

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Learn; Love; Pray

Writing Policy *including Handwriting*

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with our Writing Agreements document.

Written: October 2018
Review Due: October 2019

“You can make anything by writing.”

C.S. Lewis

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- develop fluent and confident handwriting in our children that is suited to particular purposes and supportive of all aspects of their writing;
- have a consistent approach across the whole school to ensure high levels of formal presentation;
- adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults, as seen in marking, during teaching and on classroom displays.

At St Mary’s we aim to promote our pupils’ confidence to write fluidly and legibly. We are very keen that initial experiences in writing are enjoyable, and promote self-confidence and a positive attitude to learning. We ensure that classroom organisation helps children to develop independence and encourages a calm, focused working environment where children are safe and secure in the knowledge that they can have a go without the fear of failure.

We aim to offer all children access to a variety of high quality learning experiences, through a broad and balanced cross-curricular approach that develops their awareness for the need to write clearly and quickly and foster a pride in presentation, whilst ensuring we do not stifle creativity.

We value children’s writing ability and extend it through positive modelling, explicit teaching and encouraging independence. Our use of rich texts broadens the children’s language skills and provides them opportunity to be writers both with support and independently.

Links with Speaking and Listening

We believe that children’s spoken language directly impacts their reading and writing - the greater the exposure to language, the greater the impact that can be made on reading and writing. We offer a language-rich environment where adults model speaking and listening skills, demonstrating and teaching the spoken word which is essential to developing competent writers.

Links with Reading

Books offer a new world of words that are not always used in everyday spoken language. We encourage everyone in our school community to read for pleasure and information. We provide our children with opportunities for discussion around high quality texts linked to our topics and use these as models for writing.

Handwriting

At St Mary's we use the *Nelson Handwriting Programme* to support teaching of handwriting.

'*Nelson Handwriting* is a whole-school programme designed to help all children develop a confident, legible and personal handwriting style and meet higher curriculum expectations.'

We develop handwriting across the Key Phases in the following way.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Early in the year children are supported in developing their gross and fine motor skills. This is essential in developing the child's ability to sit and grasp writing implements correctly.

- Developing gross motor control – bikes, scooters, dances and movement to music, climbing, balancing, PE lessons, using PE equipment (balls, skipping ropes, stilts, hoops etc), swinging, moving in controlled ways.
- Developing fine motor control – tracing, pattern work, finger painting, using glue sticks, cutting, sewing, peg boards, weaving, puzzles, small construction - activities to loosen the wrist - cork printing, paper tearing, kneading, ball skills, playdough, clay, malleable materials, 'Dough Disco' and 'Finger Gym'.

Opportunities for 'mark-making' are planned for both the inside and outside environment. Children are offered a range of materials and experiences for mark-making developed across all areas of learning. When teachers are modelling activities they demonstrate and encourage correct pencil grip.

In Early Years, children are taught how to form individual letters accurately in line with the *Read, Write, Inc* letter formation, alongside phonic teaching, using a variety of strategies. Patterns to support letter shapes are used for children that need them.

Key Stage 1

Children build on the skills learnt in Early Years and consolidate their handwriting by practicing the 'letter families' in order;

.c a d g q e s f o
.l i t j y u

.r b n h m k p

.v w x z

Letter Formation

c a d g q e s f o

l i t j y u

r b n h m k p

v w x z



In Year 1 children are introduced to the *Nelson Handwriting* programme, being taught to develop and improve upon their letter formation. Opportunities for independent, alongside modelled and supported, writing remain available. Children are given opportunities to practice spelling and using the phonic letter and sound patterns in their writing. Children are also taught basic sentence structure as their 'mark making' becomes increasingly coherent and accurate.

The children practise writing digraphs/trigraphs, variations of each, and key words that use:

ng ch sh th q u ll zz ss ff

ai ay oa ow ie igh ee or (e.g. play, wait, high, see)

ou oo ow oi ue er ir ar ear air

In year 2 children are taught to extend their sentence structures using a range of conjunctions and punctuation, whilst consolidating their knowledge of High Frequency

Words and spelling patterns. Children that are ready can begin learning the letter joins towards the end of Year 2.

The children practise digraph/trigraph variations that incorporate particular phonemes:

ai ay a-e ey eigh

ee ea e-e y

ie igh y i-e

oa oe o-e ow

ue u-e oo ew oo u ew

Alternate variations;

oul e ou ow ough oi oy ar or aw ore air are ear er eer ear ph wh kn gn

Lower Key Stage 2

Children build on what they have learnt previously, ensuring that their handwriting is neat and legible with clear evidence of ascenders and descenders. Children who still struggle with letter formation will be supported and monitored. Children continue to be given independent and modelled writing opportunities in the class room.

From Year 3 (some children in Year 2) children will begin being taught the 4 joins between letters;

- First join; un um ig id ed eg an or in gung
- Second join; ch sh th bi bl tl ll ill sli slu ck ack st sti ink unk
- Third join; od pg re ve oon oom
- Fourth join; wl vl of ff fl flo
- Practise the break letters; p g q y j z
- Practise capital letters.

Year 4 have further practise of the 4 handwriting joins:

- in ine
- ut ute
- ve vi
- ok oh
- sh as es (practise two joins for the letter S)
- ri ru ry (practising joining from the letter r)
- oa ad as (practising to and from the letter a)
- ee ea ed (practising joining from the letter e)
- ow ov os (practising joining from the letter o)
- ky hy ly (practising joining to the letter y)
- ha ta fa (practising joining to the letter a)
- od oo og (practising joining to the o)
- er ir ur (practising joining to the letter r)
- ai al ay
- o you oi
- re oe fe (practising the horizontal join to the letter e)
- fu wu vu (practising the horizontal join to the letter u)

- ot ol ok (practising joining to ascenders)
- ai al ow ol (practising all the joins)

Upper Key Stage 2

Years 5 and 6

- Practise consistency of letter size
- Practise using the diagonal joining line
- Practising joining to the letter y
- Practising using a horizontal joining line
- Practising joining from the letter i
- Practising joining to and from the letter v
- Practising consistency in the forming and joining of letters
- Practise crossing double tt on completing the work.
- Practise joining to and from the letter e
- Practising joining to and from the letter w
- Practising printing
- Practising joining to the letter t

NOTE: The key phases listed above are merely a guide and pupils will be supported to move on as appropriate and when ready.