

Handwriting Policy



St Mary's Church of England Primary School
Established 1845

Principles

"Handwriting is a tool that has to work. It must be comfortable, fast and legible."

Angela Webb, Chair, National Handwriting Association (2016- 2018)

Aims

As a school our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will:

- develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line
- learn the conventional ways of forming letter shapes, both lower and upper case
- understand the importance of clear presentation in order to communicate meaning
- take pride in the presentation of their work, developing handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement
- be able to write quickly to express themselves creatively and imaginatively
- develop a fluent, comfortable, legible, joined handwriting style

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

In the Early Years Foundation Stage children will be encouraged to:

- develop fine and gross motor control
- use a range of mark making tools such as pencils, pens crayons, chalks and pastels.
- create patterns

When the children have developed appropriate motor control, they will be gradually introduced to letter formation. The pupils will learn how to write their names using a capital letters at the beginning.

During Year R children will:

- learn letter formation alongside phonics (Using Bug Club)
- learn to use a pencil, and hold it effectively to form letters
- develop an effective pencil grip.

Children will usually be introduced to letter formation in these sequences:

c a d g q e o s (anti-clockwise letters round based on the c shape)

b p m n h r k (down and retrace upwards and clockwise)

i t l (downward direction)

v w x z (zig zag or diagonal letters)

f y j u (down and then round)

By Year 1 most children should be able to:

write most letters, correctly formed and orientated, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip

write with spaces between words

develop speed and stamina in writing

At Year Two most children will:

write legibly, using appropriate upper and lower-case letters

leave appropriate spacing within and between words

form ascenders and descenders consistently and correctly

practise writing at speed

form and use the four basic handwriting joins

produce writing which sits on the line most of the time.

At Year Three most children will:

Develop joined handwriting

Further develop writing speed and stamina

Produce writing which sits on the line

At Year Four most children will write with:

joined handwriting most of the time

ascenders and descenders in the correct places and on the lines

fluency

In Years Five and Six most children will write with:

consistent size and letter spacing

a cursive, legible, individual style

an ink pen is sometimes used for presentation copies

Teaching and Learning

At St Mary's we teach the Nelson Handwriting font style. We teach handwriting as a specific skill in discrete lessons focusing each time on a particular aspect of writing. There after children are encouraged to implement their skills. Handwriting exercises are completed in the usual literacy books to encourage the children to maintain high standards of presentation in their other written work.

Handwriting and spelling are often taught at the same time, one reinforcing the other. Throughout the school, teachers also make cross curricular links with class topics.

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 Programmes of Learning. Appropriate provision will be made for the specific needs of Left handed pupils

Assessment and recording

Teachers assess handwriting when assessing writing, using the 2014 National Curriculum criteria and the non-statutory guidance. (See Appendix A) Teachers regularly set handwriting targets for individual pupils. As teachers assess written work, future handwriting targets may be noted for individuals.

Review

The policy will be reviewed every three years by the Teaching and Learning Committee.

Date Implemented:	May 2023
Approved by:	Rev. Matthew Burns (Chair of Governors)
Person Responsible:	Peter Kyles (Principal)
Reviewed date:	May 2026

Appendix A

Statutory requirements

Handwriting

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.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided.

Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.

Statutory requirements

Handwriting

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
- form digits 0-9
- understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

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.

Statutory requirements

Handwriting

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 downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

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.

Statutory requirements

Handwriting and presentation

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.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that 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, for filling in a form.