



St Mary & St Andrew's Catholic Primary School

Handwriting Policy

At St Mary and St Andrew's Catholic Primary School, we believe that fluent, legible and expressive handwriting is a fundamental skill that supports children's academic success and communication. Handwriting reflects pride in work and forms part of our commitment to excellence in all areas of learning. This policy outlines a research-based approach to teaching handwriting and ensures consistency and progression across all year groups.

Intent:

- To develop confident, legible and fluent handwriting.
- To explicitly teach and practise pre-cursive handwriting from EYFS, transitioning to joined handwriting by the end of Key Stage 1.
- To embed handwriting skills through purposeful practice in spelling lessons, teacher modelling and interventions in Key Stage 2.
- To provide targeted support for children who require additional help to meet handwriting objectives.
- To encourage pride and high standards of presentation in written work.

Research-Based Principles:

Our approach is informed by research that emphasises:

- The importance of fine motor skill development in early years as a foundation for handwriting.
- Explicit and systematic teaching of handwriting to develop muscle memory and fluency.
- Regular practice to reinforce learning and maintain skills.
- Integration of handwriting into meaningful contexts such as writing tasks and spelling lessons.

Handwriting Progression and Expectations:

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

In EYFS, we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework to ensure children develop the fine motor skills needed for handwriting. Children are taught to:

- Develop hand-eye coordination, pencil grip and control through engaging fine motor activities.
- Recognise and form letters correctly using pre-cursive letter shapes.
- Begin to use pre-cursive handwriting with entry and exit strokes to prepare for joining letters in Key Stage 1 in the summer term, if appropriate.

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

In Key Stage 1, we explicitly teach handwriting through:

- Regular, focused handwriting sessions using pre-cursive and cursive scripts.
- Development of consistent letter size, shape and spacing.
- Introduction to joined handwriting in Year 1, aiming for fluency by the end of Year 2.

KS1 National Curriculum Objectives:

- Year 1: Form lower-case letters correctly, with clear entry and exit strokes; begin to form capital letters and digits 0-9.
- Year 2: Write capital letters, lower-case letters and numbers of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another; use spacing between words; develop joining techniques.

Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4)

In LKS2, children consolidate and practise their handwriting joins through:

- Spelling lessons that reinforce accurate and fluent handwriting.
- Teacher modelling of neat joined handwriting across all subjects.
- Targeted interventions for children needing additional support to meet age-appropriate expectations.

LKS2 National Curriculum Objectives (Lower Key Stage 2):

- Write legibly with consistent letter size and spacing.
- Maintain joined handwriting during independent writing tasks.
- Develop speed and fluency in writing.

Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6)

In UKS2, children refine and perfect their handwriting. We focus on:

- Encouraging individual styles that remain fluent, legible and joined.
- Developing handwriting speed for extended writing tasks.
- Supporting high standards of presentation in all written work.

UKS2 National Curriculum Objectives:

- Maintain legible, fluent and joined handwriting in all writing tasks.
- Write with increasing speed and adaptability using appropriate styles for different tasks and audiences.
- Self-assess and improve presentation and handwriting as needed.

Pen Licence in UKS2

In Upper Key Stage 2, children can earn a 'pen licence', which allows them to write in pen in all subjects, excluding maths. A pen licence is awarded at the teacher's discretion to pupils who consistently demonstrate:

- Fluent, legible and joined handwriting.
- Accurate spelling.
- High standards of presentation across their work in all subjects.

Why We Use a Pen Licence:

- It motivates children to take pride in their handwriting.
- It reinforces the importance of consistent presentation.
- It helps children develop responsibility for the quality of their written work.
- It provides a sense of achievement and progression.

Teaching Strategies

1. Explicit Teaching: Handwriting is taught in focused lessons where children practise key skills and refine techniques.
2. Integration across the Curriculum: Teachers model neat handwriting in all subjects to reinforce high expectations.
3. Individual Support: Targeted interventions support children who require additional help to meet handwriting objectives.

4. Feedback and Assessment: Teachers provide regular verbal feedback on handwriting and presentation, praising progress and addressing areas for improvement.

Assessment and Monitoring

- Handwriting is assessed regularly as part of writing and presentation assessments.
- Progress is monitored through book-looks, lesson drop-ins and verbal feedback.
- Interventions are planned for children not meeting age-related expectations. Children should only access interventions for a maximum of six weeks at a time.

Accessibility and Support Resources

We are committed to ensuring all children can achieve their full potential in handwriting. Adaptations are made for children with specific needs, including the use of specialist resources and tailored interventions. These include:

- Different-sized pencils and grips to support fine motor skills,
- Various types of scissors to develop hand strength and coordination,
- Slant boards to support posture and handwriting position,
- Alternative paper formats (e.g., wider lines or coloured paper) for children who benefit from additional visual support.

Next review: January 2028