

Policy for Handwriting

At St. Mary's CE VA Primary School we recognise the importance of teaching our pupils to develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style using continuous cursive letters that leads to producing letters and words fluently and accurately in independent writing. Despite the increased use of computers for writing, we believe that the skill of handwriting remains important in education, employment and everyday life. We see handwriting as a basic skill that influences the quality of children's work across the curriculum and we aim to make handwriting an automatic process that doesn't hinder children's creativity.

Continuous Cursive Handwriting

Continuous cursive handwriting is formed without taking the pencil off the paper – and consequently, each word is formed in one flowing movement. We have chosen to teach cursive handwriting because cursive...

- Helps prevent reversals and confusion of letters including lower and upper case.
- Enhances spelling ability through the movement of the hand, developing a 'physical memory' of letters and words.
- Develops visual, spacial and co-ordination skills through fluent movement.
- Improves reading skills through the reading of whole words as opposed to just one letter at a time.
- Encourages children to use spaces accurately in their writing.
- Enables children to write more quickly.

Continuous cursive writing also supports children with dyslexia and is recommended by the British Dyslexia Association. 'Typically when children first learn to write they are taught to 'print' their letters then they moved on to 'joined up' writing at a later stage. For children with dyslexia, learning two styles of handwriting can add an extra layer of difficulty and cause confusion. It is therefore much more helpful if a young child can learn to use a single system of handwriting right from the start.' *British Dyslexia Association website: <http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk>.*

Progression in handwriting

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| EYFS | Pupils are taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop their fine motor skills and tripod pencil grip through daily 'funky finger' activities. • Sit correctly at the table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly. • Produce a straight controlled line which supports letter formation • Write the letters a – z and digits 0-9 • Write letters using the correct sequence of movements using the rhymes from R,W, Inc. • Join pairs or groups of letters (special friends from Read, Write Inc) using joined cursive style. • Practise their handwriting skills. | |
| Year 1 | Pupils are taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit correctly at the table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly • Form letters using the correct pre cursive script | Handwriting requires frequent and discrete direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the pencil |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form capital letters • Form digits 0-9 • To practise handwriting in conjunction with phonic and spelling patterns. • To practise writing on lines with ascenders and descenders correctly placed. | <p>should not be too large for a young child's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the child to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided.</p> |
| Year 2 | <p>Pupils are taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form lower case letters of the correct size relative to one another using pre cursive and cursive script • Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters. • 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. • To practise handwriting in conjunction with phonic and spelling patterns. • To practise writing on lines with ascenders and descenders correctly placed | <p>Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.</p> |
| Year 3 and 4 | <p>Pupils are taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required. • Increase the legibility consistency and quality of their handwriting, for example by ensuring that the downstrokes of the letters are parallel and equidistant; that the lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch. | <p>Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.</p> |
| Year 5 and 6 | <p>Pupils are taught to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required. • Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task. | <p>Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters for example filling in a form.</p> |

The following table shows the letter shapes we teach linked to the letter formation descriptions from Read, Write, Inc.

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| a | Zoom! Around the apple and down the leaf |
| b | Zoom! Down the laces to the heel and around the toe, flick |
| c | Zoom! Curl around the caterpillar |
| d | Zoom! Around the dinosaur's bottom, up his tall neck, and down to his feet |
| e | Zoom! Lift off the top and scoop out the egg |
| f | Zoom! Down the stem and across the leaves |
| g | Zoom! Around her face, down her hair and give her a curl |
| h | Zoom! Down the head to his hooves, and over his back |
| i | Zoom! Down the body, a dot for his head |
| j | Zoom! Down his body, curl and dot for his head |
| k | Zoom! Down his body, loop his tail and his leg |
| l | Zoom! Down the long leg |
| m | Zoom! Down Maisie, mountain, mountain |
| n | Zoom! Down Nobby and over his net |
| o | Zoom! All around the orange, flick |
| p | Zoom! Down the pirate's plait, up and around his face, flick |

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| q u | Zoom! Around the Queen's head, up past her earring, down her hair, flick |
| r | Zoom! Down the robot's back and curl over his arm |
| s | Zoom! Slither down the snake, flick |
| t | Zoom! Down the tower, across the tower |
| u | Zoom! Down and under the umbrella, down to the puddle |
| v | Zoom! Down a wing, up a wing, flick. |
| w | Zoom! Down, up, down, up, flick. |
| x | Zoom! Down the arm and leg, repeat the other side (doesn't join on exit) |
| y | Zoom! Down a horn, up a horn and loop under the yak's head |
| z | Zoom! Zig, zag, zig |

Handwriting is taught at least three times a week at St. Mary's. It is taught as a whole class lesson with children working on differentiated activities. Children work in their handwriting books and children who require further practice will be given individual adult support.

When writing for children, for example in modelled writing and marking, staff will use the agreed cursive script. (JoinitC1).

Children are taught good posture and correct grip work alongside the script and regular checks are made during writing activities to ensure children maintain this.

Children are taught pre cursive writing in the foundation stage and Key Stage 1 moving onto joined cursive when they are ready.

Pen Licences

Children are encouraged to start handwriting using a soft pencil. As their handwriting improves, becoming fluent and consistently joined, a handwriting pen licence will be issued and children can use a handwriting pen.

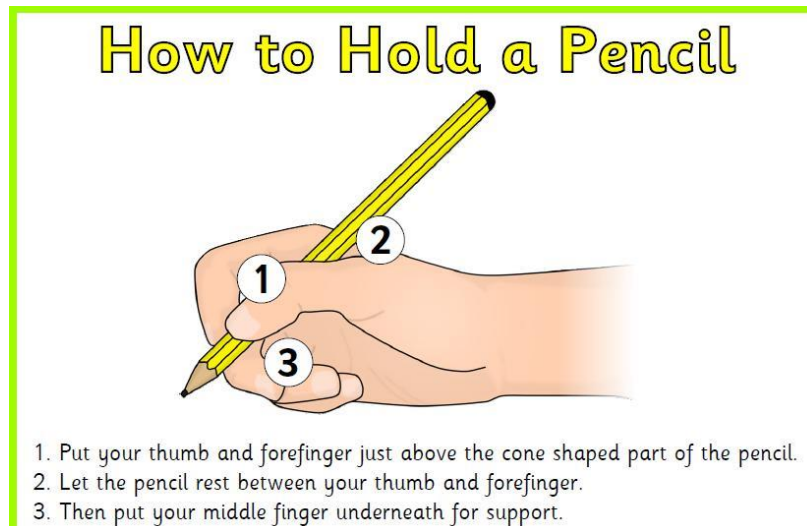
Left Handed Children

Left handed children may find it difficult to follow right handed teachers as they demonstrate letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left handers on an individual or group basis.

- Left handed children should sit to the left of a right handed child so they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the book to their left side and slanted (downhill)
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision
- Extra practice with left to right activities may be necessary before children write left to right automatically.

Children with SEND or additional needs

Some children who find handwriting particularly challenging for whatever reason may need additional support to target their handwriting. In these instances additional activities for practice at home and at school will be provided with extra one to one support in the classroom.



Rules for good posture

1. Both feet flat on the floor
2. Elbows off the edge of the desk
3. Sit back in your chair
4. Shoulders slightly forward
5. Proper desk height.