

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School



Handwriting Policy

September 2022

Review date: July 2023

Rationale

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School we are committed to teaching children the complex skill of writing legibly and fluently by ensuring good habits are engrained from the very start of the school journey. As children progress through school, the requirement to write legibly and fluently increases considerably and the cost of being unable to do so also increases. We therefore recognise the great importance of children being encouraged to adapt the correct pencil grip and writing posture during their Early Years setting. Children need consistent and regular opportunities to observe, learn, practice and apply specific fine motor and handwriting techniques in order to succeed.

At Sacred Heart we are proud of our pupil's handwriting and take particular care as members staff to demonstrate and model a consistent handwriting style in all areas of the curriculum. We use Letter-join's on-line handwriting resource and Lesson Planners as the basis of our handwriting policy as it covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum.

This will ensure children know:

- The importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.
- To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by:
 - Having correct pencil grip.
 - Knowing the all letters start from the top, except d, e and f which start in the middle.
 - Knowing the correct formation of all letters.
- Knowing the correct size and orientation of letters.

High expectations and non-negotiables

High expectations must be applied to handwriting and presentation in the same way that our expectations are high in other curriculum areas.

It is acceptable that there are times (in notes, rough planning or draft) that a child needs to write quickly and therefore, may not spend as much time focusing on handwriting and cursive script. However, it is not acceptable, for children to sustain bad habits, posture, pencil grip or standards of presentation as they move through school. Teaching must have an impact on standards. Children must be encouraged to maintain their best handwriting across every lesson and not vary the standard of their handwriting on a day to day basis. They must see, be taught and have access to modelling which exemplifies, explains and outlines what a skill is, how to do it and how to improve. They therefore, must have access to quality teaching of handwriting.

Whole School Approach

We recognise that a whole school approach is essential to ensuring success and progress in handwriting. Children at Sacred Heart have previously learnt a cursive style from Reception. However, from September 2021 children have been taught from Reception a printed style with an ending 'hook'. This is to ensure children are observing, reading and writing letters of a consistent style. Children who have previously learnt a pre-cursive style (Year 2 upwards) will continue this style as they move through the school.

The letter join program will form the basis for handwriting lessons – all staff have access to the program in which modelled examples of letters and patterns can be shown to the class. In

addition to this, each class has a handwriting booklet, which forms the basis of practice within lessons.

Teachers are expected to exemplify the cursive style in their marking of books, in classroom displays and when writing within lessons (On interactive whiteboard/flipchart paper). Children should experience daily practice of handwriting in a variety of places – from English lessons to discrete practice in Handwriting books. Staff should consider where this practice should occur within their timetable and plan accordingly.

Children should experience/have access to:

- Daily practice of handwriting.
- Same language (in line with Letter Join) to be used in each year group
- Letter Join interactive whiteboard resources, workbooks and worksheets to be used to support main teaching tool
 - Pencils to be of a good quality and sharp. High expectations regarding pencils. Children should not be completing work with blunt pencils.
 - Where handwriting is displayed, it should be of a high quality. Letter join font is to be used for displays.
 - Letter formation is to follow the progression policy outlined in this section.

As children begin their school journey in nursery they will be taught how to sit correctly and hold a pencil in a pincer grip to allow fluid movement of the nib. Children will improve their fine and gross motor skills by drawing patterns in a variety of writing materials such as modelling clay (dough disco), tweezers, ribbons, air writing, sand trays, felt pens, crayons, pencils, IWBS and iPads. Children will understand the language used for describing pencil movements in preparation for letter formation.

EYFS

As children move into Reception they will learning how to hold a pencil in an effective manner for writing and be encouraged to check and correct any errors in grip or stature. Children will know that letters are written on a base line and all letters are part of a particular 'letter family'. Children will form recognisable printed letters ending in a 'hook' in preparation for joining at the end of KS1. Children will also learn how to form capital letters and numerals correctly.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 children will continue to build on their previous learning. In Year 1 they will continue to print lowercase letters with an ending 'hook' and write legible uppercase letters. Teachers will ensure that children are sitting all letters on a baseline and are consistent in size with ascenders and descenders that are of the correct length and formation. Children will leave spaces in between words and begin to improve the speed of their writing. In Year 2 children will continue to use lead lines as well as an end 'hook' to each of their letters as this is what they have been taught previously. As children move through the school they will

build upon their handwriting style and will therefore not have to 'relearn' any letter formations.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 children will build on the quality, speed and stamina of their writing. Letters will be consistently sized, with parallel descenders and ascenders that do not touch words on lines above or below. Children will be able to improve the speed of their handwriting to ensure that creative writing takes precedence whilst building on the strength and mobility needed to write for longer periods of time.

Children will leave Sacred Heart knowing their handwriting can be adjusted for different purposes. Neat, joined, cursive letters are to be used for writing passages and large amounts of texts such as letters and lists. Printed or capital letters can be used for posters, headings, notices and labels. Speedy handwriting can be used for purposes such as dictation and notetaking when neatness is not as important.

Teaching time

Handwriting practice should take place DAILY where possible (games, English lesson starters, handwriting sessions etc.), particularly in our youngest year groups. All staff have access to sequenced and progressive lesson plans for each year group which are to be followed for their year group.

EYFS

For our youngest pupils we aim for children to be immersed in fine and gross motor activities in their continuous provision which will include the following:

- Movements to enhance gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern making, dancing.
- Exercises to develop fine motor skills such as making marks on paper, whiteboards, blackboards, sand trays, iPads and tablets.
- Letter learning to familiarise letter shapes, formation and vocabulary
- Discreet handwriting sessions in phonics lessons

KS1

Teaching will continue with daily short sessions totalling 50 minutes covering:

- Gross and fine motor skills exercises.
- Letter families reinforcement, learning and practice
- Numerals, capitals and printed letters: where and when to use, learning and practice.

KS2

More advanced handwriting techniques will be taught during two or three weekly sessions totalling 30 to 45 minutes teaching:

- Cursive handwriting re-enforcement.
- Form-filling/labelling using printed and capital letters.

- Dictation exercises to teach the need for quick notes and handwriting at speed.

Sessions can be planned in after lunch time break or planned in to another area of the school timetable. English/grammar/reading comp lessons can also start with handwriting games/practice to warm children's thinking up.

Planning and assessment

Handwriting should be evident in medium and short term planning folder.. Assessment is formative on daily basis. Handwriting is predominantly assessed during writing and is an important facet of overall writing effectiveness. Teachers however, should be assessing children's needs/standards of presentation in all lessons – not just writing. Targets/reporting of progress in handwriting should be included in parental reports if necessary. Pupils should be encouraged to self-assess and peer assess handwriting during literacy and handwriting lessons.

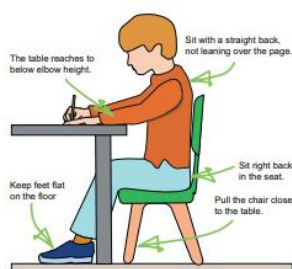
SEN and Inclusion

Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems such as fine motor skills, should liaise with the SENDCO to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources, use of specialist pens/pencils/pencil grips, or participation in specialist interventions such as Dough Disco or specific fine motor skills activities. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc. Outside agencies can be contacted where appropriate.

Posture and grip

Right handed children

How to sit correctly to be comfortable for handwriting.



How to hold and position the paper.



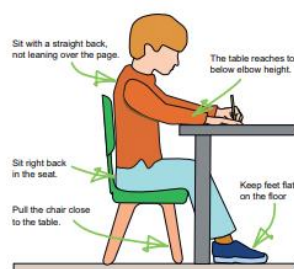
Sitting position

Sit left-handed children to the left of their partner so they have plenty of room to write.



Left handed children

How to sit correctly to be comfortable for handwriting.



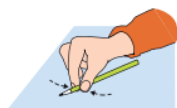
How to hold and position the paper.



Right handed grip



1. Point away the pencil,



2. Pinch it near the tip,



3. Lift it off the table,

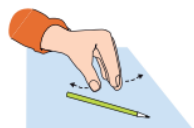


4. Spin it round...



5. ...and grip.

Left handed grip



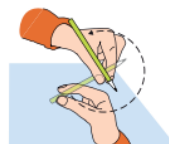
1. Point away the pencil,



2. Pinch it near the tip,



3. Lift it off the table,



4. Spin it round...



5. ...and grip.

Progression

Progression through school regarding letter formation

Children will initially start with mark making and will need to practice certain pattern formations, which will naturally support good pen grip development, fine motor skills and pen control. IT will also feed in to the next stage which is letter formation. The key patterns are:

Choose a pattern to draw



Children in EYFS and KS1 will learn letter formation for printed letters with an end 'hook'. This will provide consistency when reading and writing.

Letter-join Air No-lead

the big dog

As children move through the school from Year 1 upwards they will learn to join with no lead line.

Letter-join No-lead

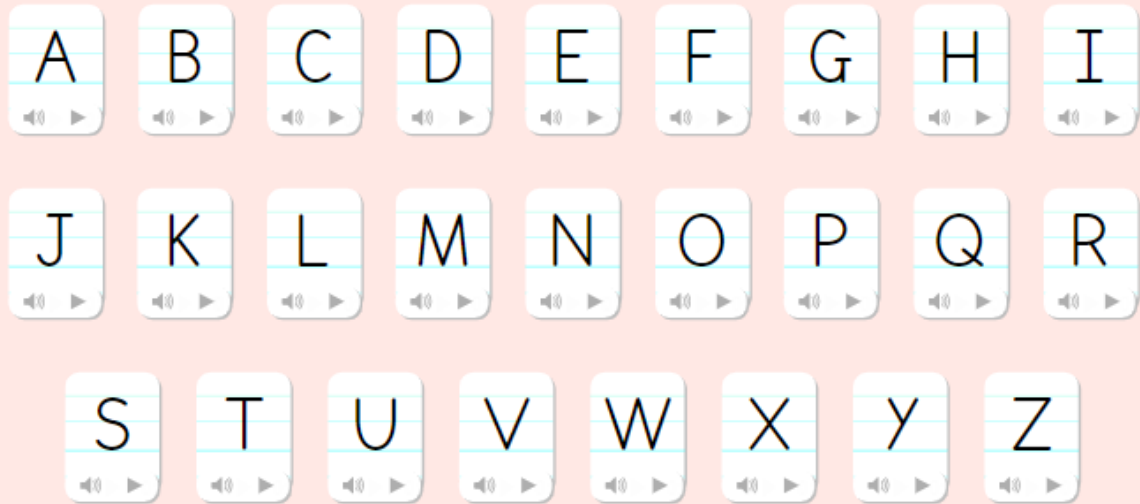
the big dog

Children in KS2 will continue to join using a leading line as they have previously been taught.

Letter-join Plus

the big dog

The capital letters are:



The numerals are:



