmes
- sensory support strategies
- adapted equipment
- occupational therapy recommendations where applicable
- personalised recording approaches
- targeted short-term support plans
- EHCP-linked targets where appropriate

Additional intervention may be considered where pupils demonstrate persistent difficulties with letter formation, fine motor development, writing stamina, presentation, independence or curriculum access despite adaptive classroom approaches.

Role	Responsibility
Class Teachers	Assess day-to-day progress and identify barriers
SENDCo	Monitor pupils requiring additional support
Senior Leaders	Review whole-school trends and impact
External professionals (where appropriate)	Inform assessment through specialist recommendations

## 12. Monitoring and review

Storybrook is committed to ensuring that handwriting and recording development remain effective, inclusive and responsive to the needs of pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs and associated Special Educational Needs. Monitoring activities are designed to evaluate the quality of implementation, identify strengths and areas for development and ensure that pupils are able to access learning successfully through increasingly independent and confident written communication.

Monitoring processes focus on both the quality of provision and the impact of handwriting and recording approaches on pupil outcomes. Leaders recognise that progress within a specialist SEMH setting may not always be linear and therefore review a range of evidence sources to develop a holistic understanding of effectiveness over time.

Staff receive appropriate training and professional development to support understanding of handwriting development, recording barriers, adaptive practice and SEND approaches where appropriate. Training may include handwriting development, fine and gross motor development, sensory processing, adaptive teaching, assistive technology and specialist SEND approaches.





Role	Responsibility
Class teachers	Monitor day-to-day progress and adapt teaching
SENDCo	Monitor pupils requiring additional support and evaluate interventions
Senior leaders	Review whole-school patterns, quality of provision and impact
Proprietor/Governors	Provide challenge and oversight regarding curriculum access and outcomes

### Review Cycle

This policy will be formally reviewed annually or earlier where:

- statutory guidance changes
- school practice changes
- monitoring identifies areas requiring development
- significant changes occur within pupil need or provision
- feedback from staff, pupils, families or external professionals identifies improvements

Monitoring and review processes support Storyybrook in maintaining a consistent, ambitious and inclusive approach to handwriting and recording development, ensuring that pupils are increasingly able to communicate successfully, access learning and develop confidence and independence over time.

### 13. Partnership with families

Storyybrook values partnership with families in supporting pupils' communication and recording development. Parents and carers may be provided with information, practical strategies, resources and opportunities to support fine motor development, confidence and recording skills. Regular communication may be used to share successful approaches, celebrate progress and strengthen consistency between home and school.

### 14. Links with other policies

Handwriting and recording development do not operate in isolation and form part of Storyybrook's wider approach to supporting communication, inclusion and successful curriculum access. This policy should therefore be read alongside other key policies and procedures to ensure a consistent and joined-up approach across the school. Together, these documents support the school's relational, trauma-informed and inclusive ethos whilst ensuring that barriers to learning are identified and addressed effectively.

Policy	Link to Handwriting and Recording Development
Teaching and Learning Policy	Supports high-quality teaching approaches, adaptive practice and effective classroom implementation





Policy	Link to Handwriting and Recording Development
Curriculum Policy	Ensures handwriting and recording skills are embedded across the wider curriculum
Assessment Policy	Provides guidance regarding assessment approaches, progress monitoring and meaningful measures of development
SEND Policy	Supports identification of needs, provision and reasonable adjustments
Accessibility Plan	Ensures barriers to learning and curriculum access are reduced
Behaviour and Relationships Policy	Supports emotional safety, regulation and positive learning behaviours
Staff Wellbeing Policy	Promotes staff understanding and sustainable approaches to supporting pupils
Equality and Diversity Policy	Ensures all pupils are supported fairly and without discrimination
EHCP Policy / Procedures (where applicable)	Supports individual targets and provision planning
Occupational Therapy or Therapeutic Guidance (where applicable)	Supports specialist recommendations relating to motor development, sensory needs and recording approaches

Consistent implementation across these policies supports pupils in developing increasingly successful approaches to recording, enabling greater confidence, independence and participation across all areas of school life.

