

ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

MAGHERY



HAND WRITING POLICY

Policy developed: October 2020

Ratified by BOG: December 2020

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters and words through a series of flowing movements and patterns. Handwriting skills should be taught regularly and systematically through the use of our agreed script.

Aims

At St Mary's Primary School our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters
- 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:

Teaching and Learning

Children should be able to

- Develop a recognition and prediction 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
- Be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement
- Be shown how to be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes
- Be encouraged to use their skills with confidence and pride in real life situations

Teaching of handwriting generally occurs outside the English lesson, although shared and guided writing provides many opportunities for modelling and the monitoring of handwriting.

Teachers and staff will model good handwriting practice at all times



Learning Environment

Within the classroom and the school surroundings, there should be a mix of different prints and cursive writing on display

When learning letter sounds we follow the linguistic phonics scheme. Children need to know that there are different types of font such as books, computers etc. These all produce a wide range of writing styles. For the purposes of recognising letters, children will be shown regular print alongside cursive.

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

Early Years

- Children will access a range of learning opportunities to develop essential pre-writing skills
- The children will access a range of activities that requires them to develop pincer skills grasping small objects such as making collage pictures using pieces of wool or string, decorating iced biscuits with small cake decorations
- The children will access a range of learning opportunities that will support the development of control of writing implements, and develop hand eye co-ordination and fine motor strength. They will learn directional sequences and movements
- The children will learn to sit in the correct position and hold a pencil correctly to allow fluid movement of the tip. They will hold a pencil using a tripod grip for writing and will be encouraged to correct any errors
- The children will understand that letters have a beginning and ending. They will learn that letters are part of "Letter Families" and will begin to form recognisable letters, capital letters and numerals.

Children are provided with a designated "writing area" to give status to their early independent writing and develop a positive attitude to the act of writing, and left-right orientation is encouraged.

By the end of the foundation stage, most children are able to use a pencil, holding it effectively to form letters, upper and lower case, most of which are correctly formed using our agreed school font.

Handwriting lessons are undertaken at least once a week in Primary 1&2 in which individual letter formation is consolidated.

Specific needs of individual pupils are met through individual or small group support with the teacher or teaching assistant.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1, building on the Foundation Stage, pupils develop a legible style. This is achieved by reinforcing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and by practising handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing. The Prim-Ed Books A and B will be used to teach the correct letter orientation, formation and proportions. (With the exceptions of letters, h, x and z). Children use handwriting for all writing, except where other special forms are required.

Handwriting practice is undertaken at least once a week in Primary 3 and 4. Within Primary 3 this is to reinforce the good practice from Primary 2. In Primary 4, the 'flick' is introduced in individual letter format.

Specific needs of individual pupils are met through individual or small group support with the teacher or classroom assistant.

Key Stage 2

In Key stage 2, pupils' handwriting speed, fluency, and legibility are built up through practice. In Primary 5 children are introduced to and encouraged to join small words together, this being developed upon in Primary 6&7. *We acknowledge that in some cases this may not be appropriate.* The Prim-Ed books C and D will be used to teach the correct letter orientation, formation and proportions. Children will use joined handwriting for all writing unless other specific forms are required, e.g. printing on a map, note taking, posters etc. - appropriateness to the task being paramount. Handwriting practice will take place at least once per week in Primary 5,6 &7.

Children will begin to use a handwriting pen for the majority of classwork where appropriate in Primary 7.

Specific needs of individual pupils are met through individual or small group support with the teacher or classroom assistant.

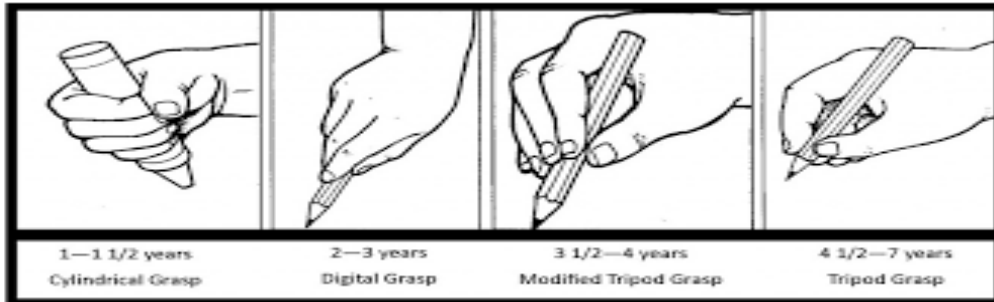
Key Stage One and Two

As well as Correct Posture and Suitable Pencil Grip, children will be able to demonstrate

- Correct placement of book
- The importance of maintaining pencils i.e. length and sharpness
- Correct formation of lower and upper case letters and numbers
- Suitable speed and fluency, correct size and shape of letters
- Correct starting and exit points of letters
- Neat and legible handwriting
- Correct use of dotted thirds

Foundation, Key Stage One and Two

Pencil Grip and Seating Position



The dynamic tripod grasp (with the pencil/pen pinched between the ball of the thumb and the fore-finger, supported by the middle finger with the other fingers tucked into the hand) is recommended once the child is developmentally ready to hold a writing implement. This minimises the risk of strain and offers the greatest control. The diagrams above show the recommended pencil writing grip which we in St Mary's will operate.

Foundation, Key Stage One and Two

What is good posture

- Children should be encouraged to sit right and then write
- Knees, hips & ankles at 90 degrees
- knees comfortably under the desks
- Shoulders relaxed
- Arms resting comfortably resting on the desk
- Neck balancing lightly on top of spine and in the middle of the body



Left-Handedness

Left-handed children not only use a different hand to write, they need to position their workbook/pages etc. differently from other children and will need to form some capital letters differently from right-handed children. These letters are shown below:

A E F H T (REF: My Handwriting Workbook Book Prim Ed series)

The Role of Parents

Parents are encouraged to ensure Homework and general handwriting is a neat and legible style with correctly formed letters, reinforcing the practice the same as that which takes place in school.

ICT

Pupils are encouraged to use and evaluate a range of fonts and styles and select and appropriately to suit a particular purpose. The school will make use of Activ- Inspire to demonstrate proper legible style.

Assessment (Foundation Stage)

MIST test (Primary 2) with focus on letter formations, reversals etc

Assessment (Key Stage One and Two)

Staff will use the Assessment Templates and Pupil Progress Trackers within the Prim-Ed series to carry through Assessment of Handwriting Skills, both at the beginning and end of the school year and on other occasions where deemed necessary.

Teacher and Head-teacher Awards

Will also be presented on occasions where this practice has improved, where genuine efforts have been made by the child, and for exemplary practice

This Policy was developed by staff in St. Mary's Primary School October 2020 and ratified by Board of Governors, December 2020

Signed: _____(Chairperson)

Mr J. Mc Kee

_____(School Principal)

Miss R Robinson