

Handwriting Policy



St. Mary's RC Primary School

Mission Statement

We live learn and grow together with Jesus through:

- Showing love to all
- Encouraging friendship to include everybody
- Acting with honesty through prayer
- Being thankful for all God's gifts
- Remaining respectful through our actions
- Forgiving someone when they are sorry
- Displaying patience by being calm and caring
- Demonstrating compassion to everyone in God's family
- Leading in service by supporting our school community

Written by: Lois Quinn

Date written: June 2026

Approved by governors on: June 2028

Policy will be reviewed: When necessary

At Saint Mary's Primary School, we are very proud of our pupil's handwriting and take particular care in our cursive handwriting style. We use Letter-join's on-line handwriting resource and progression as the basis of our handwriting policy as it covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum and builds fluency and stamina for writing.

Objective

Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality and quantity of written work throughout the curriculum. By the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils should have the ability to produce fluent, legible, joined-up handwriting, and to understand the different forms of handwriting used for different purposes. Our intention is to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.

Aims:

- To build fine and gross motor skills needed to develop early letter formation in a fun and engaging way.
- To develop a neat, legible, handwriting style using continuous cursive letters, which leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing.
- To establish and maintain high expectations for the presentation of written work.
- For pupils to understand, by the end of Year 6, the importance of neat presentation and the need for different letterforms (cursive, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly.

Expectations

To ensure consistency throughout the school, all teaching staff are encouraged to model the cursive style in all their handwriting, including whiteboards, shared and modelled writing or when giving feedback in pupils' books. Wherever possible, worksheets should also be in cursive script and used minimally to encourage children's writing.

Pupils should experience coherence and continuity in the learning and teaching of handwriting across all school years and be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work. Our objective is to help pupils enjoy learning and developing their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride.

Pens and pencils

All children will use a pencil for handwriting and written work throughout the school. Children in Year 6 will be issued with a handwriting pen and will be expected to use this consistently across their written work.

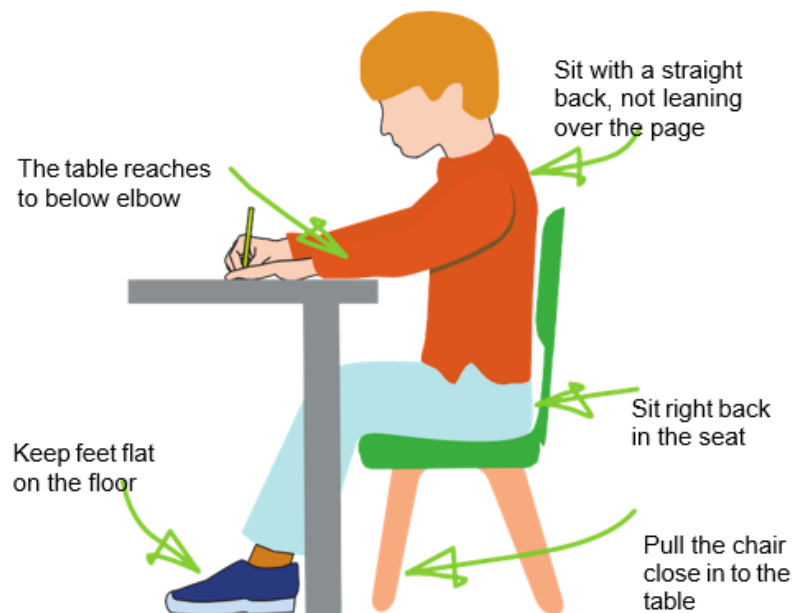
Inclusion

For children who experience handwriting difficulties due to fine motor development, including those who are left-handed or have special educational needs, appropriate support and reasonable adjustments will be provided to help them develop their handwriting skills.

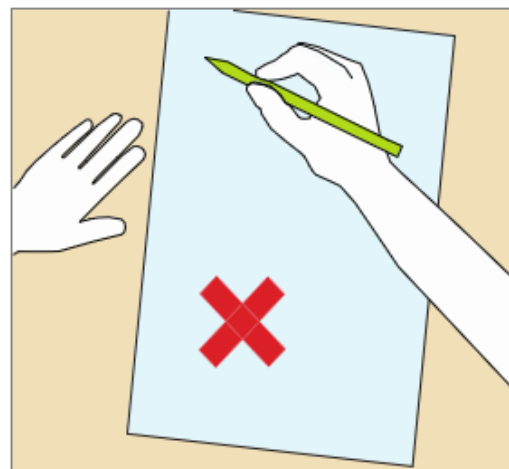
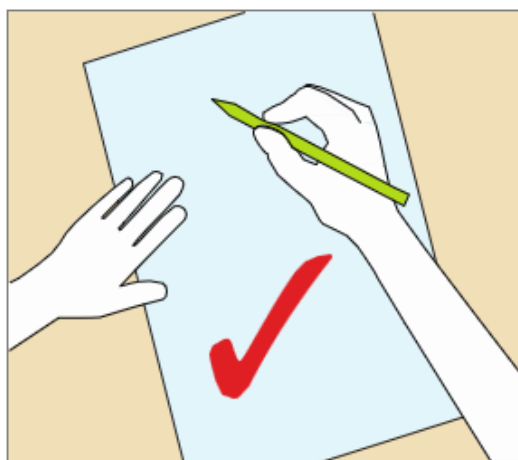
Correct Posture and Pencil Grip for Handwriting

Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

Sitting Position



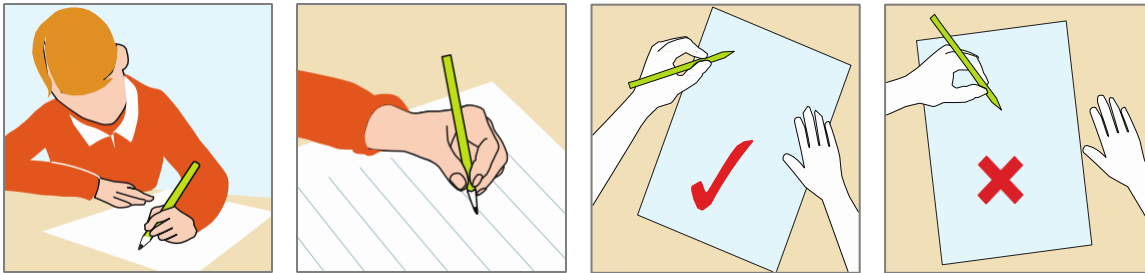
Paper position for right-handed children.



Left Handed Children

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow the movements of right-handed teachers as they model letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.

- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.



Paper position for left-handed children.

The Tripod Pencil Grip

Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib. We use the Tripod Grip Rhyme:

Right-handed pencil grip



Point away the pencil,

Pinch it near the tip,

Lift it off the table,

Spin it round...

and grip.

Left-handed pencil grip



Point away the pencil,

Pinch it near the tip,

Lift it off the table,

Spin it round...

and grip.

Phase Expectations for Handwriting

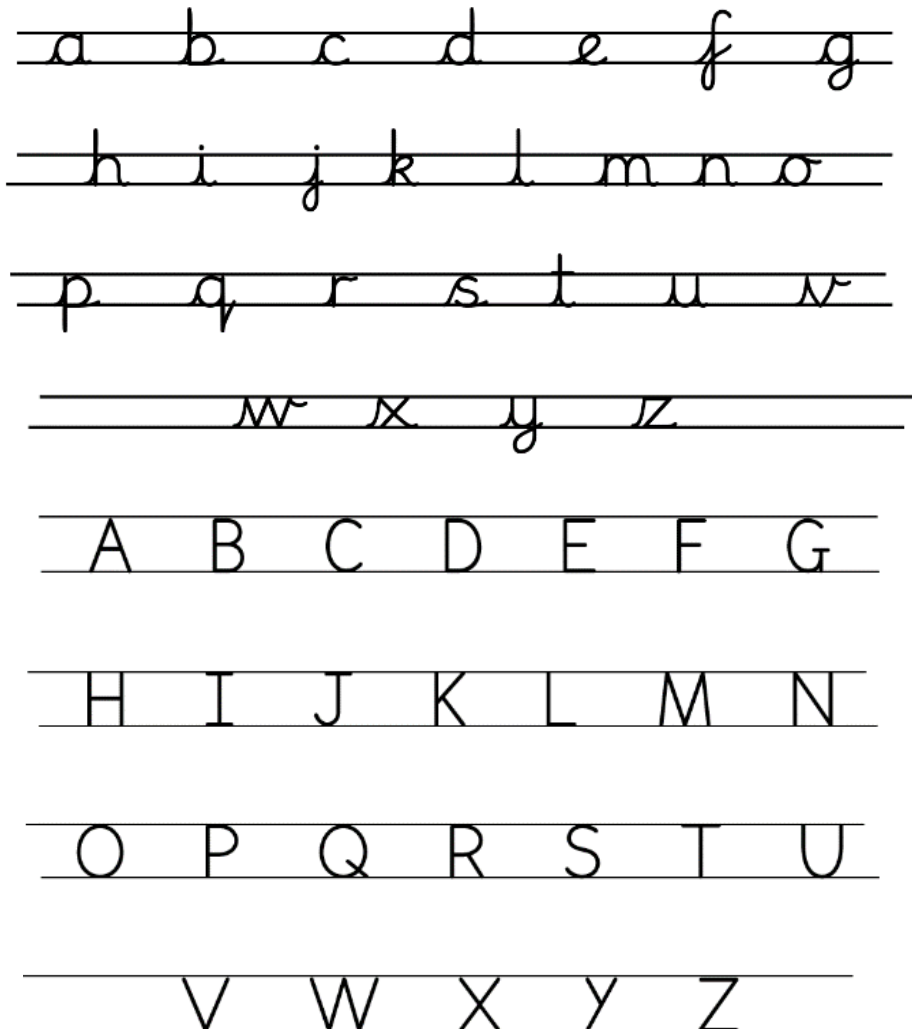
Early Years

For our youngest pupils we teach short handwriting lessons on a daily basis. Lessons will include;

- enhancing gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern-making and physical activities
- exercises to develop fine motor skills such as mark-making on paper, whiteboards, sensory trays, iPads, tablets, etc.
- becoming familiar with printed letter shapes, their sounds, formation, and vocabulary linked to letter families
- correct sitting position and pencil grip for handwriting

Our handwriting expectations are in line DFE and EEF Guidance that states; *'Accurate letter formation is an essential early skill that forms the basis of a fluent handwriting style. There is no quick way to develop these essential skills other than through regular and substantial practice.'*

By the end of Early Years Foundation Stage all children should be able to recognise and form correctly all printed uppercase and lowercase letters of the alphabet from the correct starting point so they are Year 1 ready.

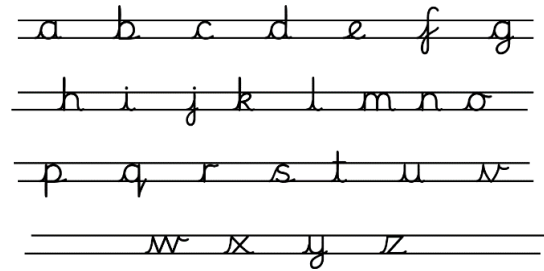


Key Stage 1: Years 1 and 2

In Key Stage 1, is taught through a daily 20-minute lesson. Lessons build on children's individual starting points and progressively develop the skills needed to achieve fluent, fully cursive, joined handwriting.

Lessons will include;

- continuing with gross and fine motor skills exercises
- learning cursive through letter families
- revisiting numerals, capitals and printed letters; where and when to use the lead in, learning and practice
- knowing high frequency words
- dictation exercises
- strengthening cursive handwriting, learning and practice
- KS1 SATs Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar exercises



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Letter Families

Find out which letters belong to each family with this fun Letter Families activity.

Letter-join

Zig-zag Letters

Trace the letter

Choose a letter family and practise writing the letters:

- Long Ladder Letters >
- Curly Caterpillar Letters >
- One-armed Robot Letters >
- Zig-zag Letters >

A screenshot of a digital activity titled 'Letter Families'. It features a green background with the title 'Letter Families' in a large, cursive font. Below the title, there is a text box that says 'Find out which letters belong to each family with this fun Letter Families activity.' There is a 'Letter-join' button. The main area is divided into four sections, each with a different letter family and a corresponding illustration: 'Long Ladder Letters' with a ladder, 'Curly Caterpillar Letters' with a caterpillar, 'One-armed Robot Letters' with a robot, and 'Zig-zag Letters' with a zig-zag line. Each section has a 'Trace the letter' button and a 'Choose a letter family and practise writing the letters:' prompt. A hand is shown pointing at the 'Zig-zag Letters' section.

With the regular handwriting practice throughout Key stage 1, children will develop the fluency and speed of their writing to ensure it becomes automatic and that they have the stamina to achieve well in lessons and meet age related expectations.

Key Stage 2:

In Lower Key Stage 2, children continue to develop and refine their handwriting skills through regular curriculum activities, including spelling lessons and written work across the curriculum. In Years 5 and 6, handwriting expectations are reinforced through every day writing, with additional support provided where needed. Children should be using a cursive style throughout their independent writing in all subjects, helping to refine their handwriting in line with the requirements of each lesson.

By the end of Key Stage 2 all children will have been given the opportunity to develop the stamina and skills to write at length in a given time frame, with accurate spelling and punctuation. They will be able to work towards producing consistently neat and well-presented handwriting in all curriculum subjects. Children should be producing cursive writing automatically, without thought, enabling them to focus on the content of their work rather than the process of writing so that they can achieve well in lessons and meet age related expectations for Year 6.

Handwriting at Home

Parents can support their children's handwriting at home by using the Pupil log-in for Letter-join provided below;

Tablet log-in

User name: qr7433

Swipe code: A capital 'L' shape starting at top left.

PC log-in

User name: qr7433

Account Password: home



Children can watch the word and letter animations and practice and explore other handwriting resources on Letter-join including;

- Magic Patterns
- Magic Words
- Phonics Match
- Word Search
- Word Bank
- Write it Right!

There are lots interactive and engaging activities for all year groups to support letter formation, cursive handwriting and spelling, grammar and punctuation.

