

St. Peter's Catholic Primary School

part of the wider Christus Trust, Multi Academy Trust



Mission Statement

Loving and learning together, with Jesus

Handwriting Policy

Policy Ref No	CUR006
Date of Policy	March 2025
Review date	March 2027

Intent

A rich and broad curriculum that develops the children's knowledge and skills, inspiring them through a journey of creativity, discovery and curiosity where everyone is equally respected and valued, equipping the children as independent, resilient, life-long learners.

Purpose

Our beliefs at St Peter's about this area of school life is that a flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. Handwriting is concerned with individual expression and the conveying of meaning through fluent composition. The principal aim is that handwriting becomes an automatic process which frees pupils to focus on the content of the writing. Handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from readiness for handwriting, through to letter joins, practising speed and fluency and higher presentation skills.

Curriculum Intent Statement for Handwriting

- In Literacy we develop the children's Knowledge and Skills in line with the school's vision for Knowledge and Skills based curriculum.
 - We inspire Creativity by developing a joined handwriting style that is legible and fluent.
- We encourage Discovery by learning how to formulate words and spellings in a joining style of writing.
- We foster a Curiosity about how letters are formed and shaped so that our intended audience can read our work and easily distinguish between our ascenders and descenders.
 - We develop Independence by composing writing that showcases our literary skills that help improve comprehension, vocabulary and fluency in reading in a neatly joined style.
 - We instil Resilience by challenging ourselves to always produce a fluently legible handwriting style.
 - As a result, the children Respect and Value their own work and the intended audience reading it.

Teaching and Learning

What we wish to achieve at St Peter's Catholic Primary School is a handwriting style that is legible, fluent and fast, facilitating their development into confident effective writers. We aim to promote high standards in the presentation of children's written work. Careful, attractive presentation promotes children's pride in their achievement and sets a tone of high expectations. We want our pupils to take pride in their work and we believe handwriting to be the first step.

All pupils will work towards developing a legibly joined handwriting style. This begins in Reception with pupils learning to start letters with lead-outs. To achieve this, pupils must demonstrate ten standards consistently:

- To hold a pencil with a consistent and comfortable grip.
- To write at a steady pace with increased fluency.
- To form all numbers correctly.
- To start all lower-case letters in the correct place.
- To join each letter correctly.
- For all ascending letters to be of a consistent and correct height.
- For all descending letters to be of a consistent and correct length.
- To space words appropriately.
- To produce handwriting that other people can always read because it is neat and clear.

All children receive quality first English teaching on a daily basis and activities are differentiated accordingly, with pupils able to self-select their own challenges where appropriate. In addition, where identified pupils are considered to require targeted support to enable them to work towards or on above age appropriate objectives, intervention programmes will be implemented and monitored for their effectiveness.

Additional provision for left-handed children will be made by the teacher: ensuring that pupils writing with their left hand will sit on the left to minimise disruption to the handwriting process. With support, they will also be shown how to make initial letters using the left-handed letter formation guide (Appendix 4), before beginning the joining process.

Left handed children should be taught to (see Appendix 1)

- Grip the pencil at a slightly higher point so they can see around their fingers.
- Hold about 3 cm 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.

Further advice to support left-handed children in their writing journey can be found in the Nelson Handwriting Teacher’s book – page 10.

At St Peter’s the children in EYFS will be taught handwriting alongside phonics and will therefore be continually practicing and progressing through their letter sounds as well as letter formation (see Appendix 4). Year 1 and 2 will build on this development to include graphemes to produce a joined legible handwriting style on a daily basis. KS2 will also continue to develop the fluency of joins in line with the schools’ handwriting scheme and will be taught explicitly for three 15-minute handwriting lessons per week. Children who find handwriting difficult should be targeted for daily intervention.

St Peter’s Catholic Primary School uses the Nelson Thornes Handwriting Scheme with the following letter formation.

Lower case letters

A row of lowercase cursive letters from 'a' to 'z' in blue ink, showing the characteristic slanted and joined style.

Capitals

A row of uppercase cursive letters from 'A' to 'Z' in blue ink, showing the characteristic slanted and joined style.

Numbers

A row of numbers from '1' to '0' in blue ink, showing the characteristic slanted and joined style.

The Four Joins

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

A row of lowercase cursive letters from 'a' to 'z' in blue ink, showing the characteristic slanted and joined style with visible joins between letters.

The break letters (letters that aren’t joined from) are: b g j p q s x y z

See **Appendix 2** for examples of the break letters

Early Years Foundation Stage

Establishing good handwriting habits in Reception is vital. We will ensure that each child holds the pencil comfortably and appropriately. Pupils will be encouraged to hold a pencil in the hand that they are comfortable with. Some pupils will take longer than others to establish a dominant hand. Children will be taught correct posture for writing at a table (feet on the floor; bottom to the back of the chair; pencil in one hand and the other hand on the paper). (See Appendix 3)

We will provide 'chubby' pencils – both writing and colouring. Develop body strength and co-ordination as well as fine motor skills, that support them to meet the physical development/ develop the fine motor skills that underpin writing. Pupils will be taught letter formation alongside Little Wandle Letters & Sounds phonic sessions.

Key Stage One

Handwriting in Year 1

Handwriting will be reinforced throughout every writing activity in Year 1. The handwriting of graphemes and words will be reinforced in all phonics and writing sessions. Early morning work and homework will consist of handwriting practise where appropriate. If pupils struggle with particular letter formations or with certain joins, they will need extra handwriting sessions / fine motor skills sessions. Wide-lined paper, mid-lined paper guides. They will be introduced to narrower lined paper once they can write legibly and easily on wider lined.

Handwriting in Year 2

Discrete handwriting sessions will be taught when appropriate. Handwriting needs to be modelled and reinforced through all written activities – in all subjects. All letters are to be joined. Teachers to reinforce Year 1 progression and use Nelson Handwriting, to reinforce the handwriting scheme.

Key Stage Two

Handwriting in Year 3, 4, 5 and 6

Handwriting needs to be modelled and reinforced throughout all writing activities and if appropriate, through separate handwriting sessions - by all adults. All handwriting is joined. All letters start on the line. All letters are to be joined. When writing is modelled, whether it is the date on the board or shared writing on a flipchart, all adults must model the handwriting policy.

Inclusion

All members of staff at St Peter's Catholic Primary School set high expectations for all pupils. Adaptive equipment is available for those that struggle with underlying stability, gross and fine motor skills. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging learning for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Subject Leader

The English Subject Leader should monitor the teaching of Handwriting regularly. This may be done through book scrutiny, planning scrutiny, lesson observation or pupil feedback.

The role of the English leader is to:

- Raise the profile of the subject in all areas.
- Ensure effective development of whole school policy and practice.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of Literacy work across the school to ensure shared and good practice.

- Lead staff meetings
- Plan/lead INSET activities
- Provide consultancy/advice
- Specify and order all resources
- Co-ordinate staff requests for resources
- Monitor and maintain the condition and availability of resources.
- To keep abreast of new initiatives and incentives in English.
- Liaise with BCT and other leading establishments for guidance and updates.

Class Teacher

The role of the teacher is to:

- Ensure left handed children are sat at the left hand side of the desk.
- Ensure children have time to practise the key skills needed to produce a legible, joined handwriting style.
- Ensure children present their work with pride, in a neat and legible way.
- Continually develop their own skills, knowledge and practises in response to the English National Curriculum, identifying their own needs and notifying the Literacy co-ordinator of any training developments needed.
- Adopt a consistent approach to teaching literacy skills in lessons; including the modelling of handwriting in guidance with school policy.
- Plan, prepare for and deliver lessons matched to the National Curriculum which will engage and enable all children to make progress.
- Ensure that any observed damage to equipment which could cause subsequent injury is isolated from use and reported.

Assessment

At St Peter's, Teachers use effective assessment for learning to ensure planning is based on prior attainment. Effective verbal feedback is used to move the pupils' learning on within lessons. Phase leaders in team meetings and senior leaders will monitor children's writing and presentation in books regularly (at least termly). 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 the Level Descriptors in the National Curriculum?

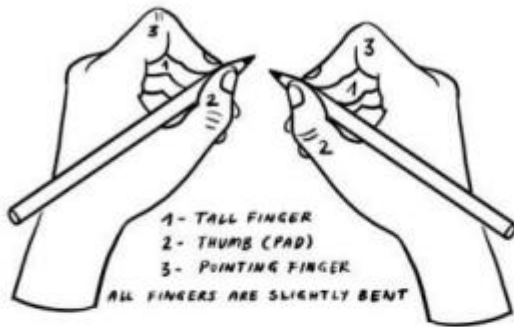
This policy links to the Assessment policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation of this Policy

The LGC are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy by in-school monitoring such as learning walks. The policy is reviewed every 12 months, in consultation with the whole school community including staff, pupils, parents, carers and governors.

Appendix 1:

Finger positioning using the tripod grip:



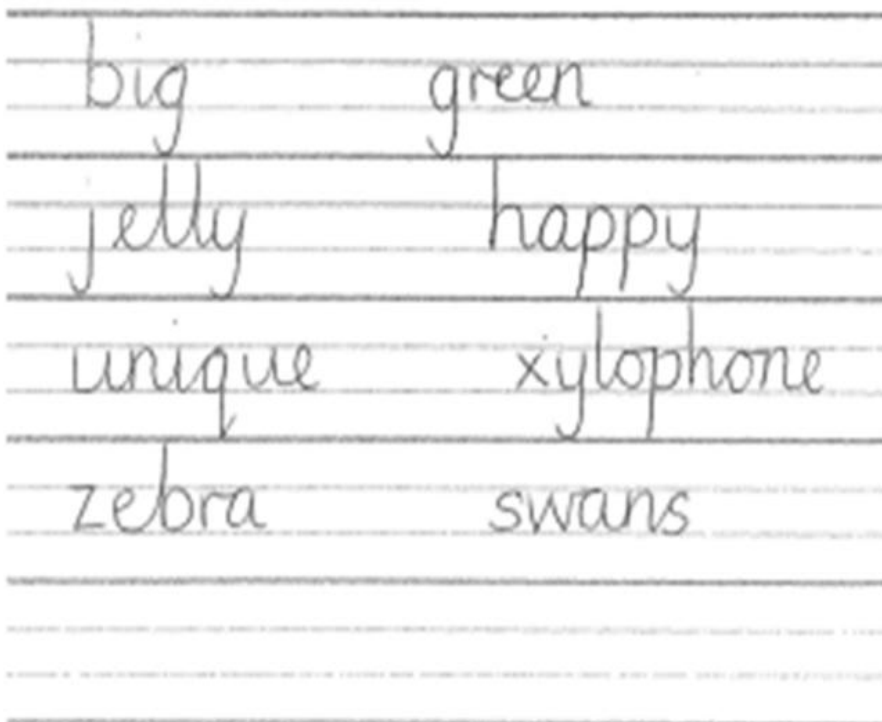
Paper positioning for right-handers:



Paper positioning for left-handers:



Appendix 2: Examples of break letters



Appendix 3:

Here's a warm up that's great for posture and a positive attitude. Use it before cursive handwriting lessons and during it, refreshing and can be done even in a crowded class. If it's manageable, let your students jump in place first.

APPENDIX 1



Push palms



Pull hands



Hug yourself tightly



Reach high, one hand, then other
Reach - make circles in the air

* BLOCKS



Pull up on chair



* Stack your blocks



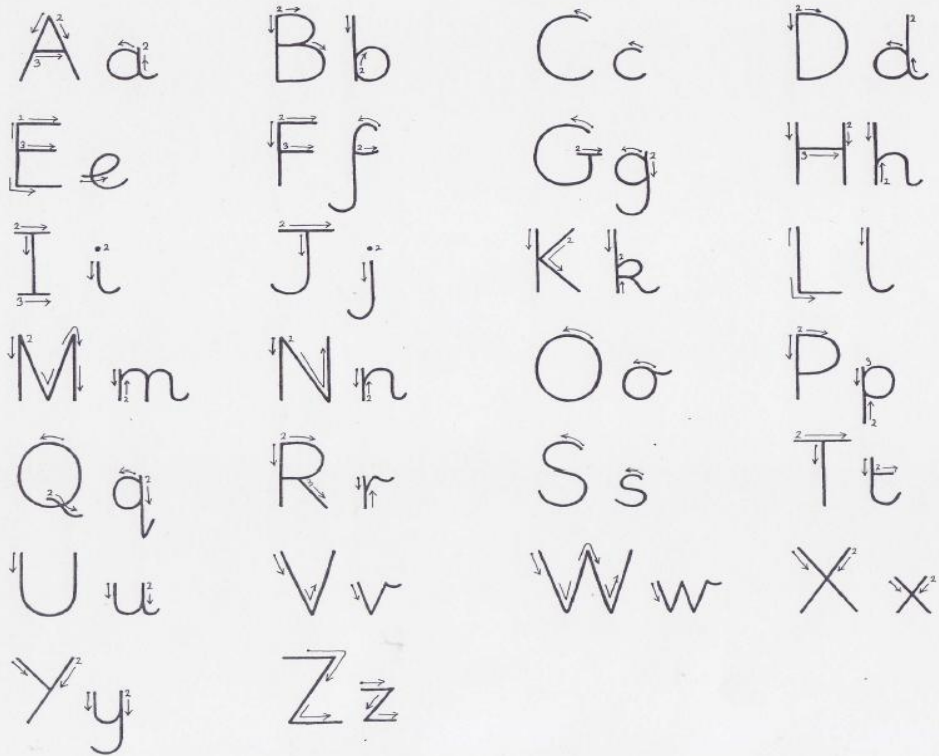
Assume an outrageous posture



Stack your blocks again!

Appendix 4:

LETTER FORMATION FOR RIGHT-HANDED CHILDREN



LETTER FORMATION FOR LEFT-HANDED CHILDREN

