

Handwriting Policy

Committee Name:	Standards and Achievement Committee
Date of Approval:	May 2023
Validity Date:	May 2025
Person responsible:	Head Teacher

‘Together, we live and grow in the love of Jesus Christ.’

At St Saviour’s CE Primary School we believe that neat, well-formed handwriting and presentation of written work helps to raise standards as the pupils take pride in and have a sense of ownership of their work.

Rationale

- Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Through effective teaching, joined handwriting can be mastered by most pupils by the end of Year 2, enabling them, with practice, to go on to develop a faster and more mature hand.
- Handwriting is a fine motor movement skill and children need to practice handwriting movements correctly and often.
- The first handwriting lessons in Foundation Stage are vital. It is most important to ensure that our children learn to form the letters of the alphabet with the correct sequence of strokes from the beginning and secure the correct pencil grip.

Aims

- To continue to raise standards in writing across the school by ensuring a clearly structured, taught progression in handwriting and presentation skills.
- To have high expectations of handwriting and presentation skills.
- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children’s books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.
- For pupils to:
 - Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters which are joined for the vast majority of children by the time they leave Year 2.
 - Develop flow and speed, so that eventually they can produce the letters automatically in their independent writing.

Strategy for Implementation - Handwriting

Handwriting is taught regularly in every class through short, focused sessions and may be linked with spelling, grammar or phonic objectives. The teaching of handwriting may be undertaken as a discrete session, although

shared and guided writing also provides additional opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting. However, handwriting is a cross-curricular task and will be taken into consideration during all lessons.

Teaching and Learning

- Handwriting is a skill that needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a fine motor movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher and learning assistant is very important.
- Children will use a variety of mark making tools but when formal handwriting lessons take place handwriting pencils / pens will be used.
- It is not sufficient to require pupils to just copy models from a published scheme or worksheet.
- Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed, and the models provided is the key to effective learning.
- A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching is planned.

The role of the Teacher and Teaching Assistant:

- To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting.
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling e.g. through using lines on flipcharts.
- To provide resources and an environment which promotes good handwriting.
- To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development.
- To correct letter / number formation as early as possible to prevent poor handwriting habits becoming embedded.

(All members of staff, including teaching assistants, supply teachers and children are provided with appropriate handwriting models and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example).

Continuity and Progression

Appendix 1 - For agreed letter formation

Appendix 2 - Correct posture and grip

Foundation Stage

- 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.
- 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 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.
- Tracing over / under patterns and shapes are an important stage of development.
- Children should also spend time making large marks and the sizes should decrease as they become more accurate with their mark making.
- Letters are taught in families with rhymes as appropriate and are linked to the order in which graphemes are learnt in GES Simply Letters and Sounds (Appendix 1).
- A focus will be on writing their own name.
- Letters should be formed correctly, and children should leave spaces between words, form capital letters and begin to use where appropriate. Children should also be taught to form numerals that are consistent in size and orientation.

- The focus throughout Term 1-4 is lowercase letter formation. We teach capital letters as and when they come up e.g. in names and titles of books. We teach the formation of all capital letters in the summer terms.

Key Stage 1

- Building on the Foundation Stage, pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a legible style and begin to join their letters in Year 1. This is dependent on the physical ability not age of the child. This is normally achieved in Year 1 by developing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and by practicing handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing. If the child would benefit from making large marks, tracing over, copying under and pattern making then provision must be made for this.
- Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion are taught in line with the school's agreed handwriting style. This continues in Year 2 when children with legible, joined handwriting can earn a 'pen license' which will be awarded by a member of staff.
- Children will write legibly using upper and lower-case letters with correct orientation.
- Letters should sit on the baseline and be consistent in size with ascenders and descenders that are the correct length and formation.
- Children should continue to leave spaces between words, form capital letters and use them where appropriate. They should also be able to form numerals that are consistent in size and sit on the base line.
- Children will improve the speed of writing and begin to write automatically thus promoting creativity in their independent writing.

Formal teaching of handwriting is to be carried out regularly and systematically and a developmental approach is used to move children through the phases, being mindful of end of Key Stage expectations if additional support via interventions is needed.

Strategy for Implementation - Presentation

It is essential that all children should have pride in their work and that it is set out well.

- At Key Stage 1 children will generally begin new work on a new page each lesson as appropriate for ability.
- Teacher's comments or symbols will indicate whether a correction needs to be addressed.
- Criteria for presentation of work will be discussed with the children prior to commencement of work.
- Any pictures should be coloured in pencil crayons. Felt pens should not be used in exercise books.
- Rulers will always be used where children need to draw lines.
- Children will be reminded to take care of their book and present their work neatly.
- Pupils will begin using pen in Key Stage 2 as soon as possible.

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support- thicker triangular pencils, pencil grips and wider lines will be used by children experiencing problems with writing alongside other activities to develop their fine motor skills.

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision.

(See Appendix 2)

The Learning Environment

- A dedicated writing area is established in all Foundation stage classrooms so that writing resources are centrally displayed.

- Writing areas/boxes are equipped with a range of writing implements and materials.
- Throughout both key stages teachers display both handwritten and word-processed work to give a high profile to developing a neat, legible cursive style.

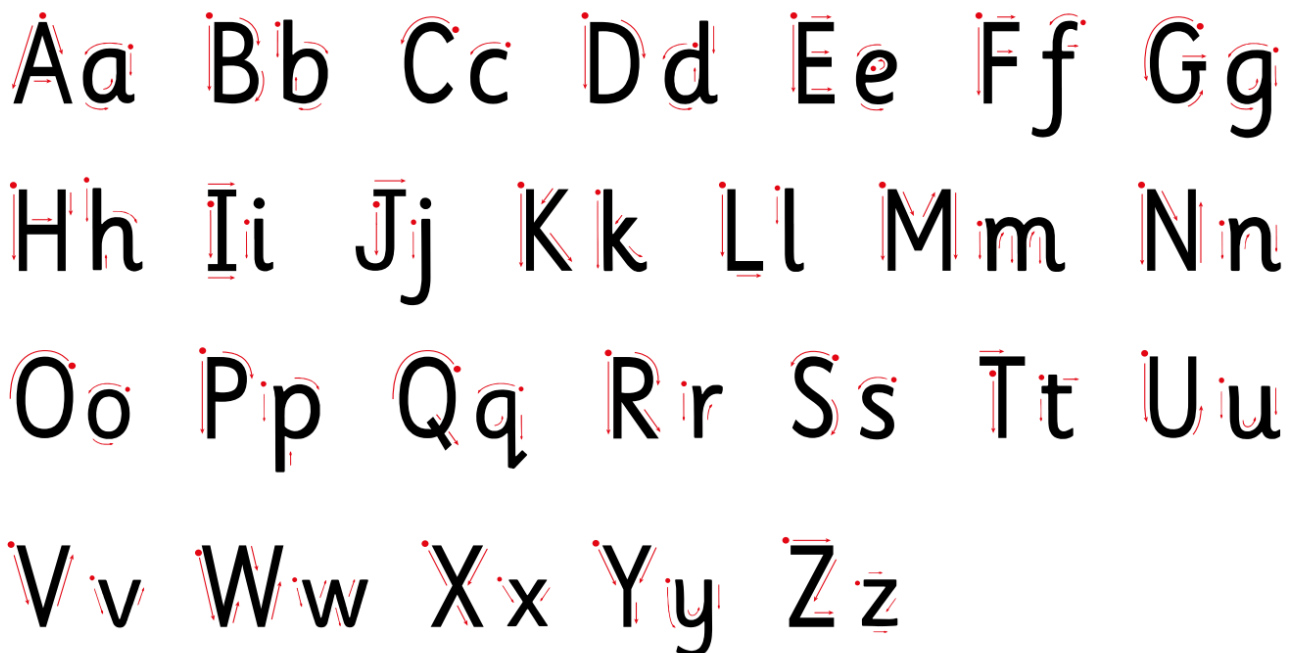
The Role of Parents and Carers

The Foundation Stage teachers play an important role in communicating this at an early stage, for example, to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to their pupils by using only capital letters for the beginning of their names, practicing drawing patterns together, playing joining up games which encourage left to right directionality.

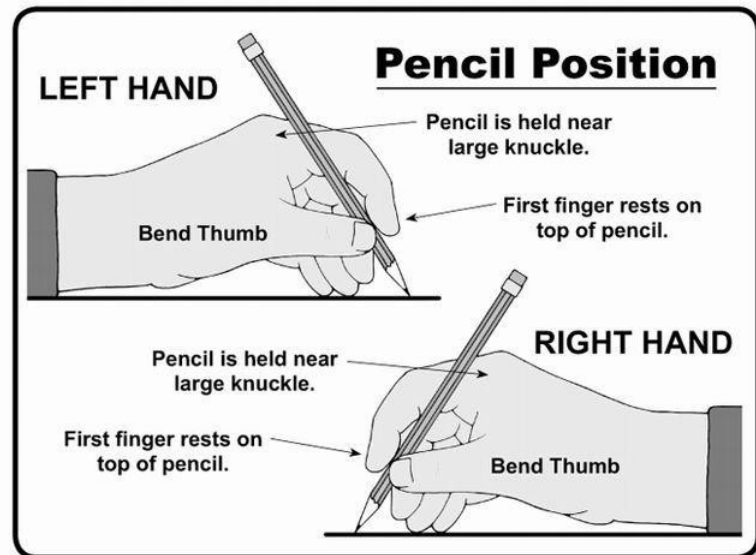
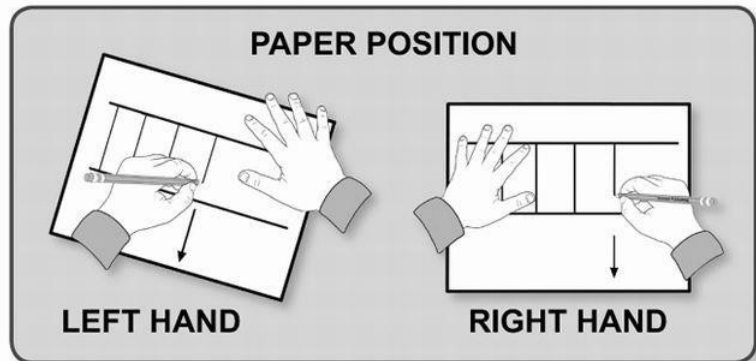
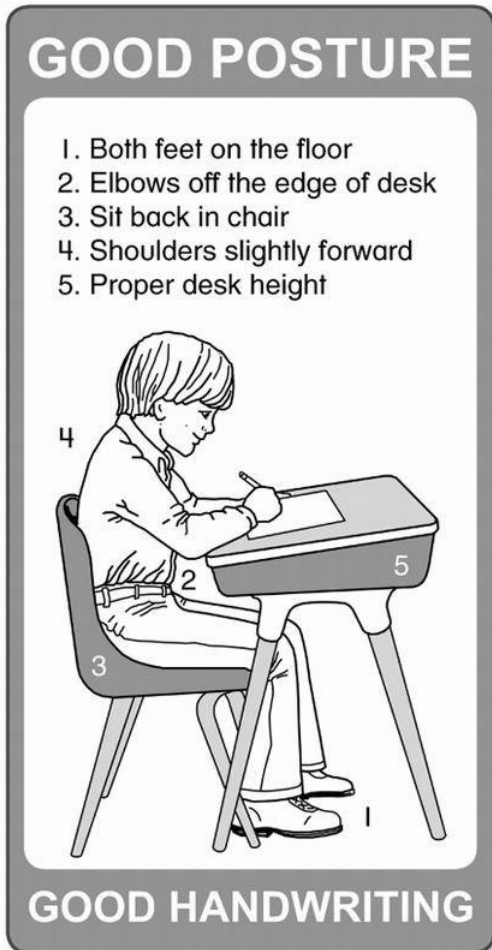
Monitoring and Evaluation

- This will be undertaken by the class teacher and will also be assessed as part of each term's writing assessments.
- When undertaking work scrutiny subject leaders will monitor all subjects for neat presentation and legible, accurately formed handwriting.
- The English Lead will monitor that handwriting is taught, practiced and modelled throughout the school.
- This policy will be reviewed annually.

Appendix 1 – lower- and upper-case letter formation.



Appendix 2- Correct posture and grip



Additional Strategies for left handed children

- Check that a left-hander is not sitting too close to the right of a right-hander. This will avoid their arms colliding. Some, but not all, left handers will find writing easier if they can sit on a higher chair BUT that their feet are still firmly on the floor.
- When copying a word, numbers, letters, writing patterns etc. a left-hander is helped if these are placed down the right-hand side of the page.
- Extra practices with left to right exercises may be necessary before pupils write like this automatically.