

# Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

*To live, love and learn joyfully in the family of Christ*



Handwriting Policy

2025

## **Intent**

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns. The development of this fluid style when mastered allows children to apply their energy into the content of their writing as opposed to the formation of the letters themselves. Handwriting skills are taught regularly and systematically throughout the school.

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School our aims in teaching handwriting are:

- To teach correct letter formations
- To teach children to write with a flowing hand that is legible, swift and pleasant to look at.
- To have a consistent approach across Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and 2 when teaching handwriting.
- To ensure that from the Summer Term of Year 1 to the end of Year 6 children are using a cursive writing style.
- 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 through 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 display excellent examples of handwriting in every classroom and around the school.
- 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

## **Implementation**

We seek to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum 2014 and EYFS Curriculum 2021. Planning is based on objectives taken from these, 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 at least weekly through spelling and English lessons. It is taught discretely throughout school, where appropriate.

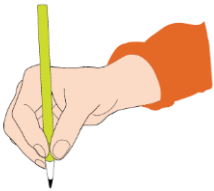
During lessons we ensure that children sit appropriately, position their paper/book, and hold their pen/pencil correctly using their other hand to hold their work firmly. Chair height is checked to ensure it is correct. It is important that in the Early Years and at Key Stage 1 children are observed 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. Regular opportunities for children to produce presentation work are also planned, for example in topic books or for display. Staff model the handwriting style and use the appropriate joins, demonstrating the fluency and legibility of the style.

Children are expected to show care for their workbooks, present their work with care, date work and underline where necessary.

### Children will be taught to:

#### *hold a pencil correctly*

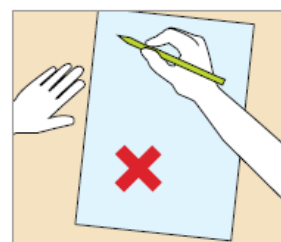
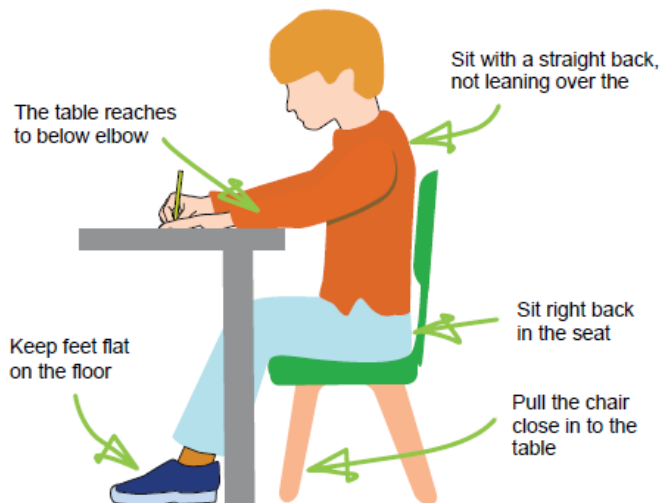


Children should be encouraged to use a tripod pencil grip, where the pencil is gripped between the index finger and the thumb. The middle finger is then used to support the underside of the pencil as shown below.

#### *and adopt the correct posture when writing*

Children should be encouraged to adopt the correct writing position as shown below.

#### SITTING POSITION



Paper position for right-handed children

*write from left to right and from top to bottom of the page*

- start and finish letters correctly in a cursive style (from the Spring Term of year 1 onwards)
- form regularly sized and shaped letters
- use regular spacing between letters and words
- take a pride in their written work and the overall presentation.
- The cursive script agreed at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School is shown below.



## Key Features

- The handwriting style is known as ‘continuous cursive handwriting’ which means each letter is formed without taking the pencil off the paper, so each word is formed in one fluid movement.
- There is a clear distinction between capital and lower-case letters.
- The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed, spelling and fluency.
- All letters start on the line.
- The majority of letters finish on the line with a ‘flick’.
- The pencil does not leave the paper until the word is complete.
- ‘ts’ and ‘xs’ are crossed and ‘l’s’ are dotted when the whole word is complete.
- The alphabet is organised into stroke-related groups for easy teaching.

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

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

l, l, t, u, j, y

v, w, x, z

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum (2014) which details specific requirements and expectations for the teaching of handwriting from Year 1 to Year 6. The EYFS requirements and expectations for handwriting are detailed in the Physical Development and Literacy section of the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)

## Foundation Stage

Children should be given opportunities to:

- Develop their fine motor skills so that they can use a range of tools competently, safely and confidently – pencils for drawing and writing, paintbrushes for painting.
- Use their core muscle strength to achieve a good posture when sitting at a table.
- Develop the foundations of a handwriting style which is fast, accurate and efficient.
- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using a tripod grip in almost all cases.
- Begin to show accuracy and care in their work Form lower case and capital letters mostly correctly.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

## Key Stage 1

All children should receive a daily handwriting session for 10-15mins.

**Year 1** During the Autumn Term cursive handwriting will be introduced starting with beginning each letter from the line and going up individually before then moving on to joining them together to form words. Handwriting can also be linked to phonic development with the introduction of new sounds written in a cursive style during phonics lessons. Our aim is that by the end of year one children will be forming all letters correctly and joining in a cursive script.

**Year 2** Adults will model cursive writing from the beginning of the year. The children will be encouraged to continue the development of basic joins which they should transfer into all their independent writing. They will also continue to link their handwriting to their phonic development as they learn to write new sounds using a cursive writing style.

## Key Stage 2

Children should receive regular handwriting sessions for a minimum of 10mins.

**Year 3** Children will continue to develop their use of cursive handwriting building upon the skills they have developed in Key stage 1.

## Years 4,5 and 6

Children will be expected to use cursive handwriting in all areas of the curriculum. Those children whose writing is neat and legible may be encouraged to use handwriting pens.

If any child is not on track to reach these expectations, they will receive additional support through small group intervention groups.

**In September, all pupils are reminded of the expectations of handwriting and are given extra sessions to recap and practice previous skills.**

## Handwriting Equipment

Children will use line sizes appropriate to their stage in writing. During handwriting sessions specific handwriting paper with 3 lines may be used. Children will also practise using the use the same sized lines as their other curricula books so that children skills are transferable and that the same expectation of handwriting is set across all writing.

Children should use a sharp HB pencil for all handwriting initially. When in KS2 teachers assess that children are competent at joined handwriting they should be allowed to use a black handwriting pen. (No biro type pens will be used.)

In some cases, depending on the specific needs of individual, children may use pencil grips or pens with a specific grip.

## Provision for Left-Handed Children

At least 10% of the population are left-handed.

All teachers are aware of the left-handed pupils in their class and make appropriate provision:

- Paper should be positioned to the left for right-handed pupils and to the right for left handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case;
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision;
- pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space;
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to right automatically.

Teachers are aware of the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers try to demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

## 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, either in intervention groups or in Individual Education Plans [I.E.P's]. Teachers of children, whose handwriting is limited, by problems with

fine motor skills, should liaise with the SENDCO to develop a programme designed for the individual child

## Assessment

A uniformed handwriting style should be consistent throughout the school; this will be evident on display boards and monitored through lesson observations and book scrutiny.

## Marking and Feedback

We emphasise constructive feedback. In our feedback policy we have clear systems for feedback of children's work which is adhered to throughout our handwriting sessions. In handwriting sessions and during independent work it is important that incorrect pencil grip and incorrect letter formation are identified and corrected at the point it occurs. Children use our 'Writing Non-negotiables', which includes references to the expectations of handwriting to ensure that their work meets expectations.

## Impact

Handwriting is a skill which affects written communication across the curriculum. Our aim is that children are able to write with ease, speed and legibility.

By year 6 children will use cursive handwriting using flowing movements and patterns. This handwriting should be demonstrated in all writing across the curriculum. Writing should be fluid in style to allow children to apply their energy into the content of their writing as opposed to the formation of the letters themselves.