

## **St Mary's First School Handwriting Policy**

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 through cursive font.

### **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.

In order to achieve these aims, the following principles are followed:

### **Teaching and Learning**

- Children should be taught handwriting at least once a week, and it should be used by teachers when writing on the interactive white board in all subject areas.
- 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 how to write cursively. They should be given the opportunities to develop their handwriting to their full potential at that age.

### ***Key Stage 1***

Children in Key Stage 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. 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 and by the end of Year 4. Handwriting pens will be awarded to children whose handwriting is neat and joined correctly in all subject areas.

### **Provision for left-handed children**

At least 10% of the population are left-handed, the majority of whom are boys. 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.

### **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**

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 Individual Education Plans [I.E.P.'s]. 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.

### **Assessment**

A uniformed handwriting style should be consistent throughout the school; this will be evident on display boards and in book scrutinies. Handwriting is currently assessed using the school's "Focus" assessment .

### **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.

Review Date:....January 2020