St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Handwriting Policy

We grow and learn in the footsteps of Jesus

Approved by	
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Date:	18.01.2023
Proposed review date[2]:	January 2024
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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. Handwriting skills should be taught regularly and systematically. There is high expectations for handwriting across the curriculum.

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

Early Years Children take part in a range of activities through planned adult led activities as well as child-initiated activities within strategically planned continuous provision for children's current developmental level to develop their fine and gross motor-skills both within the indoor and outdoor classroom provision. These start with pre-writing skills:

*Gross motor to develop core strength for sitting appropriately for writing – activities such as crawling, jumping, running, climbing, hanging by the arms and ball control.

*Fine manipulative – activities such as cutting, threading, modelling, hammering, participating in finger action rhymes, sticking, tracing.

*Perceptual – activities such as playing with shapes, construction and loose parts objects to match sort, create and recreate, as well as making representations of other things.

*Muscle strengthening in preparation for tripod grip – activities such as dough disco, using pegs, using water spray bottles and activities involving suing the pincer grip to pick up small objects with control.

When children are ready, usually in their Reception year, they are taught how to sit with the correct positioning and posture on a chair at a table to write and how to hold a pencil effectively to mark make, draw and write. Initially this is how to draw lines and circles following directional instructions, moving on to how to form lower case and then upper-case letters correctly using the Little Wandle mantras. Within EYFS we use the 'Baby Shark nip and flip' mantra to support development of correct pencil grip. This teaching is, again, through planned adult directed whole class, group and 1-1 teaching, as well as through child-initiated activities within strategically planned continuous provision – with adults teaching 'in the moment' where appropriate.

Children are given the opportunities to develop their handwriting to their full potential at that age.

Key Stage 1

Children will continue to develop fine and gross motor-skills with a range of multi-sensory activities. Handwriting should be discussed within and linked to phonics sessions. We will use the normal lined exercise books to practise handwriting and letter formation until children demonstrate that they are confident using the pre-cursive then continuous cursive style.

Children will be taught pre-cursive handwriting when they are ready in Year One (when the children are able to correctly form printed letters) and if children are proficient with this by Summer term in Year One then cursive joins can begin to be taught. Teachers and support staff continue to guide children on how to write letters correctly, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip. Children should now be leaving spaces between words accurately. By the end of Key Stage 1 children will be able to write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and correct spacing between words using a continuous cursive style.

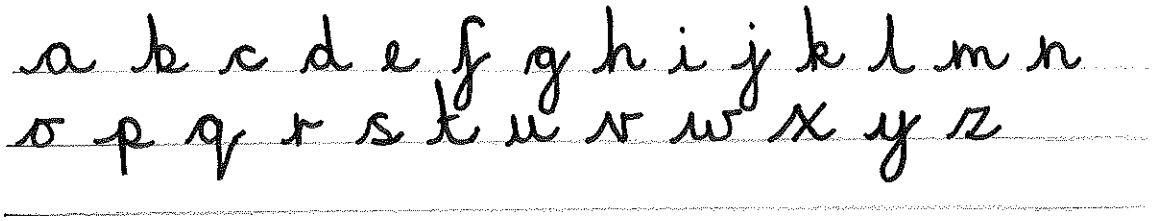
Precursive style

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 2

During this stage the children continue to have direct teaching and regular practice of handwriting in Year 3 and 4. We aim for them to develop a clear, fluent style and by the end of Year 6 be able to adapt their handwriting for the for different purposes, such as: a neat, legible hand for finished, presented work, a faster script for note making and the ability to print for labelling diagrams etc. If children are still having issues with their handwriting by the end of Year 4 they will have handwriting interventions in Year 5 and 6. Key Stage 2 will only use the Little Wandle mantras if the children are unable to form their letters correctly and are therefor unable to join.

By the end of Key Stage 2, the children are expected to use the continuous cursive looped style:



Capital letters

Capital letters stand alone and are not joined to the next letter. Children must practice starting sentences and writing names using a capital letter and not joining the subsequent letter. This should be modelled by the teacher during Literacy and Phonics sessions.

Provision for left-handed children

At least 10% of the population are left-handed, the majority of whom are boys. All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils 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 demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

The Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are made aware of our agreed handwriting style and encouraged to practice this with their children at home.

Resources

Resources are available on the staff shared system in the folder 'Handwriting' and on the Twinkl website. Our handwriting style should be displayed in every classroom and available on tables for children to refer to.

As a school we use the Little Wandle Mantras to ensure consistency across the school.

Intent, Implementation, Impact

Intent

Twinkl Handwriting offers a school-side consistent approach with a planned sequence of lessons to help teachers ensure they have progressively covered the skills required to meet the aims of the National Curriculum for writing transcription and the related Early Learning Goals.

Step 1 (Let's Get Ready to Write) of each Handwriting Help Card, available in every lower case letter pack, aims to help children to develop their fine and gross motor skills and pencil control as a precursor to effective handwriting: to show good control and coordination in large and small movements, to move confidently in a range of ways while safely negotiating space, to handle equipment and tools effectively and to safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques.

Steps 2 and 3 (Forming Letter Families and Positioning) aim to teach children the statutory objectives from the year 1 and year 2 curriculum: to sit correctly at a table, to hold a pencil comfortably and correctly, to begin to form lower case letters in the correct direction and of the correct size relative to one another, to start and finish letters in the right place, to form capital letters and the digits 0-9 of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters, to understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families', to start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and to use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Steps 4 and 5 (Joining Letters and Fluency, Style & Speed) teach the statutory skills from the year 2 – year 6 curriculum: to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters; to increase the legibility, fluency, consistency and quality of their handwriting; to ensure that their lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch; to write with increasing speed by choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters and to choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

The Twinkl Handwriting scheme intends to take all pupils on a journey to using fluent, speedy and joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. This, in turn, will help to support their composition and spelling.

Implementation

Following the programme allows subject leaders to feel confident about curriculum design and delivery throughout their whole educational setting; this is detailed in the Twinkl Handwriting progression map.

If implemented correctly, the detailed planning and progressive sequence of the programme assures subject quality, sufficient depth and coverage of skills and gives teachers the curriculum expertise to deliver effective writing transcription lessons. The scheme's supporting resources enable effective curriculum implementation and can be differentiated to meet all pupils' learning needs. Where gaps in pupils' skills are identified, the Twinkl Handwriting materials can also be used within intervention sessions to enhance pupils' capacity to access the full curriculum. Each lesson has built-in assessment opportunities, which give reliable snapshots of pupil progress. The scheme also offers more formal assessment materials as well as a handwriting coverage and assessment pack to track progress over the longer term.

Impact

The impact of using the full range of Twinkl Handwriting resources, including display materials, will be seen across the school with an increase in the profile of handwriting. Following the scheme, gives schools a consistent approach where handwriting expectations are clear and the same technical vocabulary is used with, and spoken by, all teaching staff and learners. Whole school and parental engagement can also be improved through the use of Twinkl Handwriting resources as home learning tasks.

Our children's handwriting will become automatic and to a high standard so that they are able to focus on the content of their writing rather than the presentation.

The impact of the scheme should be noticeable within written work in all areas of the curriculum.

Level expected at the end of EYFS.

Pupils should be taught to:

Literacy – Writing ELG

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.

Physical Development – 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.

Key Stage 1 National Curriculum Expectations

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.

• 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.

Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Expectations

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.

• 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.