



St. Matthew's C.E. Primary School **Handwriting and Presentation Policy**

Values

Handwriting is skill, which like reading and spelling affects written communication across the curriculum. Given effective teaching, handwriting can be mastered by most pupils', enabling them, with practice, to go on to develop a faster and more mature style. **Handwriting is a movement skill. This is why children need to practise handwriting movements correctly and often.**

The first handwriting lessons are vital and the most important issue is to ensure that the children we teach learn to form the letters of the alphabet with the correct sequence of strokes from the beginning. Children who have been allowed to invent their own ways of forming letters will find it harder to change the longer they are allowed to persist. Unless these habits are 'unlearned' (often at great effort since the movement memory is very retentive and will tend to revert to old habits), it will be impossible for them to learn a fluent, joined hand. **The correct formation of all letters needs to become automatic and may require a lot of practice.**

Suzanne Tiburtius of the National Handwriting Association

Overall Aims:

In accordance with the National Curriculum 2014,

- To raise standards in writing across the school.
- To have a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting across both Key Stage One and Two when teaching both handwriting and in the presentation of work.
- To establish and maintain the link between handwriting and spelling across Key Stage One and Two.
- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays/resources
- To enable each child to develop a personal style of handwriting that is:
 - neat, with correctly formed letters
 - legible
 - fluent and cursive
- To enable the children to have an awareness of the necessity to have more than one handwriting style for different purposes and audiences.

The English Programmes of Study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

Requirements for Years 1- 6 in handwriting

| Programme of study (statutory requirements) | Notes and guidance (non-statutory) |
|---|---|
| Key Stage 1: Year 1 Pupils' writing during year 1 will generally develop at a slower pace than their reading. This is because they need to encode the sounds they hear in words (spelling skills), develop the physical skill needed for handwriting, and learn how to organise their ideas in writing. | |
| Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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. | 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 |
| Key Stage 1: Year 2 In writing, pupils at the beginning of year 2 ... should be able to form individual letters correctly, so establishing good handwriting habits from the beginning. | |
| Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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, | 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. |

Lower Key Stage 2 Years 3-4

Joined handwriting should be the norm; pupils should be able to use it fast enough to keep pace with what they want to say.

- 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, e.g. 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 (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.

Upper Key Stage 2 – Years 5-6

Pupils should be able to write down their ideas quickly.
By the end of year 6, pupils' reading and writing should be sufficiently fluent and effortless for them to manage the general demands of the curriculum in year 7

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, as part of their personal style, whether or not to join specific letters
- choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters).

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 (e.g. quick notes or a final handwritten version). They should also be taught to use an unjoined style (e.g. for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra) and capital letters (e.g. for filling in a form).

These correct habits are encouraged, reinforced and built upon throughout the school, not only when lessons concentrate on specific handwriting skills but through written work across the Curriculum.

Provision and Practice

It is important that children take the necessary time and care with their handwriting in the early stages, so that correct habits are formed. Our school script, for both upper and lower case letters, has been decided on by using the New National Curriculum/Developing Early Writing (DEW) guidance.

Correct letter/number formation at KS1 will be taught by teaching in 'letter shape families'

Rec/Year 1 – Linking letters to sounds:

- **s, a, t, p, i, n**

'straight down', 'back up again', 'over the hill',

Shape Families: **the four groups are:**

- **Letter l (long ladder) – b, i, j, l, t, u (v, w with rounded bases) – down and off in one direction**
- **Letter r (one-armed robot) – b, h, k, m, n, p, r (numbers 2,3,5 – clockwise direction) – down and retrace upwards**
- **Letter c (curly caterpillar) – c, a, d, e, g, o, f, s; numbers 0, 6, 8, 9; - anti-clockwise**
- **Zigzag letters – k, v, w, x, y, z; numbers 1, 4, 7**

The teacher follows **the English Programme of Study**. This sets out objectives for teaching as well as the progression in handwriting, from Foundation to Year 6.

At St Matthew's, we believe that as soon as children in KS1 can form all the letters correctly and consistently, they need to begin to develop their joined handwriting and to use it across the curriculum. This joined-up handwriting style, with a focus on speed and fluency, will continue to be developed throughout Key Stage 2.

Links with handwriting and Spelling

Developing a fluent joined style is an important part of learning to spell and the teaching of spelling and handwriting should be closely linked.

- Handwriting sessions. As children are taught the basic joins, they can practise joining digraphs as one joined unit. This can develop into practising letter strings and complete words linked to the specific focus for teaching in the spelling unit (e.g. joining w-a to support work on the w-special).
- Common-exception words/Y3-4 and Year 5-6 words can be demonstrated and practised as joined units e.g. *the, was, said*).
- Spelling sessions. The children need to see the target words written in joined script as frequently as possible and practice writing words in dictations, using joined script themselves.

At St Matthew's, we use Letters and Sounds and Babcock No Nonsense Spelling, to support the teaching of spelling and handwriting.

Organisation and Methodology

We aim to develop handwriting through systematic and regular practice. The use of our agreed script (see above), ensures a consistency of style and approach. **This will be displayed in all classrooms.**

There is a minimum concentrated period of handwriting practice per week:

- **Foundation** - Daily Handwriting - linked to the teaching of Letters and Sounds Phonics Programme
- **Year 1/2** - as above: including the use of Babcock (No Nonsense Spelling) patterns/word lists as appropriate
- **Year 3/4** - 5 session per week - as above including a focus on speed
- **Year 5/6** – 5 session per week - as above

During discrete handwriting sessions, all children who are being taught the skills of letter formation, sizing, legibility and joins are expected to use a lined handwriting book. Once the children have developed a joined style, which is fluent and accurate, they will be expected to practice at the back of their English book.

Throughout the Foundation Stage, children are introduced to the relationship between letter symbols and letter sounds. Good starting points for writing are the child's own name, labelling familiar objects all using the agreed script formation. The class teacher uses a variety of appropriate resources e.g., alphabet friezes,

practice sheets, tactile letters, chunky pencils, various felts, crayons, letters in 'air', tracing in sand etc. In the Foundation Stage children are introduced to letters and letter sounds using Letters and Sounds resources. Writing patterns are practised in order to encourage a flowing style, and when children are ready, they are taught to produce letters which start on the line and end in flicks.

Year 1 - children are taught to produce letters which start on the line and finish with flicks to encourage a flowing style. Children are taught to join as soon as the class teacher feels that he/she is ready (**the sooner the better, so as to enforce good habits early on**).

Year 2 - children begin to join letters appropriately with horizontal and diagonal joins to letters with and without ascenders. Letter formation using agreed script is reinforced in family groups (see appendix 1). Children are taught to form letters correctly, starting on the line and with a flick from the outset. Children should be split into ability groups practising letter formation of individual letters, moving to groups of letters, then to short words and beyond as necessary. As children become more familiar with the correct formation of individual letters, they are encouraged to consider size and position (with regard to lines) of letters. The teaching of capital letters becomes more pertinent as year 1 progresses and their writing development as a whole, demands knowledge of simple punctuation. Ascenders and descenders are pointed out in relation to positioning of letters on lines. Lined paper is used for most written work.

Year 3/4 - children to revise and consolidate the four main joins in handwriting and any appropriate points from above.

Year 5/6 - children to use a joined style, developing fluency, accuracy and speed in handwriting. Children to know when to use a clear, neat hand for finished presented work, as opposed to informal writing for rough drafting, notes etc.

Other opportunities to develop handwriting:

- Phonics work
- Shared/Guided writing.
- Combining handwriting and spelling practice.
- Writing across other areas of the curriculum.

Display work such as:

- Headings
- labels
- explanatory texts
- captions

All of the work undertaken by the children from Reception to Year 2 will be written in pencil. However:

- children should have the opportunity to write with a variety of pencils and felt-tipped pens, though the latter are used at the teacher's discretion
- Throughout Year 3, handwriting pens are introduced to children who are developing a fluent joined style. These continue to be used until Year 6.
- **Children must only use the specified handwriting pens. There is no need for them to bring in/use pens from home.**

Teaching Points

When demonstrating patterns or letters, which are made in the air, it is important for the teacher to face away from the children, so that the children are 'seeing' the correct letter formation. Any visual demonstration should be accompanied by oral instructions, e.g. over the top, round, up, down and flick.

The teacher should ensure:

- the child is sitting comfortably and at a table of a suitable height
- the free arm is resting on the tabletop holding the paper/book steady
- the child is holding the pencil/pen correctly
- left-handed children are seated with other left-handed children or at the left-hand side of the writing table (see appendix 1)
- a note is kept of all left-handed children so that the above is facilitated

Children should be encouraged to develop an awareness of space and layout from the earliest stages, thinking about the placing of headings, margins and the look of the text on the page. Later, during Key Stage

2, pupils should consider the effect of different computer-generated font styles and layout formats to create special effects for different purposes.

General

When marking children's work and writing comments in books, teachers adopt the style in which the children are taught to write. **Issues concerning progression in handwriting will be tackled quickly by the teacher, rather than commented on repeatedly in marking.**

It is expected that children use the same handwriting in all their writing across the curriculum – not just as an isolated subject during the handwriting lesson.

Display writing throughout the school will include print, the taught handwriting style and computer-generated writing.

Assessment of Handwriting

Assessment will be continual. It will be based on the class teacher observing in the early stages how the children are forming their letters and later, by monitoring handwriting style and presentation.

Periodic assessment will be required, to ensure children are making progress against national agreed criteria. Appropriate action will be taken for individuals/groups of children who need further support.

Presentation

At St Matthew's, presentation is an important aspect of children's learning. The quality of this presentation reflects the effort and pride a child has taken in their work. Children should all be aware of the standards expected of them and know that this will apply whichever teacher is taking the class. It will ensure expectations are raised by all staff and engender in all children a sense of pride in how their work should look. We recognise that how work is presented will also depend on the on the purpose and audience of the work being produced.

It is important to have a consistent approach to presentation throughout all the subjects in the curriculum. Therefore it is a requirement that:

- All work should be dated. Number date for Maths. Written date for all other subjects.
- Date should be underlined using a pencil and ruler.
- The lesson focus should be written under the date.
- All books should have a margin. Only a question number or teacher comment should be written in the margin.
- A line should be drawn under completed work.
- In maths books there should be one digit per square - or not - at the discretion of the teacher/depending on the work. The size of the square should be appropriate to the age of the pupils.
- All work is completed in pencil from Foundation Stage. Once children have developed a cursive, fluent handwriting style, all written work is completed in pen. The expectation is that all children will be writing in pen by the end of Year 3.
- Mistakes are crossed out once using a pencil and ruler. **NO rubber should be used in books by pupils** but may be used by the teacher, at their discretion.
- **There should be NO marks on the cover of books.** Pupils should be encouraged not to leave large spaces or blank pages, for no obvious reason.
- All children should be taught how to produce neat, labeled diagrams/maps using pencils.
- High standards of presentation are expected and are relevant to the age/ability of the pupil. Presentation skills can be taught discretely.

Only the highest standards of handwriting and presentation will be accepted at St Matthew's C.E. Primary School.

SEN

In the case of specific difficulties, it may be necessary for the class teacher, in conjunction with the English Lead/SENCO, to devise an individual programme of work. This should accommodate the child's need and facilitate progress towards agreed objectives.

Equal Opportunities

We provide handwriting/presentation opportunities for all pupils in which equality of opportunity is supported. This is irrespective of gender, race, creed and disability, taking into account the individual needs of all children.

The KS1/2 Leads/Assistant Heads and SLT will monitor the implementation of this policy on a regular basis.

Updated by Sonia Thompson - DHT/English Lead – July 2016

Date agreed by the Governing Body: September 2016

Policy to be reviewed in July 2019

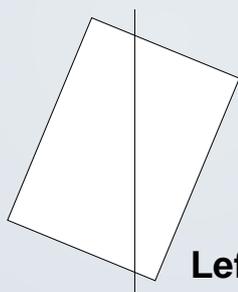
Appendix 1:

Form and use the four basic handwriting joins

- diagonal joins to letters without ascenders,
e.g. ***ai, ar, un;***
- horizontal joins to letters without ascenders,
e.g. ***ou, vi, wi;***
- Diagonal joins with ascenders,
e.g. ***ab, ul, it;***
- horizontal joins to letters with ascenders,
e.g. ***ol, wh, ot;***

Positioning of paper

Right-handers



Left handers

