



# ST GEORGE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Handwriting and Presentation

## POLICY



**INSPIRED BY GOSPEL VALUES, TO GROW AND LEARN  
THROUGH FAITH, LOVE AND LAUGHTER**

At St George's Catholic Primary School, we believe that neat, well-formed handwriting and presentation of written work helps to raise standards and encourage the pupils to take pride and have a sense of ownership of their work. As a school, we support the teaching of cursive handwriting which is progressive throughout each teaching phase using the principles of 'Letter-join' handwriting scheme.

**There are four main purposes to this policy:**

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils;
- To establish expectations for teachers of this subject;
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school;
- To state the school's approaches to this subject in order to promote public and parents' and carers' understanding of the curriculum.

**Background**

**Why is a handwriting policy important for a primary school?**

*Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Given effective teaching, handwriting can be mastered by most pupils by the time they are seven or eight years old enabling them, with practice, to go on to develop a faster and more mature hand ready for secondary school and adult life. The surest way to ensure consistent teaching and the development of legible, fluent joined handwriting throughout the school is to have a written policy agreed and put into practice by all staff. Handwriting is a movement skill, children need to practise handwriting movements correctly and often. The first handwriting lessons are vital and the most important issue is to ensure that the children we teach learn to form the letters of the alphabet with the correct sequence of strokes from the beginning. The correct formation of all letters needs to become quite automatic and may require a lot of practice.*

**Suzanne Tiburtius of the National Handwriting Association**

**Aims**

**For the school:**

- To raise standards in writing across the school.
- To have a consistent approach across EYFS, Key Stage One and Two when teaching handwriting and presentation of work throughout the school.
- 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 legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting.
- To develop flow and speed, so that eventually they are able to produce the letters automatically and in their independent writing.

## **Strategy for Implementation**

### **Entitlement and curriculum provision**

Handwriting is taught regularly through short, focused sessions and may be linked with spelling, grammar or phonics objectives. Teaching generally occurs outside English lessons, although shared and guided writing also provides additional opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important; it is not sufficient to require pupils to copy models from a published scheme or worksheet. St George's promotes the principles of 'Letter-join' handwriting scheme and celebrates the individuality and creativity that pupils bring to their style. 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:**

- To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting.
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling.
- To provide resources and an environment that promotes good handwriting.
- To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development.

### **Inclusion**

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and a specific individual or group programme is drawn up in consultation with the SEND co-ordinator. Developing gross and fine motor skills, using writing aids such as thicker triangular pencils, pencil grips and wider lines will be used by children experiencing barriers to writing alongside other activities to develop their fine motor skills.

### **The learning environment**

A dedicated mark making/writing area is established in EYFS. At Key Stage 1, pupils have access to writing materials indoors and in learning opportunities that access continuous provision and outdoor learning space.

Writing areas/boxes are equipped with a range of writing implements and materials. In KS2 suitable materials are available for pupils to work at their own tables. Throughout all Key stages, teachers display both handwritten and word- processed work to promote a legible cursive style.

### **The role of parents and carers**

The Early Years 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, practising drawing patterns together, playing joining up games which encourage left to right directionality. The

early years teachers, in partnership with the English subject leader, are expected to communicate with pre-school agencies to encourage good practice.

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

### Monitoring and Evaluation

This will be undertaken by the class teacher and will also be assessed as part of the school's monitoring and evaluation schedule.

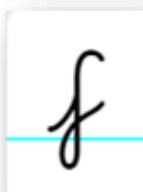
### Principles of Letter-join

At St George's, class teachers follow this handwriting schedule:

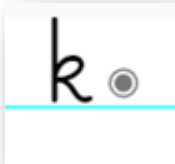
Class/Year Group	Letter-join Principle	Information
EYFS	Print letters	Model line in joins when teaching digraphs and trigraphs
Year 1	Y1 Autumn – print Y1 Spring – pre-cursive Y1 Summer – cursive	Model line in joins when teaching digraphs and trigraphs
Year 2	Y2 Autumn 1 – revise pre-cursive/cursive  Autumn 2 - cursive	Model line in joins when teaching digraphs and trigraphs  Any modelled writing from Autumn 2 will be cursive
KS2	Cursive	Line in joins with possible loops

### Key Letters

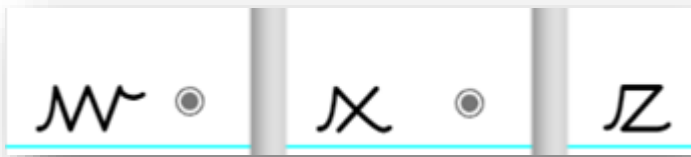
In EYFS and Key Stage 1, the letter f is modelled starting with a line in from the line into the top of the f, back down below the line with a loop to join the centre of the letter in readiness to join other letters.



In Key Stage 2, pupils will have the top loop modelled and children can make an informed decision about the handwriting formation as long as their handwriting is joined.



The letter k has a line in from the bottom of the line, all the way to the top of the k, back down to the line, up half way then a loop with a line across with a kick (line in to another letter).



## Early Years Foundation Stage

In the EYFS, pupils will have many opportunities to hold a range of mark making resources in order to develop and strengthen their gross and fine motor skills in order to mark make effectively. Children develop these skills at different stages. Below is a guide to support this awareness.

**TYPICAL PENCIL GRASP DEVELOPMENT FOR HANDWRITING**

10 Months Pincer Grasp	12-15 Months Palmar Supinate Grasp	2-3 Years Digital Pronate Grasp	3-4 Years Quadrupod Grasp
			
			
	3-4 Years Static Tripod Grasp		5-6 Years Dynamic Tripod Grasp



**Heather Greutman, Occupational Therapist-Growing Hands**

The Early years Foundation Stage Profile 2022 states that children working at the expected level by the end of Reception will:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing using the tripod grip in almost all cases
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing
- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

### EYFS Guidelines

Pupils will receive discrete handwriting sessions each day to develop their pencil grip and letter formation. As children learn phase 3 phonemes (End of Set 1 Read, Write Inc - th, ch, qu, ng, nk), they will be introduced to digraphs and then trigraphs. Children will learn how to form printed letters and what these letters look like when joined

Pupils' writing during Reception will generally develop at a slower pace than their reading. This is because they need to encode the sounds they hear in words (spelling skills), develop the physical skill needed for handwriting, and learn how to organise their ideas in writing.

Pupils should be taught to:

- sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly



- begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- form capital letters
- form digits 0-9
- understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these (See appendix 1).
- Individual letters, digraphs and trigraphs are taught as they are shared in their phonic phases/sets (printed and joined).

## Years 1 & 2

Pupil's writing follows a similar approach to Reception and generally develops at a slower pace than their reading. As they become more secure in their grapheme-phoneme correspondence GPC, they will be able to organise their ideas in writing more effectively. Phonic and handwriting lessons that specifically teach joins, begin in Year 1.

- Pupils begin to practice forming letters that belong to specific 'handwriting families.' (ie – letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

Joins are supported by 'Letter-join' handwriting scheme. Year 1 follow the pre-cursive (print to cursive) approach until the Summer term where they begin to adapt and develop cursive joins. Research has shown that developing cursive writing supports increased spelling development and as each phonic set/phase is taught, so are cursive joins.

### Specific letters and their joins

As a school, we discussed specific letters that are modelled differently in the 'Read, Write, Inc Phonic Scheme'. St George's staff model 'Letter-join' formation for all letters but follow the scheme's delivery of phoneme/grapheme order and paired reading plan.

When teaching joins, the line in begins on the line. Here are the letters that can cause some barriers

#### Guidelines

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it comfortably with co-ordination so that bad habits are avoided. Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs. (See Appendix 2).

#### Measuring Progress in Years 1 & 2

I want to be anurse

because

Want to be a I soldier

ecause I want to help the

In writing, pupils at the beginning of Year 2 should be able to form individual letters correctly, so establishing good handwriting habits from the beginning.

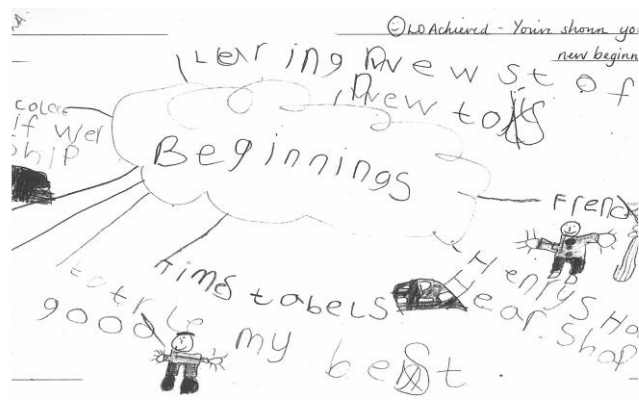
Pupils should be taught to:

- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

## Once upon a time

### Guidelines

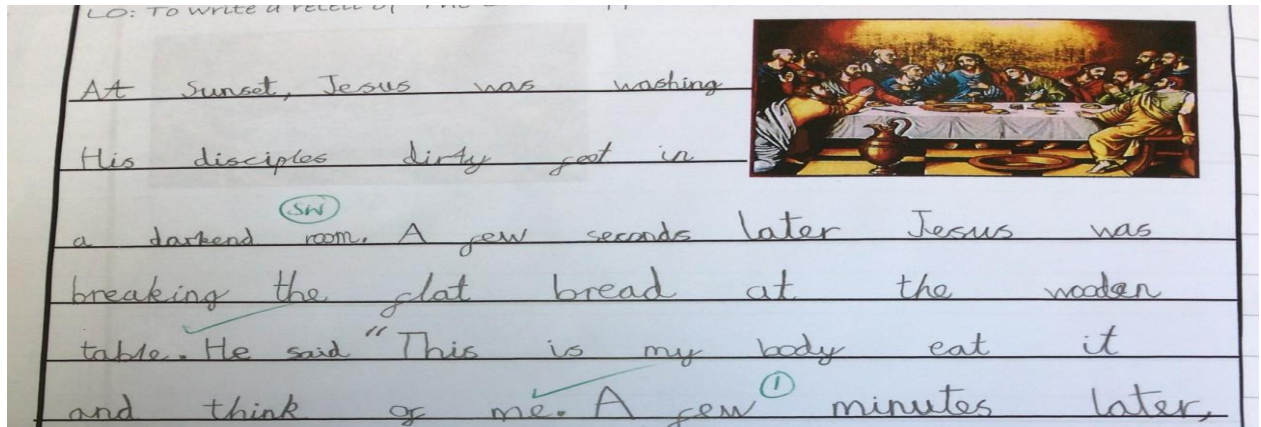
Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. Digraphs and trigraphs continue to be modelled with joins from each phonic set using accurate formation and orientation.



23.11.15

The god family prepared the baby for a Baptism. They dressed the baby in a white gown and white blanket. They went to church and the priest gave holy water in the font and made the sign of the cross on the baby's forehead. Next the godparents gave the son the baptism candle and they sang a hymn. When they had finished the hymn the priest lets them





## Years 3 & 4

Joined handwriting should be the norm; pupils should be able to use it fast enough to keep pace with what they want to say.

Pupils should be taught to:

- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.
- increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters are clear.

quick jumps the  
lazy car pencil  
letter game flex  
basket Tuesday

### Guidelines

Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

## Measuring Progress in Years 3 & 4

After I left you, I was strolling down the street when somebody suddenly grabbed around my neck. It was Nancy, Bill Sykes' friend. I was shocked. What does she want, I thought. I screamed and a crowd gathered but she pretended I was her best friend. Just then Bill Sykes appeared with his dog from the barber shop. He told his dog to watch me. I shouted for help but Nancy covered my mouth. I nearly suffocated.

When I ~~was~~ <sup>4</sup> your house, I strolled down the street. Suddenly, I felt someone's hands seized around my neck. I was shocked & turned around. It was Nancy! I asked her, "What are you doing here?" She covered my mouth then a crowd of people crowded around us. Nancy said, "Heads my run away, brother." I tried to say "I'm not..."

After I left home, I was tottering happily down the street when someone grabbed me by the neck. It was Nancy, Bill Res' friend. People gathered around us and Nancy said I was <sup>(A)</sup> little run away. Suddenly Bill came out from a bar with a drink and his dog, Bullseye. His dog hung onto my leg with his sharp razor like teeth and Nancy covered my mouth so I couldn't shout for help. I was nearly suffocated. Super writing!

## Years 5 & 6

Joined handwriting should be the norm; pupils should be able to use it fast enough to keep pace with what they want to say.

End of Key Stage 2 handwriting expectations for pupils working at the expected standard are:

- To maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed. The national curriculum states that pupils should be taught to 'use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un joined'.

Pupils should be taught to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:

- choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding, as part of their personal style, whether or not to join specific letters

quick jumps the  
lazy car pencil  
letter game flex  
basket Tuesday

- choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.



## Guidelines

Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task (e.g. quick notes or a final handwritten version). They should also be taught to use an un-joined style (e.g. for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra) and capital letters (e.g. for filling in a form).

## Measuring progress in Years 5 & 6

Christmas Day 25<sup>th</sup> December 1914. I heard a German shout  
"Hey, Tommy!" "You plugg!" Suddenly, from outta nowhere a leather  
ball was thrown onto the battle field.

Over here pal!" Fritz volleys the ball, I chested it down and  
my foot on it! England vs Germany; Blue vs Green; Blazers for good  
is referee

The match carried on till evening noon then everyone went back  
to the trench at night fall. began to set in -

After a long and arduous  
journey, without you by my side, I have  
arrived at boarding school. Oh how I miss  
home. Mother, you, our green and fruitful  
garden, my bedroom and especially your  
exquisite cooking! I hope this reaches you  
how safe I am here. than at home.

Today I was off to sign up for the army. There  
was a spherical shape of feelings, circling my  
insides as I waited and dreaded to sign  
the paper. My hands were shaking hastily  
as I shook the soldiers icy, dead hand and  
stumbled back home.

## **Presentation at St George's Catholic Primary School**

The aim for all children at St George's is to take pride in their work and celebrate their achievements by:

- Adopting a consistent approach to presentation across the school with progression in our expectations as children move up through the school.
- Motivating children to have high expectations of themselves and their school work.

Clear and thoughtful presentation helps children to organise their thinking and their learning. It supports children to remember and recall what they have learned. To ensure consistency towards the presentation of work across the school, staff should focus on the following guidelines.

All modelled, displayed and marked writing by staff should adhere to the expectations below.

### **Early Years and Key Stage 1 Expectation**

All recorded work:

- A date must be included.
- In Reception teachers date children's work or record this using an e-learning device/app.
- In Year 1, children work towards writing the short date independently. Learning Objectives must be included either by a 'printed form' or written by the pupil.
- In Year 2, children write the short date independently with the LO for the lesson depending on the subject being taught.
- When modelling writing on the whiteboard, teachers and teaching assistants model writing using 'Letter-join' formations as described in each year group at key points in the term.
- If children make a mistake they make a neat cross either side of the error and continue writing, rather than scribbling or writing large crosses through words. Rubbing out is at the discretion of the class teacher as rubbing out can damage children's books and have a negative impact on presentation.
- No felt tip pens to be used in children's books – coloured pencils and biro pens are permissible.
- All staff must follow school's agreed marking policy.

### **Key Stage 2 Expectation**

All recorded work:

- The long or short date and the learning objective is to be written neatly by the children.
- As pupils move through to upper KS2, they will underline this with a ruler.
- Teachers and Support staff will model 'Letter-join' formations in their written feedback and modelled writing in the classroom.

- Written feedback is in accordance with the marking and feedback policy for teaching and learning.
- Children may have access to rubbing out resources but this is closely monitored by the class teacher/support staff as some children spend more time cleaning errors than re-drafting.
- No felt tip pens to be used in children's books but coloured pencils and biro pens may be used for teaching and learning strategies.
- All staff must follow school's marking policy.

Work completed on sheets must be gathered and stored in plastic wallets/folders and NOT stuck into books. Some images/stimuli can be included and stuck in if this benefits the task and supports the beginning of writing activities. This is in agreement with the Key Stage Lead.

### **Displays**

All classrooms to present an English Working Wall linked to the current topic/unit. This could include key vocabulary, images to support understanding of the topic and current pupils' work. Topic books linked to current learning should also be visible and accessible to all pupils.

All classrooms to present a Maths Working Wall linked to the current topic/unit. This could include key vocabulary, images and resources to understand key concepts and examples of current pupils' work. Resources linked to current learning should also be available and accessible to all pupils.

Displays can use a range of fonts and do not have to follow the 'Letter-join' policy for handwriting. This supports pupils' awareness of different letter formations and sizes that they may come into contact with in the wider world. Displays should be well presented without ripped/ragged edges.

### **Appendix 1**

#### **Handwriting Families**

Long Ladder Letters – i, l, t, u, j, y

Curly Caterpillar Letters – a, c, f, e, s, g

One Armed Robot Letters – b, h, k, m, p, r

Zig Zag Letters – v, w, x, z

## Appendix 2

### Left-handed Letter Formation

# Letter-join's Guide to Provision for Left-handed Writers

## Recognising the needs of left-handed pupils

Teachers should be aware of the specific needs of left-handed writers and make appropriate provision. Some practical help right from the start can make a huge difference to the learning outcomes of left-handed children.

## Modelling left-handed writing

It is difficult for left-handers to follow letter formation when modelled by a right-handed teacher. Teachers must be prepared to demonstrate correct letter orientation to left-handed children on an individual or small group basis.

## Challenges for left-handed writers

Left-handed children commonly experience the following challenges when they start learning to write:

### Left-handers 'push' the pencil

Left-handed children have to push the pencil across the paper instead of pulling it like a right-hander. This causes the pencil to dig into the paper so that handwriting does not flow easily. Pushing the pencil along means that the tip may jump so the flow is not continuous.



### **Left-handers cannot see what they are writing**

As the pupil's hand is following the pencil, it is hard for them to see what they have just written. They may hook their left wrist to move their hand and wrist out of the way, making writing uncomfortable. This method can affect handwriting stamina and legibility and cause fatigue and pain when writing.



### **Handwriting support for left-handed pupils**

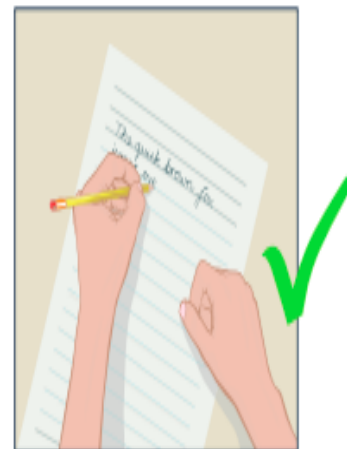
To help left-handed children to overcome these difficulties, they should be taught how to adopt good handwriting techniques from the start, as follows:

#### **Position the paper correctly**

Left-handed children should position their paper/book to their left side and slanted. This makes it easier for pupils to see the tip of the pencil as they write.

#### **Use the right hand for stability**

To prevent the paper from sliding as they write, pupils should use their right hand to steady the page.



Letter-join 



### **Keep the hand and wrist under the line**

Left-handers often curl their wrist over the top of the pencil so that they can see their writing. Writing on a sloped surface can help left-handers to keep their hand and wrist under the line and the pencil on the line.



### **Hold the pencil with a good tripod grip**

Use the Tripod Grip Rhyme (below) to ensure the correct pencil grip.

To enable children to see as they write and to prevent smudging, left-handers should hold their pencil at least 3cm from the point. This can be marked by stickers in the correct place for grip until the child is familiar with the position.



### **Sit left-handed children on the left**

Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.

