

St Joseph & St Bede R.C. Primary School



Handwriting Policy

Mission Statement:

"With Christ at the centre, our **DREAM** is for greatness in our learning, to **BELIEVE** in our unique talents, to be 'Guardians of life and creation' and to **ACHIEVE** a better world, by living life to the full."

Approved by:

Date: April 2020

Last reviewed on: May 2014

Next review due
by: April 2021

Rationale

At St. Joseph and St. Bede R.C. Primary School, all children are introduced to Cursive Handwriting from the start. We believe this raises standards in handwriting throughout the whole school, developing confidence, accuracy and fluency and improved presentation.

The rules of the Cursive Style help:

- to minimise confusion for the child as every letter starts on the line with an entry stroke and leads out with an exit stroke, which is dyslexia friendly.
- with the flow of Cursive Writing as letters naturally flow into each other, it is impossible to write separate letters without joining.
- form spacing between words as the child develops whole word awareness
- develop a child's visual memory
- all children's writing skills regardless of academic ability
- to develop skills of punctuation and grammar

All children write with a pencil, although older pupils are introduced to ink pens.

Aims

- To provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in handwriting
- To produce clear, concise, legible handwriting
- To present work to a variety of audiences neatly
- To develop accuracy and fluency
- To help children recognise that handwriting is a form of communication and as such should be considered important in order for it to be effective
- To promote confidence and self-esteem
- To encourage children to take pride in their work
- To help children recognise that handwriting as a life-long skill and will be a fundamental element of all forms of written communication throughout their lives
- To display neatly presented work around the school as a model of excellence for others to aspire to

Order of letters

Letter formation should be taught in this order

The Rockin' Round Letters

- a lead up, rock back, lead on
- c lead up, rock back
- d lead up, rock back, three quarter up, three quarter back, lead on
- o lead up, rock back, loop round, lead on
- g lead up, rock back, drop down, loop round

The Tallees

- b lead up, three quarter line, drop back down, pop, lead on
- h lead up, three quarter line, drop down, over the hill, lead on
- k lead up, three quarter line, drop down, pop, lead on
- l lead up, three quarter line, drop down, lead on
- t lead up, three quarter line, drop down, lead on. Cross over

The Rollercoasters

- e lead up, loopde loop
- s lead up, curly-wurly, lead on
- x lead up, backwards c, forwards c
- z lead up, zig, zag, zog
- f lead up, three quarter line (with a hat), drop down, three quarters, loop to lead on

The Up-downs

- y lead up, drop down, smiley, drop down, loop
- u lead up, smile, lead on
- i lead up, drop down, lead on. Dot
- m lead up, drop down, over the hill, over the hill, lead on
- n lead up, drop down, over the hill, lead on
- r lead up, drop down, back up, lead on with a hat
- v lead up, zig zag, lead on
- w lead up, down, up, down, up, lead on

The Drop-downs

- j lead up, drop down, three quarters, loop round, lead on
- p lead up, drop down, three quarters, back up, pop, lead on
- q lead up, rock back, drop down

Development of learning and teaching handwriting

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.

EYFS

The emphasis at this stage is with movement rather than neatness. 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. Pupils are to be taught to use lead-in strokes, following agreed policy, as soon as they are ready for letter formation.

To aid movement, close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space. Teachers are vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not become ingrained and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils (for example, additional tracking and tracing of letters at the pre-writing stage) and those with special educational needs are met.

In the pre-communicative stage pupils play with writing and these experiments are recognised and praised as an important stage in the child's understanding that marks on paper convey meaning. Pupils are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements; a multi-sensory approach is used to help pupils feel the movement in the hand. Activities to develop gross motor control may include: rolling hoops and running with a hoop, ribbon movement, chalking, painting on a large scale and Interactive White Board use.

Activities to develop fine motor control may include: sand, Roll n' Write, mark making trays and tools, tracing, colouring within guide lines and pictures, pattern work, using glue spreaders in small pots, painting with the tips of the fingers, cotton buds, dough disco, play dough and threading.

Children are encouraged to work towards a tripod grip.

Children are introduced to actual letter formation in conjunction with the introduction of phonic skills. They are taught where to start the letter for ease of introduction of cursive script later.

Practice of particular High Frequency Words helps to develop good visual and writing habits e.g. 'the', 'and'. Usually by the end of the

EYFS, all children will have been introduced to all letters of the alphabet and introduced to more independent writing. They use handwriting patterns to promote the use of cursive script. Children practise their names in cursive script by tracing over in the first instance and then underneath and then using motor memory.

Meeting for Parents

Parents are invited to attend a meeting for 'new' parents, held in the Autumn Term. This enables us to outline our rationale and engage their support in encouraging their child to practice correct letter formation at opportune moments at home.

They are each given a copy of the correct letter formation and Cursive Style alphabet poster, (which is displayed in all classrooms as an aid to learning and teaching) which they are shown how to use at the meeting. This information is also given out at Parent's Evening where appropriate.

Year 1 and 2

As the children move to Year 1 the skills acquired in the Foundation Stage are continued, consolidating correct formation, concentration and accurate precision work.

The leading lines on individual letters are introduced in groups of similarly formed letters and practice of these takes place in short regular bursts. Sessions begin with a multisensory approach, where children use their 'magic finger pencils' in the air, on their hand, on their partners' back. They are also encouraged to verbalise the movements of their finger / pencil (e.g. "start on the line, all the way up, straight back down..." etc). The teacher then models writing on the board and the children are given the opportunity to practise their letters on whiteboards or paper. When using paper, all children write in pencil. Spellings are closely linked with handwriting activities, assisting the children with phonic skills required for successful reading. As the children progress through Year 1 and into Year 2, they are shown how to use the individual leading lines to join pairs and groups of letters.

A 'pen licence' can be awarded when all letters are correctly joined, and legible.

Copies of handwriting letter formation are given out at Parent's Evenings.

Year 3-6

The Cursive style continues to develop through close links with the National Curriculum.

Phonics (where necessary) and spelling are taught through handwriting practice and as fluency and accuracy develops, pupils can gain their 'pen licence', to write with a biro pen.

Handwriting is timetabled in short, regular sessions and where possible is integrated across the curriculum, e.g. practicing scientific vocabulary, cloze procedure linked to history.

All handwriting activities are undertaken as class activities for the following reasons:

- to develop effective and efficient pen hold
- to develop the habit of concentration which is crucial to good handwriting
- to encourage the development of cursive script, neatness and legibility
- to provide the class teacher with the opportunity to help assess individuals' progress and monitor areas requiring reinforcement.

Children copy into their books, applying the same techniques, closely monitored by the teacher. In some lessons, it is also appropriate to practice speed-writing through the use of dictation, which also helps them to think quickly and remember spellings.

The use of ICT

All teachers use the Interactive Whiteboard in direct teaching: use of the lined writing templates are an essential tool for learning, as the teacher can demonstrate the correct letter formation and joins clearly to the whole class at once if necessary.

Younger children rehearse 'large letters/joins' on a blank screen, using different colours and thicknesses of line.

www.letterjoin.co.uk is used to demonstrate the formation of letters.

Handwriting and Reading

In school, children are exposed to both cursive and print styles as well as commercial print. They develop awareness for reading in print and writing in cursive side by side in their learning, such as prompts around classrooms/school - teachers lettering, labels on displays/teaching aids e.g. alphabet on tables and through teachers modelling of writing.

Left Handed Children

Each left-handed child is identified to ensure that writing conditions are suitable. The following guidelines are useful to help left-handed children.

Guidelines for writing left-handed:

- The writing surface and chair are suitable for the child's own height and allows them to sit appropriately
- The child sits towards the left of their partner leaving plenty of space for writing on the left side of his/her - mid line (this allows maximum space for arm movement)
- A writing tool which does not smudge should be used
- 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
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically

Children with difficulties

Sometimes some children may experience difficulties and these will be addressed through differentiated work.

Resources

Teachers use the chosen handwriting joins (see below). Resources for pattern practice in EYFS / Yr 1 are made using the cursive unjoined font. Also www.letterjoin.co.uk is used to show how to form each letter and gives letters with similar patterns. Worksheets can also be printed from www.letterjoin.co.uk.

The quick brown fox
jumps over the lazy dog.

Dotted 

Outline 

Once the child is consistently joining the following font will be used. -
XCCW Joined 5a

The quick brown fox
jumps over the lazy dog.
Dotted Style Lined Style

Monitoring

The presentation of all work is monitored through work scrutinies and book monitoring. There is an expectation of consistency of presentation across subjects.

Written by C Lowe A Burke April 2020

Signed: Headteacher

Signed: Chair of Governors

Date: May 2014

Review: This policy will be reviewed April 2021