



St Mary's RC Primary School
Handwriting Policy and Guidelines

At St Mary's we are committed to ensuring that all children are able to communicate through text using a fluent and legible style of handwriting.

The named person within school who takes overall responsibility for handwriting is Mrs J Robinson.

St Mary's operates a whole school approach to handwriting so that teaching is consistent and all teachers are giving the same advice to parents, visiting teachers and supply teachers.

To fully enforce the whole school approach at St Marys' we:

- Send home examples of the handwriting scheme to all new parents and families.
- Engage in staff training and staff participate alongside children in handwriting sessions.
- Hold half termly staff meetings to moderate handwriting and to identify difficulties and successes.
- Provide the handwriting examples and policy as an appendix to the Staff Handbook.

Aims of the Policy

1. To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
2. To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by;
 - Having a correct pencil grip
 - Knowing that all letters start from the top, except d and e which start in the middle
 - Forming all letters correctly
 - Knowing the size and orientation of letters

Teaching time

KS1

Children receive daily practice incorporated into their daily Phonics session. The pupils also receive a taught, whole class session once a week.

KS2

At the start of KS2 children receive a taught, whole class session once a week followed by at least three practice sessions incorporated into daily Guided Reading or Writing.

As pupils progress through KS2 children who find handwriting difficult will be targeted through the school's Provision Mapping.

Handwriting Model

St Mary's RC Primary School uses the **Nelson Thornes Handwriting Scheme** with the following letter formation

Lower case letters

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Capitals

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Numbers

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

The Four Joins

1. to letters without ascenders
2. to letters with ascenders
3. horizontal joins
4. horizontal joins to letters with ascenders

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

The break letters (letters that aren't joined from) are:

b g j p q x y z s

NB children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units BEFORE learning to join.

Paper

All pupils will be given a handwriting book to practise in. This will have guidelines within it to support them in gauging letter size.

Children write within A4 exercise books with line spacing in accordance with their age.

Handwriting size should decrease as the child's age increases.

All children should be allowed to use unlined paper *from time to time* so that they can practise to apply skills and consider issues of presentation and aesthetics.

Teaching Sequence

- Hand and finger strength
- Physical preparation
- Tracing
- Patterns
- Independence

For the order of teaching letters and joins see Appendix 1

Techniques for teaching letter formation

- Model good handwriting all the time
- Demonstrate
- Talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Children form letters in the air
- Finger trace over tactile letters
- Draw round templates
- Write in sand with finger or stick
- Write with chalk on chalkboard
- Wax resist letters
- Form letters with pegs on pegboard
- Form letters with beads
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the back of another person

Getting ready to write -

Seating and posture

- Chair and table should be at a comfortable height
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Encourage children to sit up straight and not slouch
- The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor
- Tables should be free of clutter
- Rooms should be well lit
- Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners

Pencil grip and Implements Used

- Children should write with a HB pencil until introduced to pen. Pencils should be reasonably sharp.
- A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil
- At the start of the Autumn Term of Year 5 pupils will be given a blue ink pen.
- Correcting fluid is not allowed, one line through a word will indicate a mistake.

For right handers

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point
- The paper should be placed to the right tilted slightly to the left
- Use the left hand to steady the paper

For left handers

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger
- Hold about 3cm from the tip
- The hand should be kept below the writing line
- The paper should be tilted slightly to the right at about 20 - 30°
- Use the right hand to steady the paper

NB It is very important that a right handed child is NOT seated on the left hand side of a left handed child as their elbows will collide! *Please refer to Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p10 for further information*

Assessment

All Staff should monitor children's writing and presentation in books regularly (at least termly). The following should be considered:

- Is the writing generally legible?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with the Level Descriptors in the National Curriculum?

Individual assessment

Children should be observed as they write during handwriting lessons – the teacher must circulate, monitor and intervene. Teachers also need to monitor and mark whole pieces of writing. The following should be considered:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movement when forming and or joining letters?
- Are any letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
- Is the writing easily legible?
- Is the pupil's handwriting development in line with the Level Descriptors in the National Curriculum?

School will build a portfolio of handwriting exemplars.

Links to spelling

Linking handwriting with spelling is one of the most powerful ways of developing the visual memory. Handwriting should be practised using letters, blends, strings or digraphs so that patterns are internalised.

Remember to use **Look – Say – Cover – Write – Check**

The child:

Looks at the word carefully

Says the word

Covers the word so that it can't be seen

Writes the whole word from memory

Checks the word is written correctly

If not, repeat.

Policy on Correcting Handwriting

Please see school policy on Marking and Feedback for school's ethos on marking.

At the start of all sessions teachers will set high expectations for good handwriting and presentation.

On occasion teachers will use their judgement and sometimes ask children to repeat small sections of their work if the handwriting is not of the child's usual best standard.

Resources

Nelson Thornes Handwriting Teacher's Book

Nelson Thornes Handwriting Units on Interactive White Boards

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be evaluated annually by all Staff.

September 2019

Appendix 1

Order of teaching

Single letters (YR and Y1)

- c a d g q o
- e s f
- i l t
- u y j k
- r n m
- h b p
- v w x z

Supporting activities

- tracing patterns
- tracing
- copying over (letters, numbers and words)
- copying under (letters, numbers and words)

Joins Y2 (going into Y3)

Introduction of the four handwriting joins

- First join; un um ig id ed eg an or ing ung
- Second join; ch sh th tl ll ill sli slu ck ack st sti ink unk
- Third join; od pg re ve oon oom
- Fourth join; wl vl of ff fl flo
- Practise the break letters b p g q y j z
- Practise capital letters

Supporting activities

- Match and copy captions
- Trace and copy patterns
- Copy words
- Copy sentences
- Write out menu
- Copy poem

- Alphabetical ordering

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p30 for learning outcomes and further information

Joins Y3 (going into Y4)

Revision

- Practise the break letters b p g q y j z
- Practise capital letters

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p30 for learning outcomes and further information

Further practise of the four handwriting joins

- in ine
- ut ute
- ve vi
- ok oh
- sh as es (practising two ways of joining the letter s)
- ri ru ry (practising joining from the letter r)
- oa ad as (practising joining to and from the letter a)
- ee ea ed (practising joining from the letter e)
- ow ov ox (practising joining from the letter o)
- ky hy ly (practising joining to the letter y)
- ha ta fa (practising joining to the letter a)
- od oo og (practising joining from the letter o)
- er ir ur (practising joining to the letter r)
- ai al ay
- o you oi
- re oe fe (practising the horizontal join to the letter e)
- fu wu vu (practising the horizontal join to the letter u)
- ot ol ok (practising joining to ascenders)
- ai al ow ol (practising all the joins)

Supporting activities

- copy words
- copy sentences
- copy poems
- match questions to answers
- copy jokes
- make and copy compound words

See *Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book* p54 for learning outcomes and further information

Year 4

- ning ping ting
- oc od oo
- ake ome are
- fla flo fle
- who wha whe
- ie in il
- inly ky ny
- ap ar an
- ick uck ack
- practise writing with a slope
- he
- we
- re
- fte fir fin
- wra wri kni (silent letters)
- ii ll tt rr nn mm cc oo dd ss ff ee
- ew ev ex (spacing)
- th ht fl (proportions)
- ac ag af
- Capital letters
- Decorated capital letters

- Practising with punctuation ! ? – “ “ , ‘

Supporting activities

- Copy words, sentences, poems
- Trace and copy
- Copy tongue twisters
- Copy instructions

See *Nelson Handwriting Teacher’s Book* p78 for learning outcomes and further information

Years 5 and 6

- Practise consistency and size of letters
- Practising using a diagonal joining line
- Practising leaving an equal space between letters
- Practising joining to the letter y
- Practising using a horizontal joining line
- Practising the size and height of letters
- Practising joining from the letter i
- Practising joining to and from the letter v
- Practising consistency in forming and joining letters
- Practise speedwriting
- Practising crossing double tt on completing the week
- Practising joining to and from the letter e
- Practising joining to and from the letter w
- Practising printing
- Practising drafting and editing
- Practising joining to the letter t

See *Nelson Handwriting Teacher’s Book* p102 for learning outcomes, activities and further information

- Ensuring letters are consistent in height and size
- Practising with punctuation

- Practising break letters
- Practising joining from the letter m
- Ensuring the ascender on the letter t is the correct height
- Practising spacing within words
- Developing fluency
- Practising printing
- Practising forming and joining the letter f
- Practising presentation
- Practising printing
- Practising speed writing
- Revision
- Looking at different handwriting styles

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p126 for learning outcomes, activities and further information

- Revision of all skills

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p150 for learning outcomes, activities and further information.

Policy Date – September 2021



All are welcome here to walk with Jesus as we love, learn and flourish.