

# St Augustine's Catholic Primary School



## Handwriting Policy

Updated: January 2024

Agreed by Governors: Spring 2024

To be reviewed: January 2026

## SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

**Our Catholic school is united in God's love, enabling everyone to grow in love for one another and to develop in faith. We strive for all children to achieve their best by becoming active and confident learners in a nurturing and caring environment. We guide everyone to shine in their own unique way.**

**'Unique and United in God's love. We let our light shine'**

### Aim.

Our aim is that the children will be able to write clearly, fluently and quickly so that they can cope with the everyday demands of life and school.

The children are taught the conventional ways of forming letter shapes, both lower case and capitals, through purposeful guided practice in order to foster a comfortable and legible handwriting style.

### In Early Years the children will be taught to;

- ✓ Hold the pencil correctly
- ✓ Develop the muscles in their arms ready for writing

### In Key Stage 1 the children will be taught to:

- ✓ Write from left to right and from top to bottom
- ✓ Form letters correctly
- ✓ Be consistent with the size and shape of letters and the spacing of letters and words
- ✓ Have the correct pencil grip
- ✓ Find a convenient position for their page
- ✓ Have the correct posture and position

### In Key Stage 2 the development of the above mentioned skills will result in:

- ✓ A clear and fluent style of handwriting
- ✓ A neat legible hand for finished pieces of work
- ✓ A faster script for note taking and personal writing
- ✓ Ability to print in capitals for labelling maps and diagrams

### General guidance.

Posture is extremely important when children are writing. They should sit comfortably on the front half of their chair with two feet on the floor – this allows them to lean into their desk and ensures good balance.

The back should be relatively straight – the children's eyes should be approximately 30 cms from their paper.

The left hand (for a right-handed child) or the right hand (for a left-handed child) should be used to hold their paper, under no circumstances should the hand be used to support the head.

They should be encouraged to find a comfortable orientation for their paper, and to have their fingers about 1.5 cms from the point of their pencil.

A good pencil grip should be encouraged. A poor grip can sometimes be corrected by holding the pen/pencil between the first two fingers. Whatever grip is favoured the children should use their fore finger to control their pen/pencil (not their thumb).

### Progression.

#### Stage 1 – Printed Script

- Holds a writing implement with a good grip and makes marks for meaning
- Use of pre-handwriting patterns, using a variety of implements and paper sizes, to facilitate the development of both gross and fine motor skills
- The focus is upon correct letter formation as this is very important. All letters will be addressed during this year. Ligatures will be taught from the start.

#### Stage 2

- Joins will be taught/reinforced during this stage in accordance with the school style (see Appendix 1)
- When letters are formed correctly, children will begin practising joining their letters in line with the phonics programme where appropriate, children will practise the joins in their handwriting books. It is anticipated that most children will be writing in a fully cursive style by the end of Key Stage 1
- The teaching of letter formation and joins (leaders in and out) will be in Year 1. Year 2 is when the children will use joined cursive writing.

#### Key Stage 2

Once the script has been established the teaching of handwriting will continue with active teaching lessons from class teachers and individual practise time. In these lessons the class teacher will use a wide range of teaching strategies including:

Direction

Demonstration

Modelling

Scaffolding

Explanation

#### Stage 3.

- Continue to practise joined writing to aid presentation, legibility and the finer points of the joins. Correct letter formation and joins will be actively taught. Children will write in a cursive script for all pieces of written work. Special Handwriting Pencils will be awarded in KS1 for those who constantly show neat handwriting. Handwriting pens (e.g. Berol) will be introduced for children who receive Pen Licence in KS2, i.e. when the class teacher feels that fluency, letter formation and joins are secure and fluid. These are to be agreed with Mrs Walsh in KS1 and Mrs Patel in KS2.

#### Stage 4.

- Handwriting practice will continue. Children will need reminders about letter formation and joins and any inconsistencies of style should be worked on. It is recognised that older children like to develop a more personal style. However, this must be consistent with the school's fully cursive style. Children will need to practise different presentation styles – varying heights, use of capitals etc. Pencil and Pen Licences can be revoked after a warning if the standard of handwriting dips.

#### Handwriting Implements.

- Foundation – Variety of suitable implements e.g. crayons, large felt pens, fine motor skills work, large & fine movements developed
- Infants – HB pencils only.
- Years 3 / 4 – HB pencils. Introduce handwriting pens for those with a Pen Licence. No ink in Maths books. Children to use gel pens, Berol handwriting pens, and roller ball pens, but not biros.
- Years 5 / 6 – HB pencils unless they have received their Pen Licence. No biros to be used. In Maths, HB pencils are to be used for writing, drawings and labelling.
- A supply of pens will be kept in the classrooms. Children who persistently lose their pens will be asked to purchase replacements.

#### Handwriting Exercise Books.

- Foundation – the children will practise regularly on a variety of materials appropriate to their needs.
- Infants and Juniors – the children will be provided with a separate book for their handwriting practice as required.

#### Handwriting resources

- Handwriting scheme
- Handwriting for Windows disk – to allow worksheets, labels and resources to be made – this has been installed on all class computers in the fonts selection
- ICT apps and online resources

#### Regularity of Lessons.

- Foundation – to practise manipulative skills each day (including fine and gross motor skills). Formation practice included in daily phonic session also.
- Other classes – once a week but more if individual pupils need extra support/ practice

#### Teachers' Handwriting.

Each teacher's handwriting is the model for the children. All staff should aim to produce quality writing at all times. It is pointless to provide the children with handwriting lessons if the white board model does not match the required style – it should at all times.

A copy of the handwriting scheme should be on display in all classrooms.

### Support Staff.

Support staff should use the recommended script when writing in the children's books so that the models offered to the children are consistent.

### Worksheets / Whiteboard work.

The children should learn to read a range of text types including cursive script from the outset. The work class teachers present to infant children should be mainly in a clear, fully cursive script.

### Left handed children

Left-handed children need particular sensitivity. This statement applies not only to the use of the correct style but occasionally to the appropriate use of a lined book for a few children. Left handed children should always be seated on the left of right handed children to avoid clashing elbows when they are writing. They should be encouraged to find a comfortable orientation for their paper, and to have their fingers about 1.5 cms from the point of their pencil.

We aim to provide a left-handed support group where possible with left handed staff to model good practice.

### SEND

Teachers will need to be sensitive to the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and to genuine developmental needs.

Pupils with specific learning difficulties may find cursive handwriting useful because the writing implement stays on the page for the whole of the word.

However, every child's individual needs will be taken into account and the need for self-expression encouraged if a child finds cursive writing difficult.

### Marking and feedback

Feedback should be given as soon as possible to the children.

Marking should encourage the pupils and give guidance for future improvement.

Ticks and written comments should be clear, with errors indicated.

Displays of children's work showing good handwriting and presentation should be a focus in all classrooms.

### Handwriting across the curriculum

It is important to ensure that appropriate attention to handwriting and presentation takes place in other areas of the curriculum. For example, during Science, pupils may be labelling a diagram or writing a report in Art and Design, they may be designing packaging where a cursive script would not be appropriate. In this sense other subjects can be used outside the explicit teaching of handwriting to give opportunities for reinforcing key knowledge, skills and understanding with regard to handwriting and presentation.

## Planning

Handwriting targets should be clearly detailed on class teachers' plans. Timetable should show clearly the time allowance expected in this policy document.

## Teaching of lower case letters

These strings of letters may be taught in any order, however, it is important that children learn the formation of all the letters on each line in succession as progression is built in.

Letters are taught in the sequence recommended by Phonic Bugs (Letters and Sounds) phonic approach:

### **Phase 2**

S,a,t,p,i,n,m,d,g,o,c,k, ck,e,u,r,h,b,f,ff,l,ll,ss

### **Phase 3**

J,v,w,x,y,z,zz,qu

c a d q g o

l u l t

m n h

e

r

k

j y

b v w

p

s

f

x

z

### Pupils new to the school

If a pupil arrives at Saint Augustine's with a legible, well formed cursive style of handwriting they should be encouraged to continue in that style.

Children arriving using printed letters will be taught a cursive script if appropriate. Children arriving from overseas who do not speak English or who are unfamiliar with the alphabet script will be taught to write in cursive handwriting in line with policy requirements when class teachers judge that they are ready.

# St Augustine's School Handwriting Policy

## Cursive Alphabet

The school agreed handwriting style includes:

- closed 'p' and 'b'
- looped 'f' at the front
- 's' shaped with joins
- straight 'v' and 'w'
- curved x
- curly z
- All letters join except capital letters

A a aaaa

B b bbbb

C c cccc

D d dddd

E e eeee

F f ffff

G g gggg

H h hhhh

I i iiiii

J j jjjj

K k kkkk

L l lllll

M m mmmm

N n nnnn

O o ooooo

P p ppppp

Q q qqqqq

R r rrrrr

S s ssssss

T t ttttt

U u uuuuu

V v vvvvv

W w wwww

X x xxxxx

Y y yyyyy

Z z zzzzz