

Handwriting Policy

At St James Primary School we have aspirations for every single child to succeed. Through our Christian vision we thoroughly believe that all children have the potential to thrive regardless of their starting points, personal context and characteristics. Our children learn through a supportive and purposeful curriculum, linked tightly to the educational programmes set out in the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, that demonstrates that "With God there is no limit to what you can do. There is no obstacle you can't overcome. Through Him all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26) Our staff are committed to developing a love of learning, whilst developing the skills and values to support the all-round development of every pupil. St James C of E Primary School is a special place where we dream, believe, learn and achieve.

Intent

At St James' our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in accordance with the cursive font.
- Develop flow and speed.
- Eventually produce the letters automatically and in their independent writing.
- In order to achieve these aims, the following principles are followed:

Impact

The impact of using the full range of Read write Inc and Nelson Handwriting resources, including display, will be seen across the school with an increase in the profile of handwriting. Following the scheme, will give our school 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 Nelson Handwriting resources as home learning tasks.

Handwriting lessons should not feel like a chore for teachers and pupils and should encourage a sense of pride in pupils' written work.

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.

Implementation

Teaching and Learning

- Children should experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across the school.
- Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line and be given support in finding a comfortable grip.
- Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly.
- Encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting.
- Shown how to be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- Encouraged use their skills with confidence and pride in real life situations.

Early Years.

Children are given lots of opportunities to develop their gross motor skills in order to strengthen their muscles in their shoulders, arms and fingers as well as develop their fine motor skills. Children should begin to learn how to correctly hold a pencil. Then how to use a pencil, and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters most of which are correctly formed. They should be given the opportunities to develop their handwriting, to their full potential at that age.

Key Stage 1

Handwriting should be practiced within and linked to phonics sessions. Letter formation is taught in line with the **Read write inc Handwriting** guides. Each letter has a ditty or rhyme to help children with the correct form and orientation of all the letters of the alphabet. 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. Some children will be ready to adopt a cursive style. All children will become familiar with the letter families and will practise their writing in the sequence of the letter families.

Key Stage 2

During this stage the children continue to have direct teaching and regular practice of handwriting. 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.

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.

The Learning Environment

In all classes, pencil pots with suitable materials are available for pupils to work at their own tables. Classrooms are equipped with a range of writing implements, line guides, word lists and dictionaries.

Resources

St James' uses the Nelson Handwriting Scheme from year 3 upwards with the following letter formation.

The Four Joins

1. to letters without ascenders
2. to letters with ascenders
3. horizontal joins
4. horizontal joins to letters with ascenders

The break letters (letters that aren't joined **from**) are: bgjppqxyzs

NB children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units **BEFORE** learning to join.

See Appendix 1 for a break down of where and when this will be taught in EYFS, KS1 and KS2.

All teachers will ensure:

- Chair and table are be at a comfortable height
- The table is supporting the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Children sit up straight and do not slouch
- The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor
- Tables are free of clutter
- Rooms are well lit
- Left handed pupils sit on the left of their partners

Pencil grip

- Children should write with a pencil (or pen when introduced in Y6) with a rounded nib. Pencils should be reasonably sharp.
- A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil

For right handers

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point
- The paper should be placed to the right tilted slightly to the left
- Use the left hand to steady the paper

For left handers

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger
 - Hold about 3cm from the tip
 - The hand should be kept below the writing line
 - The paper should be tilted slightly to the right at about 20 - 30° • Use the right hand to steady the paper
- NB It is very important that a right-handed child is NOT seated on the left hand side of a left handed child as their elbows will collide!

Teachers should demonstrate writing with their left hand wherever possible or use the expertise of left-handed writers.

Assessment

Senior leaders should monitor children's writing and presentation in books regularly.

The following should be considered:

- Is the writing generally legible?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with age related expectations?

Individual assessment

Children should be observed as they write during handwriting lessons – the teacher must circulate, monitor and intervene. Teachers also need to monitor and mark whole pieces of writing. The following should be considered:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movement when forming and or joining letters?
- Are any letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
- Is the writing easily legible?
- Is the pupil's handwriting development should be in line with age related expectations

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