



Policy for Handwriting and Presentation

St. George's C.E. First School



Rationale:

When communicating ideas in writing it is important that children use a handwriting style which is neat and legible. The importance of handwriting should not be underestimated. It is vital that children can write quickly, comfortably and legibly as it is a skill needed in many curriculum areas. Children's self-esteem is also heightened when they are able to take pride in their handwriting.

Aims of this policy:

- To raise standards across the curriculum by encouraging pupils to take pride in their handwriting and in the presentation of their work.
- To raise standards in writing across the school.
- To ensure a consistent approach across the school to the teaching of handwriting and expectations for presentation.
- To adopt a consistent approach towards the handwriting modelled by all adults when writing in pupil's books, on whiteboards, labelling resources or on displays.

Our aim for pupils is to:

- Experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across school.
- Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly.
- Take pride in the presentation of their work and know what is expected of them.
- Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting.
- Build children's confidence in their writing ability so they are able to write quickly, creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- Achieve a neat, fluent and legible style of joined handwriting so they can concentrate on content, rather than the mechanics of writing.

Implementation and Provision:

Handwriting is a skill that needs to be taught explicitly. Correct modelling of the agreed style by all staff is very important. It is not sufficient for pupils to be expected to learn a high standard of handwriting by simply copying from a published scheme or worksheet. At St. George's handwriting will be taught through regular short, focussed sessions and may be linked with spelling, grammar and phonics objectives. Intensive teaching is recommended at the start of each school year to clarify expectations, with further reinforcement in short, regular sessions throughout the week (dependent on age and ability of pupils). Handwriting books should be used and teachers should walk around constantly monitoring and correcting while children are writing. Errors in formation should be corrected early before they become a habit. Attention to posture and seating arrangements is important (appendix 2). Once children are able to form letters correctly, line guides should be provided when children are writing on plain paper to help develop uniformity of size and the correct position of the letters. Capital letters stand alone and are not joined to the next letter. Wide or narrow lines are used according to the child's needs and at the teacher's discretion. Teaching includes presentational features such as margins, dates, underlined headings and how to cross out with one straight line.

Handwriting frequency

Formal and discrete teaching of handwriting skills should be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure age related expectations for each year group and Key Stage are met. Teachers should review expectations for handwriting and presentation at the beginning of each new school term. Handwriting sessions will increase or decrease in frequency during the course of each term depending on the age and ability of the children.

EYFS:

For our youngest pupils teachers should plan several daily sessions (10-15 minutes in length), which develop core muscle strength. These must be spread out throughout the Nursery session or school day so that there is a consistent focus on developing and enhancing gross and fine motor skills. This should be in addition to a focus on letter learning to ensure pupils are familiar with letter shapes, formation and vocabulary.

Key Stage 1:

Formal handwriting will continue with daily activities (15-30 minute sessions) that support correct letter and number formation. There will be a continued focus on gross and fine motor skills exercises as well as correct formation of upper and lower case letters and numerals. Additional handwriting sessions should be planned into the timetable where individual pupils require further support. Pupils should be given regular, basic dictation exercises to further practise these skills.

Key Stage 2:

Handwriting will continue to be taught but the frequency and the nature of tasks will depend very much on the needs and ability of pupils (30-60 minutes minimum). Once pupils develop a fluent and efficient style of handwriting, they will have frequent opportunities to showcase the expected standards of handwriting. Dictation exercises should also be used to teach note taking and encourage speedy handwriting.

Teachers must:

- Follow the school policy to help all pupils to develop legible and fluent handwriting.
- Provide direct teaching and accurate modelling.
- Provide resources and an environment which promotes high standards of handwriting and presentation.
- Monitor pupils' progress and set targets for improvement through timely and specific feedback.
- Model high expectations for handwriting when writing on white boards, flip charts and marking books.

The Learning Environment

A model of the agreed handwriting style should be displayed in all classrooms. Only this style should appear on signage, displays and demonstration writing. Teachers should discuss handwriting and presentation in all subjects to ensure a consistent set of expectations for presentation across the curriculum. They should give high priority to handwriting in classroom displays. All members of staff including teachers, teaching assistants, trainees and supply teachers will be provided with the agreed handwriting style and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example.

Posture:

Developing a good posture is as important as developing a good pencil grip (see Appendix 2). Correct posture should be taught and checked frequently. Children will be able to sustain writing for longer if they become used to sitting comfortably. Staff should ensure pupils:

- Hold their pencils correctly (Tripod grip).
- Place their **feet flat on the floor.**
- Are sitting up with their bottoms **pushed into the back of their chairs.**
- Have a direct view of the teacher/board.

- Use their non-writing hand to steady the paper or book and bear some body-weight.
- Have the paper or book slightly tilted.

Presentation (Exercise books/ learning journals)

It is very important to ensure that there is a consistent response to presentation across all areas of the curriculum. Staff should focus on the following guidelines to ensure consistency, taking into account the age and ability of children where necessary. Children should be expected to keep their books well presented. They should not 'doodle' on the front cover, or indeed on pages inside. The colour, size and layout of subject books and learning journals will be specified so that there is consistency in each phase and across the whole school. Book covers should be prepared by the teacher (a template will be provided) and must include:

- Full name
- Class
- Subject
- Academic year

EYFS and KS1

All activities or work completed by children should have a date and clear learning objective, which should be underlined. The date, learning objective and success criteria may be prepared by the teacher and stuck in pupil books prior to the lesson (font size no less than 14) and must be cut to size and neatly stuck in, including edges. As writing skills develop, children should be encouraged to write the date and titles themselves. Children should be encouraged to write from the left hand edge of the page, or margin, though EYFS does allow for more freedom when first exploring letter shapes and formation. During Year 2 every effort should be made to move pupils on to the expectations for Key Stage 2 as soon as developmentally appropriate.

KS2

Children should write from the left hand margin. In all Key Stages a line should be left between the date and title and then another line left between the title and the first line of work. A mistake should be crossed out with one line through it.

- All work should have the date and clear learning objective; underlined using a ruler.
- The full date should be written in all books except Maths books, when the digital date is acceptable.
- The lesson objective for the lesson should be handwritten by the pupil **below** the date, after leaving one line. It should also be underlined using a ruler.
- The success criteria should, where appropriate, allow for pupil self assessment to be recorded against teacher assessment. An additional column may be added where appropriate for any peer assessment.

Success Criteria	SA	TA

- Any additional comments during self and peer assessment should be recorded on a post-it note in pencil. Where this might involve highlighting/markings sections of writing then a pink or green pencil crayon should be used. Pupils should not comment using pen.
- Pupils should not rule off on completion of a piece of work.
- Teachers comments should be in the agreed joined handwriting style, written clearly and space allowed for pupil responses.
- Key Stage 1 guidance should be followed where Key Stage 2 guidance is deemed inappropriate, for example for pupils with special educational needs or new arrivals (EAL).

General Presentation

- All diagrams should be produced using pencils and coloured using pencil crayons. Felt pens/wax crayon should not be used in exercise books.
- Teachers must expect the same, high standard of presentation in all subjects.
- Errors should be crossed out using a single line drawn with a ruler in all cases.
- Rubbers should be used at the teacher's discretion.
- Children will be encouraged to redraft written work for display, understanding the purpose and audience for which they are writing. Any written work displayed will be of the highest standard for that individual child.
- Clear expectations must be given about the quantity of work to be produced. Work should not be left unfinished.
- Marking should follow the Marking Policy. Only pink and green pens should be used and supply staff must be made aware of this.
- All staff must model the agreed style of handwriting whenever they are writing for class. This should be joined from Year 2.

Maths

- Correct number formation must be modelled, taught and encouraged in EYFS. This must be consistently reinforced throughout Key Stages 1 and 2.
- 1 cm squared books should be used from Key Stage 1 for number work
- All lines must be drawn with a sharp pencil and a ruler
- All year groups must teach one digit/figure per box
- Column addition and subtraction, and long division must end with a line under the answer. Pupils should understand that these double lines represent the equal symbol.
- Questions should be clearly numbered and set out neatly moving down the page.

Progression

Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception)

Well planned provision and an enabling learning environment are essential for the development of the fine and gross motor skills. During the Nursery year provision should include a range of adult led and child initiated activities that will enable pupils to strengthen these core skills. In addition there should be a strong focus on pattern making, exploring line (straight, curved, loops, waves) and shape. Gross motor skills are developed through sky writing letters, making patterns in the air and making different body shapes and actions. Fine motor skills are developed through bead threading, play dough modelling and finger painting etc. Pencil control is developed through tracing, pattern copying and drawing. 'Readiness for writing' and learning correct letter formation in Reception rely heavily on children developing and strengthening these core skills in Nursery.

Letter formation (starting at the right entry point and then moving in the right direction) learned at this early stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility. To aid development, close attention must be given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space. Staff must be vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not develop and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils and any pupils with specific motor difficulties are met. Pupils should be given opportunities to explore and attempt mark making and writing through play. These early efforts must be recognised and praised as they indicate an early understanding that marks on paper convey meaning.

During the Reception year learning the correct formation of letters is vital; a 'patter' can be used to aid memory e.g. 'a' - all the way round, down and flick. Pupils should be given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements; a multi-sensory approach should be used to help pupils feel the movement in the hand. Teachers should deliver daily sessions of 'dough disco', 'write-dance' or 'funky fingers' to encourage both fine and gross motor skill development.

Suggested activities to develop gross and fine motor skills

- Tracing in wet sand
- Painting using thick brushes (water on playground/wall)
- Pegboard patterns
- Sewing and weaving activities
- Cutting out
- Whiteboard activities
- Drawing letters on backs/different textures e.g. carpet, sandpaper
- Jelly letters

Letter formation should be practised in '**shape**' families and linked to the phonic sound made. Shape families are sorted into 4 main movement groups. The four groups are:

- **Long ladder letters**-down and off in another direction ,exemplified by the letter l :
Letters y,i, j,l,t, u;
- **One armed robot**-down and retrace upwards, exemplified by the letter r:
Letters b,h,k, m,n,p,r;(numbers 2,3,5 follow a clockwise direction);
- **Curly caterpillar letters**- anti-clockwise round ,exemplified by the letter c (curly caterpillar): Letters c,a,d,e,g,o,q,f,s;numbers:0,6,8, 9;
- **Zigzag letters**: Letters: v,w,x,z; numbers:1,4,7.

Key Stage 1

Building on the Foundation Stage, pupils at Key Stage 1 should develop a legible style which progresses to including basic joins. The joining of letters is dependent on ability (particularly gross and fine motor development) rather than age; correcting formation and printing of letters must precede learning to join. In Year 1 this is achieved by developing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and by practising handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing. Correct letter formation should be continually reinforced. Staff should use their professional judgement in determining when pupils are introduced to the basic joins etc. This should not be unnecessarily delayed. This will continue into Year 2 where pupils should be beginning to develop a more fluent joined style.

Key Stage 2

The target for pupils in Key Stage 2 is to produce a fluent, consistently formed style of joined handwriting with equal spacing between the letters and words. Pupils should continue to have regular handwriting sessions in the agreed handwriting style. Teachers should use their professional judgement to determine which pupils may benefit from more frequent and regular handwriting lessons and support for motor skills. All pupils will write in pencil until they can demonstrate to staff that they are joining competently and consistently. Pupils in Year 4 may receive a pen license when staff deem that a pupil is ready. All pupils in Key Stage 2 should practise their letter formation/handwriting when copying any spellings.

Inclusion

The expectation is that the vast majority of pupils will form all letters correctly and that they will have developed a comfortable and efficient pencil grip enabling them to write legibly and fluently. Pupils who have difficulties with the various aspects of handwriting should have extra support which targets specific difficulties .Clear targets should be set by the class teacher and reviewed regularly. Where progress is limited because of problems with fine motor skills staff should liaise with the SEND coordinator to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Thicker triangular pencils, pencil grips and wider lines may be used by children experiencing problems with writing, alongside other activities to develop their fine motor skills. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting and angle of table.

Left-handed pupils

All teachers need to be aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- Make sure that left-handed children sit on the left of right-handed children, otherwise their writing arms will clash.
- Put a mark at the left side of the page to indicate where writing begins as some left-handed children mirror-write from the right.
- Left-handed children usually need to have the paper slightly to the left of centre of their body and should be encouraged to tilt their work clockwise so they can see what they have written.
- Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate letter formation to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

Links with Parents and Carers

It is essential that parents are enabled to support handwriting at home. As well as demonstrating and sharing examples of correct letter formation, the progression from initial letter formation to joins should also be shared so that parents and carers are able to encourage and reinforce this at home.

Homework

Parents should be encouraged to support their children to produce quality work following the handwriting and presentation policy guidelines. Children will be expected to take the same care with homework as they do in their class books and the same standards will be expected unless the teacher has specified differently. All homework must be completed in pencil.

Handwriting assessment

In the early stages of handwriting, teachers observe closely to ensure letters are correctly formed, and intervene appropriately. Later, assessments are made against criteria which may include the following:

- Is the writing legible and generally presentable?
- Do tall letters touch the top line?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins correctly made?
- Are the spaces between letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of writing appropriate?
- Is the writing correctly aligned?

Monitoring

Monitoring of the standards of the children's handwriting and of the quality of the teaching of handwriting is the responsibility of the Literacy subject leader and the SLT (Senior Leadership Team). This will be carried out during regular book trawls and through Key Stage meetings.

Tasnim Koser Deputy Head teacher December 2016

This policy was discussed and agreed in a staff meeting on: 3rd January 2017

Ratified by Governing Body:

Date:

Appendix 1

Statutory and Non Statutory Guidance

National Curriculum Programme of Study – English (Handwriting)

From Early Years/Year One, children 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' (ie letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

By Year 2, Children should

- 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

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

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.

By Yr 3 and 4 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, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch]

Notes and guidance (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.