



Policy:	Handwriting
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There have been no changes to this policy

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Proposed annual review authority:	Headteacher
Policy Section:	Curriculum

Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." (Luke 18:16)

This policy is based upon our Christian values of thankfulness, respect, honesty, love and resilience.

## **Introduction**

At St Mary's CE Primary school, we believe that good handwriting is essential to our children's educational achievement. Our main aim is that handwriting becomes an automatic process, which frees pupils to focus on the content of the writing. Handwriting skills are taught daily and systematically through the use of a continuous cursive handwriting scheme. This practice has been carefully planned and implemented so that all children can achieve a good standard of writing.

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. Joined up handwriting is taught with a sequential and progressive approach from Year 2. Handwriting should be taught regularly and Teachers and TAs are expected to model the handwriting style.

## **Aims**

We aim to provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in handwriting.

We aim for children to:

- produce clear, concise, legible handwriting
- develop flow and speed
- develop accuracy and fluency
- recognise that handwriting is a form of communication and as such should be considered important in order for it to be effective
- take pride in their work.

The school will support these aims by

- promoting continuity, coherence and progression across the school
- displaying neatly presented work around the school as a model of excellence for others to aspire to.

## **Teaching and Learning**

- Handwriting is timetabled in short, regular sessions.
- Handwriting is taught daily and systematically in classes, groups or individually as appropriate.
- Patterns are used initially, by writing with a variety of tools and using multi-sensory methods to help free-flowing hand motions.
- Correct pencil hold and letter formation are taught from the beginning and handwriting is frequently linked with spelling.
- Display writing throughout the school includes continuous cursive writing and computer-generated cursive writing.
- Handwriting is taught progressively throughout each year group so that children are constantly improving and developing their handwriting skills.

### The Continuous Cursive Script

As recommended by the British Dyslexia Association, we adopt a continuous cursive style of writing. It's most important feature is that each letter is formed without taking the pencil off the paper. Consequently, each word is formed in one, flowing movement.

The key advantages of this script:

- By making each letter in one movement, children's hands develop a 'physical memory' of it, making it easier to produce the correct shape;
- The starting and finishing points for all Continuous Cursive letters are easier to remember (they all start on the line and, other than a few exceptions, all finish on the line)
- As letters and words flow from left to right, children are less likely to reverse letters which are typically difficult (ie b/d, p/q)
- There is a clear distinction between capital letters and lower case;
- The transition to joined writing is simple and occurs sooner, allowing children to concentrate on the composition of the writing, rather than thinking how to form the letters.
- Words written in one set of movement, without the pen being taken off the paper, helps the motor memory store spellings.
- The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling.  
(The British Dyslexia Association)

Effective teaching of handwriting can only be achieved through modelling. Teachers must demonstrate letter formation and joins regularly and children must practise by carefully copying and repeating. During discrete handwriting, it is important to observe children writing to ensure they are forming letters correctly.

### Continuous Cursive Handwriting

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj  
Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt  
Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Long letters	l t i u j y
Curly letters and numbers	c a g q o e f s d 0 6 8 9
Up and over letters and numbers	b h k m n p r 2 3 5
Zig –zag letters and numbers	v w x z 1 4 7

The quick brown fox jumps  
over the lazy dog. Baa baa  
black sheep, have you any  
wool? Yes sir, yes sir, three  
bags full.

### **Delivering National Curriculum Expectations**

EYFS: Good handwriting relies on hand eye coordination and secure motor control. Before children can learn to hold a pencil correctly and use it to form letters they first need to master gross motor skills. Therefore, during Nursery and Reception (Foundation Stage), we will provide physical activities to develop these, such as climbing, balancing, dancing, crawling through tunnels, carrying objects, reaching up, down and across for things.

Fine motor skills are those that involve a refined use of the small muscles which control the hand, fingers and thumb. Little hands need to develop dexterity and strength. Children will develop and then refine their actions. They will begin to understand how to control their hands and finally, fine finger movements to make marks. We encourage children to participate in ‘funky finger’ (fine motor) activities to develop the muscles in their fingers. Funky finger activities include playdough (pinching), threading, building towers, elastic bands, nuts & bolts and jigsaws. Using ‘froggy fingers’ (pincer/tripod grip) will help move the pencil efficiently and improve their mark making.

Displays in Nursery and Reception should begin to model the cursive script when written labels are used.

Our Nursery and Reception class at St. Mary's, use our own Floppy Phonics themed rhymes to help with the formation of letters. We concentrate on the basic formation before introducing the cursive style in Year 1.

Sound Rhyme

a	All around the apple and add a flick (apple)
b	Down the bone, up and around the ball (bone and ball)
c	Curl around the cat ( cat)
d	Around the head, up and down the paw (dog)
e	Lift off the top and scoop out the egg (egg)
f	Curl, then down the fish and draw the fin (fish)
g	Go around the gate, down and into the grass (gate)
h	Down the hat and up over the top (hat)
i	Down his body, and a dot for his head (insect)
j	Down the jug, curl and dot the top (jug)
k	Down the key, lock it and flick (key)
l	Down the lion and curl the tail (lion)
m	Down the man, over the man, over the man (man)
n	Down the net and up over the net (net)
o	All around the octopus (octopus)
p	Down the handle, up and around the pan (pan)
q	Around the crown, down to the earring and flick the nose (queen)
r	Down past the eye and up over the ears (rabbit)
s	Slide down the sun (sun)
t	Down the teddy, across the teddy (teddy)
u	Down, under and up to the top, down and flick (umbrella)
v	Slide down the van and slide up the van (van)
w	Down the web, up the web, go down and up (web)
x	Across the fox ear to paw, cross the fox nose to tail (fox)
y	Under the yo-yo and down to curl the string (yo-yo)
z	Zig – zag- zig (zip)

Year 1: Pupils should be taught to:

- Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil correctly
- Form correctly-orientated lower-case letters, capital letters and digits 0-9

Year 2: Pupils should be taught to:

- Form lower-case letters of correct size/proportion
- Start using diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters and understand which letters are best left unjoined
- Write capital letters of the correct size, orientation and proportion
- Use correct spacing between letters and words

From Year 1 pre-cursive handwriting is taught leading to continuous cursive in every class from Year 2 onwards.

Children consolidate their letter formation and it is expected that some children will be joining their handwriting by the end of Year 1. This process continues throughout Year 2 whereby most children should be joining their handwriting using the continuous cursive script.

Year 3 and 4: Pupils should be taught to:

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters
- Know which letters are best left unjoined
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting

Years 5 and 6: Pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed
- Choose the writing implement best suited to the task

Children are expected to write with a pen from Year 5 and continue to develop their cursive style. In Year 5 and 6 children are encouraged to develop appropriate styles for speed and fluency.

### **Handwriting and Reading**

In school, children are exposed to both cursive and print styles as well as commercial print. They develop awareness for reading in print and writing in cursive side by side in their learning. This awareness is prompted around the classrooms and school by teachers' lettering, labels on displays/teaching aids, alphabets on tables, teachers' modelling of writing.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Children with special needs in handwriting will be helped by appropriate teacher intervention. The particular needs of left-handed children will always be taken into consideration. Additional support and advice is available from our Special Education Needs Coordinator.

### **Left-handed children**

Each left-handed child is identified and closely monitored by the class teacher to ensure success.

The following guidelines are useful to help left-handed children:

- the writing surface and chair should be suitable for the child's height
- the child should sit towards the left of their partner leaving plenty of space for writing on the left side of his/her mid line (this allows maximum space for arm movement)
- the paper should be supported with the right hand
- the writing forearm should be parallel with the paper edge as the child writes
- the writing tool should be held sufficiently far from its point to ensure the child can see what he/she is writing.

### **The use of ICT**

All teachers use the Interactive Whiteboard in direct teaching. Use of the lined writing templates are an essential tool for learning as the teacher can demonstrate the correct letter formation and joins clearly to the whole class at once if necessary. Software is available on all computers to allow staff and children to type sentences and words using the cursive script.

### **Displays**

All displays in school will be expected to demonstrate the cursive style for headers, information and labels when they are handwritten in KS1 and for all computer generated and handwritten headers, information and labels in KS2.

### **Monitoring**

Handwriting will be monitored as an ongoing process both through the handwriting scheme and throughout the curriculum. Children in EYFS are assessed on an ongoing basis through observation and handwriting forms part of this. Within KS1 and KS2, handwriting is monitored during work scrutinies by the English leads and is assessed as part of the children's writing assessments.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

### **Equal Opportunities**

St Mary's CE Primary School is committed to valuing diversity and equality of opportunity. We aim to create and promote an environment in which pupils, parents and staff are treated fairly and with respect, and feel able to contribute to the best of their abilities.

We aim to consider cultural background, gender and SEN, both in our teaching attitudes and in the published materials we use with our pupils. As a staff we endeavour to provide equal opportunities for all pupils in Literacy.

We believe that it is our mission at St Mary's CE Primary School, to enable pupils to meet confidently the challenges of adulthood, by striving for academic success and developing strong relationships based on the Gospel values of trust and respect and our school Christian values of Thankfulness, Respect, Resilience, Honesty and Love.

