

ST MARY'S CE (A) FIRST SCHOOL POLICY DOCUMENT FOR HANDWRITING

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns. Handwriting skills should be taught regularly and systematically from printed writing in EYFS moving to cursive writing beginning in Year 1.

Each child is encouraged and supported to achieve spiritually, socially and academically, within the Christian church school ethos of love and respect for all. We ensure we teach in a sensitive and positive way, showing kindness and respect, as the Good Samaritan would.

Aims

At St Mary's our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in accordance with St Mary's chosen font.
- Develop flow and speed.
- Eventually produce the letters automatically and in their independent writing.

Teaching and Learning

- Children in EYFS will be taught printed letter formation using Twinkl Phonics. They should be taught handwriting at least once a week, and incorrect letter formation should be addressed as part of everyday marking.
- Children should experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across the Nursery and School.
- Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line and be given support in finding a comfortable grip.
- Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly.
- Encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting.
- Shown how to be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- Encouraged use their skills with confidence and pride in real life situations.

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

Early Years

Children take part in activities to develop their fine and gross motor-skills and recognition of patterns, for example, to form letters using their index finger in sand or using paint. Children should begin to learn how to correctly hold a pencil, then how to use a pencil, and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters most of which are correctly formed. Children will be shown pre-cursive handwriting. They should be given the opportunities to develop their handwriting to their full potential. Pencil grips will be provided for children who need help with the tripod grip.

Key Stage 1

Children in Year 1 will begin writing cursively, starting all letters from the bottom line. The chosen font is provided in our appendix, and guidance for teaching is to be found in "The Handwriting File" on the shared drive. Children will continue to develop fine and gross motor-skills with a range of multi-sensory activities. Handwriting should be discussed within and linked to phonics sessions. Teachers and support staff continue to guide children on how to write letters correctly, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip. Children should now be leaving spaces between words accurately. Teacher marking of lessons in all subject areas will address letter formation difficulties, with opportunities for the children to practice as part of their editing process. By the end of Key Stage 1, children will be able to write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and correct spacing between words

Key Stage 2

During this stage, the children continue to have direct teaching and regular practice of handwriting. We aim for them to develop a clear, fluent style of continuous cursive handwriting by the end of Year 4. Handwriting pens will be awarded to children whose handwriting is neat and joined correctly in all subject areas.

Capital letters - Capital letters stand alone and are not joined to the next letter. Children must practice starting sentences and writing names using a capital letter and not joining the subsequent letter. This should be modelled by the teacher in all subject areas.

Inclusion

Fine Motor difficulties - The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and provision will be made for this in their Learning Passports. Teachers of children, whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills, should liaise with the SENCO to develop a programme designed for the individual child. Handwriting lines should be drawn into exercise books if children persistently find it hard to form letters the correct size.

Provision for left-handed children

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- paper should be positioned to the left for right-handed pupils and to the right for left-handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case;
- pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision;
- pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space;
- extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.
- Teachers are aware of the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

Assessment

A uniformed handwriting style should be consistent throughout the school; this will be evident on display boards and in book scrutinies. Letter formation will be assessed during assessment weeks and audits/records kept of those needing support. These records will be passed on to the child's next teacher at the end of the year.

The Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are made aware of our agreed handwriting style and encouraged to practice this with their children at home.

Resources

Resources are available on the shared system in the folder 'Handwriting File.' Children should have access to displays or table top resources which show our handwriting style.

Written - December 2024

Review: December 2026