



St Wilfrid's Catholic Academy

Handwriting Policy

Aim

At St. Wilfrid's Catholic Academy School, joined up handwriting is taught with a sequential and progressive approach. Children are introduced to this style from early years as it is considered to be the most natural development of children's earliest attempts at writing. Teachers and TAs are expected to model the handwriting style. Handwriting is a taught skill and it is important that teachers are seen to put a high value on teaching and sustaining good handwriting. We believe that children's self-esteem and pride in their work can be raised by good quality presentation. Our aim in this policy is to teach children correct letter formation, joining and good handwriting habits, so that they can write fluently and legibly and by the end of KS2 to begin to develop a distinctive style.

Each aim is considered equally important:

- To teach children to write with a flowing hand which is legible, swift and to a high standard of presentation.
- To enable children to develop their own style of handwriting as they progress through Key Stage 2.
- To support the development of correct spelling and to aid in the elimination of letter reversals by the learning of word patterns and the correct joining of letters.
- To ensure that children of differing abilities are provided with appropriate and achievable goals.
- To assist children in taking pride with the presentation of their work.
- To teach correct letter formation.
- To appreciate handwriting as an art form.
- To display excellent examples of handwriting in every classroom and around the school.

Teaching and Organisation

We seek to fulfil the requirements of the New National Curriculum and EYFS Curriculum. Planning is based on objectives taken from these frameworks, which ensures a progressive structure. In their short term planning teachers outline specific objectives for groups of children and individuals in order to ensure progress. Handwriting is taught regularly and dependent upon the need of the class or group. Teachers resources include photocopied sheets and interactive whiteboard resources in FS, KS1 and KS2.

During lessons we ensure that children sit, position their paper / book and hold their pen/pencil correctly using their other hand to hold their work firmly. Chair height is checked to ensure it is correct.

It is important that in the Early Years and at Key Stage 1 children are observed closely during the lesson to ensure that letter formation is correct.

In addition to specific handwriting lessons children are expected to apply their learning in their exercise books and to show care for the presentation of their work.

It is important for teachers across the school to set a good example to children by modelling good handwriting when writing on the board, IWB or when marking children's books. Teachers strive to model the cursive style and use the appropriate joins, demonstrating the fluency and legibility of the style.

CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

The school recommendations for the progression in handwriting are:

Form letters controlling size, shape and left to right orientation whilst spacing words appropriately

1. Begin to join letters in a word.
2. Employ a fluent, legible style.
3. Use fluent, legible handwriting for different purposes and set out completed work giving attention to layout and presentation.
4. Maintain consistent fluency and legibility in handwriting across a range of tasks.

EYFS Curriculum expectations (Assessed at end of Reception)

Nursery/ Reception	Fine Motor Skills • Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases. • Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery. • Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing. Writing • Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. • Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters. • Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.
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National Curriculum expectations are as follows:

Year One	• 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' (ie letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

Year Two	• 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
Year Three and Four	• 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, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch]
Year Five and Six	• 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

Early Years Foundation Stage

During their Nursery and Reception years, the children are given a wide range of opportunities to develop an understanding that writing conveys meaning, e.g. books, story-telling, signs, labels etc.

A range of physical based activities are planned to support the development of gross motor movements of different types of letters. Children develop fine motor skills to prepare them for writing through activities such as threading, 'Dough Disco' and tapping pins. Children experience a wide range of handwriting-related skills, e.g. letter and number formation in sand trays, through tracing, use of ribbons, with chalk, felt tips, pencils, crayons, writing over and under teacher models in various forms, word building with magnetic letters and pattern making in various media. For those children that are ready for handwriting practice, large pencils can be used in conjunction with lined/unlined paper. Using 'pick and flick', we will ensure that each child holds the pencil comfortably and appropriately. The pencil should be held between the thumb and first finger and should rest on the middle finger. Pencil grips for correction of pencil hold are also used where appropriate.

As an introduction to the whole school scheme, handwriting patterns are practised with wide-lined paper and thinner pencils being introduced where appropriate. Teachers model correct letter formation and children practise this alongside their Phonics programme.

Correction of letter formation and pencil grip takes place on an individual basis. Children practise name writing in non-joined style. On name cards, the starting and finishing point for letter formation is labelled.

Key Stage 1

Children work on handwriting skills daily and in a variety of activities, e.g. writing in books, multi-sensory approaches, through phonic work and writing in their learning journals and duplicated practice worksheets. Wide-lined exercise books, handwriting paper and standard-size pencils are used. Children are encouraged to use joined-up handwriting in their daily work when all letter formation follows the correct orientation. The correction of pencil grip and letter formation is dealt with on an individual basis. Children are encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work. In addition, handwriting is often practised through the teaching and learning of phonics.

Key Stage 2

At this stage, when children maintain consistent fluency and legibility in handwriting across a range of tasks, they will be given a blue handwriting pen to work in (from the English lead) and they will be awarded a 'Pen Licence' card in the celebration assembly.

This is to really raise the profile of handwriting across the school and celebrate success.

Biros and gel pens are not permitted. Children will present their displayed work in blue pen. Handwriting practise takes place dependent on the need of the class, group or individual and the correction of mistakes is dealt with on an individual basis. Children are encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work.

Pencils should continue to be used throughout the school for underlining dates and titles, notes, drafting, all maths work, diagrams, charts and maps. Children should be encouraged to always write with a sharp pencil and to use rubbers to correct mistakes, or cross through with a single line in pencil, if they are writing in pen.

Continuity and Progression

Across the Early Years Foundation Stage Children will have:

- Opportunities to watch adults writing and for children to write for themselves;
- Attempt writing for various purposes using features of different forms such as lists, stories and instructions;
- Write their own names and other writing forms such as labels and captions and begin to form simple sentences, sometimes using punctuation;
- Use their phonic knowledge to write simple regular words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words;
- Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters and numbers, most of which are correctly formed.

By the end of Reception year children will have been introduced to:

- a correct, comfortable and efficient pencil grip
- producing a controlled line which supports letter formation
- writing letters using the correct sequence of movements
- pattern-making and letter/number formation
- sequence of single letter formation is taught via Bug Club Phonics.
- children are taught to write the letters as they learn the sound.

Once the children are secure with letter sounds, this sequence is followed to support children with letter formation if further support is required with their handwriting.

1. The Stick letters

i, l, t, j,

2. The anticlockwise letters

c, o, a, d, g, q, e, s, f, y, u

3. The clockwise letters

r, n, m, b, h, p,

4. The diagonal letters

v, w, x, k, z

Letter and Number Formation in EYFS

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

twinkl.com

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Pre-cursive letter formation, once secure with single letter formation

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

Key Stage 1 and 2

Stage 1:

- Develop a correct, comfortable and efficient pencil grip.
- To form lower case letters correctly as above with a flick.
- To practise handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing, ensuring correct letter orientation, formation and proportion.

Stage 2:

- To begin using and practising 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 to letters with ascenders, e.g. ab, ul, it

- horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ol, wh, ot

Stage 3:

- To ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and the spacing between letters and words.
- To build up handwriting speed, fluency and legibility through practice.

Stage 4:

- To use joined cursive handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required.

Equal Opportunities:

Equality of opportunity is a high priority and reference to the School's Equal Opportunity Policies will provide examples of how this is achieved.

Inclusion:

More able children and children with Special Educational Needs are supported in their Handwriting work, with reference to their need. Teachers will put in place suitable interventions and resources e.g. sloping boards and dycem matting, for children who need additional support. An individual handwriting observation sheet can be completed to identify specific needs for children who require further support with their handwriting. The outcomes of this will inform the interventions required for that pupil or group of pupils.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is the role of the English, EYFS and Phonics subject leaders to monitor the teaching and learning of handwriting throughout the school. This is done through regular work sampling, analysis of assessment pieces and lesson observations. Feedback from this monitoring is used to inform staff of necessary developments in order to raise standards. Monitoring is supported by the Principal and SLT.

Reviewed by:

Date: December 2025

Next Review: December 2028