

# Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Ilkley,

## A Voluntary Academy

### Handwriting and Presentation Policy



#### **Mission Statement**

*Jesus said, "I chose you, and appointed you to go and bear much fruit." (John 15:16)*

#### **Our three consistencies are**

**Love of others**

**Love of self**

**Love of learning**

Policy review date- January 2022

Person Responsible- Sophie Fisher- AA in SF's absence

Ratified by Governors- March 2022

Review date- January 2024

## Introduction

Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. If they have difficulty, this will limit fluency and inhibit the quality and quantity of their work. It is important that the child's handwriting becomes a skill that requires little effort and thought, so that creative and physical energy can be focused on the content of writing, rather than upon the act. We adhere to The British Dyslexia Association's recommendation that children learn the continuous cursive style.

The key advantages are:

- By making each letter in one movement, children's hands develop a 'physical memory' of it, making it easier to produce the correct shape
- Because letters and words flow from left to right, children are less likely to reverse letters which are typically difficult (like b/d or p/q)
- There is a clearer distinction between capital letters and lower case.
- The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling

## Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to set out a whole school approach to presentation and the teaching of handwriting that has been agreed by the whole staff and Local Governing Body following discussion, consultation and professional development. It provides guidance for all staff, new and experienced and it will underpin the continued development of the school as a learning community.

## Provision:

We use the Letter-join Program [www.letterjoin.co.uk](http://www.letterjoin.co.uk) as the basis of our handwriting policy as it covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## Aims

- The aim is to have a consistent approach to presentation and handwriting across both Key Stage One and Two.
- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard, on displays and resources.
- To raise standards in writing across the school and achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting
- Develop flow and speed to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- To automatically use clearly formed and joined handwriting in all of their writing

## Teaching and Learning

In order to achieve these aims, the following principles are followed:

- Patterns relating to letter formations are first introduced using a variety of tools and multi-sensory methods. This develops free flowing hand movements and muscle strength. Letters are also introduced in varied, multi-sensory sessions: writing letters in the air, on backs or hands; orally describing letter shapes and joins with children using 'letter speak'; using a variety of writing materials including whiteboards, chalk, paints, felt pens, crayons, plasticine, cornflour mix, shaving foam etc.
- The cursive font, with lead-ins (see appendix 1), is taught as a specific skill, at least once a day for about 10 minutes, with additional, individual or group practise where necessary.

- Correct pencil hold and letter formation are taught from the beginning and handwriting is frequently linked with spelling.
- As digraphs are introduced, their corresponding joins are taught.
- When marking or writing comments, members of staff use cursive handwriting as appropriate.
- Teachers model cursive script on IWB, whiteboards, flip charts etc.
- Displays around the school and classroom should model clear joined handwriting as well as other fonts.
- The cursive font should be displayed in classrooms to ensure familiarity with the style.

### Entitlement and curriculum provision

Handwriting is to be taught regularly through short, focused sessions and may be linked with spelling, grammar or phonics objectives. Teaching generally occurs outside English lessons, although shared and guided writing also provides additional opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting.

### Handwriting Progression

<p>Early Years Foundation Stage</p>	<p>The emphasis at this stage is with movement and fine motor skill development. 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 and lead-out strokes, following agreed policy, as soon as they are ready for letter formation. (For agreed letter formation please see Appendix 1). 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. All children are to take part in activities that develop fine and gross motor skills both indoor and outdoor.</p> <p>The children are introduced to the cursive script as the Letters and Sounds are introduced and practise correct formation, including the joining of digraphs (see appendix 2)</p> <p>Children should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to form lower case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.</li> <li>• Form digits 0-9</li> </ul>
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Key Stage 1	<p>Building on the Foundation Stage, pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a legible style and begin to use fully cursive handwriting in Year One by starting to join their letters. This is dependent on ability not the age of each child. This is achieved in Year 1 by developing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and by practising handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing. Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion are taught in line with the school's agreed handwriting style. This continues in Year 2. It is expected that the vast majority of children will be joining by the end of Key Stage 1.</p> <p>Handwriting practice is to be carried out in separate handwriting books but is to be modelled and expected in all writing in all books.</p> <p>Children should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand which letters belong to which handwriting "families" i.e letters that are formed in similar ways, and to practise these (see Appendix 5)</li> <li>• Form lower case letters of the correct size relative to one another</li> <li>• Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters.</li> <li>• Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters</li> </ul> <p>N.B. The cursive script has a lead in and exit line that naturally encourages the children to join their handwriting. The children are to begin to join when they are ready.</p>
Key Stage 2	<p>The target for children in Key Stage Two is to produce a fluent, consistently formed style of fully cursive handwriting with equal spacing between the letters and words. Children in lower Key Stage Two will have regular handwriting sessions using appropriate prepared resources, in the agreed handwriting style. Handwriting practice is to be carried out in handwriting books but handwriting following the agreed handwriting style is expected to be used by pupils in all books and across all lessons. Children will write with pencils until the class teacher assesses that they are joining competently and consistently. When children reach KS2 they will be able to earn a pen licence. They will then be given a handwriting pen to use. (see pen licenses below)</p> <p>All children in Key Stage Two will use the agreed cursive handwriting style in all lessons.</p> <p>Children should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting e.g. ensuring that the down strokes 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</li> <li>• choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters</li> <li>• choosing the right implement that is best suited for a task</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>N.B. When the children are producing consistently formed, sized and joined handwriting, they will be granted a 'pen license' and encouraged to write in pen where appropriate.</p>

## Pen Licences

When children reach KS2 they are able to work towards a pen licence. To achieve this they have to work towards specific criteria (see Appendix 4) when children feel they are consistently writing at a standard which would enable them to achieve a pen licence, they are allowed to submit their work to their teacher who will decide if they agree.

Certificates will be presented in celebration assembly on a Friday.

### Techniques for teaching letter formation and joins

- Always model good handwriting
- Demonstrate formations
- Talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Children form letters in the air and on parts of the body
- Finger trace over tactile letters
- Write in sand with finger, paintbrush or a stick

### Basic structure of a handwriting session:

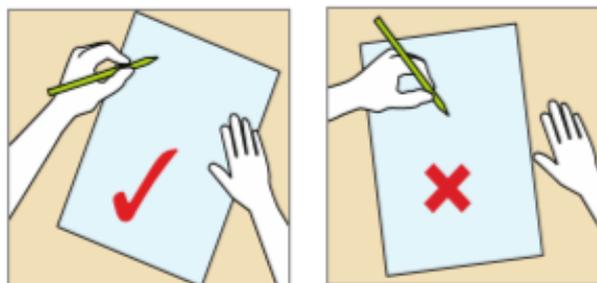
- Gross and fine movement warm up
- Posture check: feet flat on the floor, back straight and touching the chair
- Teacher modelling
- Children practising independently with a teacher model, then from memory

The daily phonics session in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, provides opportunities to correct handwriting errors and staff should be aware that it is appropriate to correct pencil grip, letter formation, letter joins etc. at this time.

### Provision for left handed children

Left handed children always sit on the left side of right handed children, so their elbows don't bump and knock each other and so that they are not competing for space. They are encouraged to find a comfortable orientation for their paper, usually slightly to the left centre of their body (as shown below), and to have their fingers about 1.5cm from the point of their pencil. Pens appropriate for left handed writers will be provided, to avoid smudging. Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary

left-to-right



Paper position for left-handed children

before pupils write automatically.

### Resources and

### writing materials

Children are given experience of a variety of writing tools. Pens (handwriting pens not biros) should be used by those who have achieved a consistent, cursive style. All children should write in black

ink. The children are to practise their handwriting in a handwriting book chosen for this specific purpose. Guidelines should be used when writing on plain paper.

### Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities

The SENCO will provide resources for those who have difficulty with fine motor skills – pencil grips, fine motor control programmes and referrals where necessary.

## **Presentation Guide**

### Presentation

Pupils will learn that different levels of presentation are appropriate for different pieces of work and different circumstances. However, pupils are expected to:

- Look after exercise books and not draw or scribble in or on them
- Increasingly plan their work to make it look attractive and well presented
- Not use writing or drawing media that is not approved or not fit for purpose
- Use rulers to draw straight lines. When underlining a ruler should be used at all times.
- Set out, number and annotate work appropriately
- At appropriate times, pupils may be encouraged to experiment with alternative means of presenting their work for specific reasons.
- Cross through mistakes or editing alterations with a single line. Erasers should only be used very occasionally and with the express permission of an adult. (see appendix 4 – Presentation Protocols) Sacred Heart Primary School celebrates the learning from mistakes. No ink erasers may be used.
- When writing in maths books or on squared paper, the expectation is one number per square.

Children's work Book covers should indicate:

- Child's name
- Class Name
- Subject
- Specific Year Group

Teachers are expected to:

- Ensure that classrooms are well equipped with the essential tools that will assist pupils to create work with a high presentational standard
- Organise the classroom in such a way that materials and resources are easily accessible and systems for their return and maintenance are robust (self- service classroom)
- Ensure that children look after resources and materials so that they learn to respect equipment.
- To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting.
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling.

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important; it is not sufficient to require pupils to copy models from a published scheme or worksheet.

## Policy Success Criteria

We know Sacred Heart School's Handwriting and Presentation Policy is effective if:

- A scrutiny of work confirms the appropriate development in handwriting skills
- Specific difficulties are addressed in the marking of handwriting tasks
- A scrutiny of work confirms that the presentation protocol is adhered to

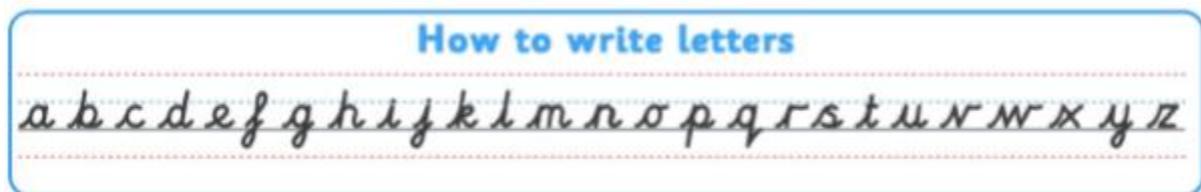
## Equality Statement

Sacred Heart School provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is committed to equality and reflects and values diversity.

## Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Executive Head within the processes of school self-evaluation. The Governing Body will monitor the implementation of the policy.

## **Appendix 1 – Agreed letter formation for cursive writing**



## **Appendix 2**

**Set 1:** s, a, t, p

**Set 2:** l, n, m, d

**Set 3:** g, o, c, k

**Set 4:** cu, e, u, r

**Set 5:** h, b, f, off, l, all, sus

**Set 6:** j, v, w, x

**Set 7:** y, z, zizz, Qu

**Consonant digraphs:** chi, shy, the, ng

**Vowel digraphs:** air, eye, high, oak, or, art, or, urn, ow, oi, ear, air, urea, err

## **Appendix 3 -Pen Licence Criteria**

To achieve a pen licence, you should consistently and accurately:

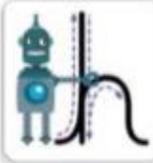
- Write your lower-case letters of the correct size, next to one another.
- Understand which letters, when next to one another, are best left not joined.
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- Use spacing between words that matches the size of the letters.
- Keep your letters sat on the line.

- Cross out any mistakes or changes with one neat line.
- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters
- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: - choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices - deciding whether or not to join specific letters - choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

#### Appendix 4) Presentation Protocols

The Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Presentation Protocols					
	FS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3 &4	Year 5 &6
Writing Implements	A selection of 'beginners' thick and fine writing implements.	A selection of 'beginners' thick and fine writing implements. Children to use fine writing implements when they have mastered the correct pencil grip.	Fine pencils	Introduce handwriting pens (black) as appropriate for English and written work. Pencil for Maths work.	Pupils should use handwriting pens for written work once they have their pen license and pencils for maths work.
	Felt tips should not be used where they will come through on to the reverse of the paper in books.				
Self-correction	Simple, straight line through to show where they have self-corrected.			Simple, straight line through to show where they have self-corrected. Eraser or correction fluid may be used at the discretion of the teacher for final draft work.	
Ruler use		All straight lines to be drawn with a ruler. Younger pupils will need to be taught how to do this.			
New work	New work to commence on a new page.	New work will usually commence on a new page, unless advised against by the teacher.		New work to be commenced after ruling off precious work, if there is usable space available.	
Date	All work to be dated by an adult.	All work to be dated by child or teacher at the top.		All written work to be dated by child, at top, right hand side using full date, and underlined. Maths to use numbered date e.g. 23.07.2020	
Paper	To use unlined and lined paper depending on the activity.	Teachers should select lined paper, appropriate to the size of writing, so pupils can position writing correctly on the line. Exercise books will be -		Narrow lines and small squared exercise books.	

Appendix 5 – Letter “families”

Letter families		Easy	Harder
all letters start on the line			
 <p>Ladders Up down and hook</p>	l i t u	j y	
 <p>Zig-zags Up, straight lines and hook</p>	w	w z x	
 <p>Curbs Clockwise up, anti-clockwise back, complete the letter and hook</p>	c o a d	g q e s f	
 <p>Robots Up down, retrace up, over and hook</p>	n m h	r b p k	

f	k	w	x	z
f	k	w	x	z
f	k	w	x	z