

St Anne's

Church of England Primary School



Minds to learn, hearts to care

Handwriting Policy

Introduction

It is paramount that children are rigorously taught correct letter formation from the very beginning of their time in school. At St Anne's CE Primary School, we begin to teach handwriting by linking closely with the Read Write Inc scheme. Handwriting is taught progressively and in-line with the requirements of the National Curriculum.

This begins in EYFS where children are taught single letter formation (Appendix A). Writing is taught as a specific skill, little and often, with EYFS staff trained to develop the foundations of fast, accurate and efficient handwriting.

Children in EYFS and KS1 have handwriting linked to daily phonics sessions but also have lessons dedicated to the development of handwriting skills.

Developing children's motivation and capability for writing in the EYFS stems largely from the opportunities provided by staff and through carefully planned provision. Expressive language underpins writing and is prioritised through core texts and a literature rich environment. The children in the EYFS are encouraged to communicate through writing during adult-led and child led work.

In KS1, children are introduced to a simple joined handwriting style which is not made complicated by unnecessary loops or swirls. (Appendix B). In Year 1, handwriting is taught daily and discretely. Children learn to sit correctly at a table, holding their pencil comfortably and correctly. They form lowercase and capital letters in the correct direction starting and finishing in the right place.

In Year 2, as long as their letter formation is correct, children will be increasingly encouraged to join their handwriting, children are taught to use diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters and understand which letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and lower-case letters. Children in Year 2 are taught handwriting discretely and daily.

In KS2, handwriting is taught discretely for children in Years 3 and 4 but is adapted to meet individual need. By Year 5 and 6 it is expected that most children will be joining fluently. At KS2 the expectation is for children to have cursive handwriting modelled to them by their teacher during any shared writing. It is an expectation that no matter what the subject area is being taught, children maintain their handwriting style and presentation.

Rationale

Joined, neat legible handwriting is an essential skill which must be taught to all children. A consistently high standard of writing is expected across school in order to foster a sense of pride and respect in work.

Handwriting must be embedded across the curriculum, it must become an automatic process allowing children to record their thinking fluently and legibly. *The National Curriculum (2014) English makes a clear reference to handwriting and forms part of the expected standard at the end of KS1 and KS2.* (Appendix C)

Handwriting is complex perceptual-motor skill that is dependent upon the maturation and integration of a number of cognitive, perceptual, and motor skills including:

- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills
- Visual-motor control
- Eye hand co-ordination
- Cognitive and perceptual skills
- Tactile and kinaesthetic sensitivities
- Behaviour, concentration and motivation

Awareness of this complexity informs the curriculum and teaching progression across the school. It also underpins any intervention programme when children experience difficulties.

Aims

For all children to learn and practise appropriate and effective handwriting skills at each stage of development, continually working towards mature handwriting which is:

- Legible
- Presentable
 - Comfortable
- Fluent
- Flexible
- Fast
- Automatic
- Sustainable

To raise attainment by all by involving children in the development of their own handwriting and to understand the factors which help this process.

- For children to have opportunities to write in different styles and for different purposes across the curriculum.
- For all staff to use and model the agreed handwriting conventions outlined in this document, thus providing consistency and continuity throughout the school community.
- To make provision for left handed children and for children who experience difficulties.
- To encourage personal satisfaction and pride in well- presented writing.

Curriculum

We understand that handwriting is a taught developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression. The school handwriting curriculum is guided by the requirements of the

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2012) and the National Curriculum for English KS1 & KS2 (2014). (Appendix C)

Strategies and Implementation – developing handwriting at St Anne’s CE Primary School

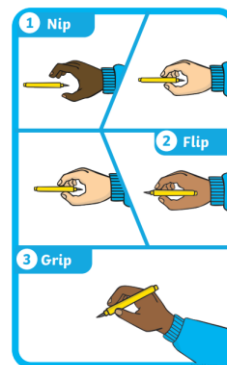
At St Anne’s, we follow the RWI programme for the early stages of taught handwriting and aim to make the physical process of handwriting enjoyable from the start, so that children can see themselves as ‘writers’.

The mnemonics (memory pictures – Appendix A) help children to visualise the letter before they write it down, therefore, children learn the letter formation alongside learning the sound.

We ensure that children practise handwriting under the guidance of a teacher so they do not develop habits that will be difficult to undo later. In addition to this, we place emphasis on being ‘writing ready’ by teaching the children how to adopt an appropriate writing posture.

We encourage writing to take place with:

- feet flat on the floor
- bottom at the back of the chair
- body one fist from the table
- shoulders down and relaxed
- back leaning forward slightly
- (helping hand) left/right hand holding the page
- left/right hand ready in a tripod grip – ‘nip it, flip it and grip it’.



In order to support our children in learning to write, we ensure that the classroom environment allows for them to stay focused and attentive to their task.

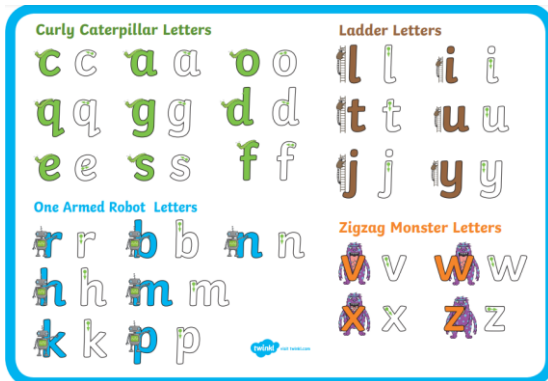
In addition to practising writing, we recognise and value the importance of developing children’s fine and gross motor skills to enable them to have the strength required for pencil grip accuracy and posture.

We ensure that children have opportunities to target their fine motor skills with purposeful tasks in the learning environment, as well as engaging in whole class activities like ‘Dough Disco.’, ‘Finger Gym’ and ‘Squiggle whilst you Wiggle’ (EYFS). To support children’s gross motor development, we have a variety of active opportunities for body strengthening in the outdoor learning environment.

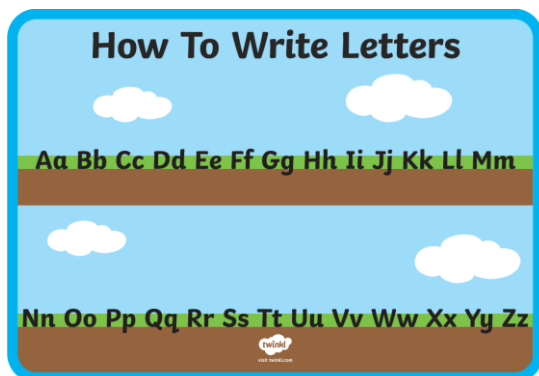
Stages of Handwriting development

There are different stages of handwriting following the teaching of letter shapes (graphemes) and sounds (phonemes) simultaneously during RWI Phonics sessions.

Then children learn correct letter formation using letter families.



Once children can form the letters correctly, they learn how to place the letters on the line and of relative size. Children are encouraged to continue using the line guide Ground, Grass and Sky for sizing and spacing.



- Small letters are placed in the grass: a c e i m n o r s u v w x z
- Letters that are written below the line are in the ground (descenders): g j p q y
- Tall letters are written to reach the sky (ascenders): b d h k l t f

At this stage, children are encouraged to write on wide-lined paper.

Handwriting fluency and stamina

As a school, we would expect and aim for most children to start joining their handwriting by the time they reach KS2. There is an expectation that children develop their use cursive writing during Years 3 and Year 4, in line with the National Curriculum expectations. By Years 5 and Year 6, children are expected to be able to write legibly, with increasing speed and fluency.

At KS2 the expectation is for children to have cursive handwriting modelled to them by their teacher during any shared writing. It is an expectation that no matter what the subject area being taught, children maintain their handwriting style and presentation. (Appendix D)

Intervention and Additional Support

For children who are struggling to develop their handwriting skills, we continue to support them with strengthening their fine motor skills and offer them a range of support and writing tools to try and develop their handwriting. In some instances, small group intervention is required to assist in the development of handwriting or staff consult with the school Special Needs Coordinator (SENDco) who can request a handwriting assessment.

Positivity promotes respectful relationships

We celebrate good work, good behaviour, good attitudes and individual effort at St Anne's CE Primary School.

Some of the ways we reward children are:

- Class Dojo points and related certificates
- Stickers
- Stamps
- Verbal praise and feedback by all members of staff
- Positive comments in children's books
- Visiting the Headteacher with 'good work' and good news
- Headteacher stickers
- Presentation of awards received outside school
- Celebration Assembly - weekly




Signed by:

Head Teacher – Suzanne Binks

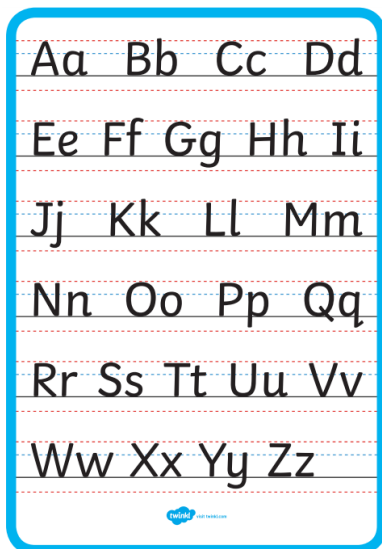
Chair of Governors – John Monaghan

Appendix A:

https://www.ruthmiskin.com/wp-content/uploads/202/05/handwriting_phrases_v2.pdf

a  Around the apple and down the leaf.	b  Down the laces to the heel and around the toe.	c  Curl around the caterpillar.	d  Around the dinosaurs bottom, up his tall neck & down to his toes.	e  Lift off the top and scoop out the egg.	f  Down the stem and draw the leaves.
g  Around the girls face, down her hair and give her a curl.	h  Down the head, to his hooves and over his back.	i  Down the body and dot for the head.	j  Down his body, curl, dot for his head.	k  Down the kangaroo's body tail and leg.	l  Down the long leg.
m  Down Maisie, mountain, mountain.	n  Down Nobby and over his net.	o  All around the orange.	p  Down the girates plait and around his face.	qu  Round her head, up past her earring, down her hair and flick.	r  Down the robots back and curl over his arm.
s  Slither down the snake.	t  Down the tower, across the tower.	u  Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle.	v  Down a wing, up a wing.	w  Down, up, down, up.	x  Down the arm and leg, repeat the other side.
y  Down a horn, up a horn and under head.	z  Zig-zag-zig.				

Appendix B:



Appendix C

National Curriculum Expectations.

Expected Level at the end of EYFS

Pupils should be taught to:

- Show good control and coordination in large and small movements.
- Move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space.
- Handle equipment and tools effectively.
- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques.

Expected Level at the end of KS1

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 at 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.
- Form lower case of the correct size relative to one another.
- Start using some of diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and lower-case letters.
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Expected Level at the end of KS2

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 for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of the letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders do not touch.
- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
 - Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters.
 - Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for the task.

Appendix D

