



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Handwriting Policy

2025-6

Rationale

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. Handwriting skills should be taught regularly and systematically throughout the school.

Aims

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School our aims in teaching handwriting are:

- To enable children to write in a consistent, well presented and legible format.
- To have a consistent approach across Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and 2 when teaching handwriting.
- To ensure that from Year 1 to the end of Year 6 children are using cursive writing.
- To make sure all children know the difference between lower and upper case letters.
- To ensure the skills taught at Key Stage 1 continue to develop at Key Stage 2.
- To adopt a consistent approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.

Children will be taught to:

- Hold a pencil correctly and adopt the correct posture when writing
- Write from left to right and from top to bottom of the page
- Start and finish letters correctly in a cursive style from Yr1
- Form regularly sized and shaped letters
- Use regular spacing between letters and words
- Take a pride in their written work and the overall presentation.

Handwriting Yr1 Pupils should be taught to:

- Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- Form capital letters and form digits 0-9
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (ie letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

Handwriting Yr2 Pupils should be taught to:

- Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

Handwriting Yr 3 and Yr4 Pupils should be taught to:

use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, [for example, by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch]

Handwriting and presentation Yr5 and Yr6 Pupils should be taught to:

Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters; choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task

In the Foundation stage children:

Are encouraged to use a range of mark-making tools and different media. ☑ Given opportunities to record in all activities – indoors and outdoors.

Experiences are planned to develop children's fine and gross motor skills; this will prepare them to become confident writers.

Letter formation is linked to phonic teaching sessions.

Children learn to print so they can read what they write.

At Key Stage 1 children:

Continue using the school scheme and are given support to develop fine and gross motor skills as appropriate.

Handwriting is taught daily as children develop understanding of letter formations. They are taught to join letters when they can achieve correct letter formation.

Handwriting is also linked to phonic and spelling work.

When they can write legibly and quickly, they are taught to a joined cursive style.

Lessons should be short, pacey with a clear purpose.

Throughout Key Stage 2:

Handwriting is taught in three to four sessions each week.

Teachers model an even cursive style in all sessions but will focus teaching on a range of letter formations and joins during taught handwriting sessions.

Children are encouraged to achieve a high standard of presentation with written work as this allows writers to communicate effectively with their readers.

Children are encouraged to write with pencils for everyday work but are allowed to use pen when they have developed a fluent cursive, joined handwriting style and receive their Pen License!

Handwriting sessions will link closely with learning in spelling, grammar and phonics.

Provision for left-handed children:

At least 10% of the population are left-handed, and our 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.

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 Learning Plans [I. L.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.

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.