

St Michael's RC Primary School and Nursery



Handwriting Policy

School Mission Statement



St Michael's RC Primary School is a Catholic family of faith, following the teaching of Christ. We strive to create an environment where all members of our school community become caring, independent and resilient individuals who fulfil their potential.

"I came so that you may have life, life in all its fullness" John 10:10

AIMS:

As a school, we aim to teach the pupils the following:

- A recognition and appreciation of patterns and lines
- Learn the conventional ways of forming letter shapes, both lower case and upper case letters
- An understanding of the importance of clear presentation, in order to communicate clearly and with meaning
- To take pride in their written presentation, and write with enjoyment
- To be able write quickly across the curriculum
- For pupils to develop a fluent, comfortable, and legible joined up handwriting style

TEACHING OF HANDWRITING:

Teachers should be using the school handwriting program of Join-it and Nelson Handwriting Scheme. Handwriting should be taught once a week and then activities should be provided for morning starters throughout the rest of the week. Handwriting should be taught discreetly through all other subject areas, with pupils being exposed constantly to modelled examples of correct formation and presentation of acceptable handwriting.

FOUNDATION STAGE (Nursery and Year R):

Pupils in these years are developing and strengthening their gross motor control (controlled movements of the whole body) and fine motor control (smaller movements, usually of the hands and fingers). They use a variety of equipment to help develop these skills, including: big chinks, shaving foam, finger painting and over sized pencils. Pupils will also develop their recognition of patterns and begin to talk about shapes and movements. At this stage they will also be taught how to write their first name, with a capital letter and with the correct letter formation. To learn correct letter formation pupils will use letter speak (see Appendix A), based on Read Write Inc, which is taught daily. Pupils have the opportunity to develop and improve their letter formation using whiteboards, which provides writing practice without the restriction of lines, as well as on lined paper.

- Children to be introduced to pre-cursive and cursive script at the earliest stages of writing.
- Children in the Foundation Stage should be writing in the pre-cursive script to enable an easier transition in Year 1 into the cursive script, depending on their ability. However, the expectation is that by the end of Reception pupils will start to transfer towards a cursive script depending on their skill and ability.

YEAR 1:

Pupils will continue to work on correct letter formation, using their previous knowledge from Foundation Stage teaching. Letter speak, from Read Write Inc. will still be used. Most pupils will write their letters correctly, with the correct formation and orientation, will leave appropriate sized gaps between words, be able to write with increased speed and stamina as well as have an efficient and comfortable pencil grip. Towards the end of the year, most pupils should move away from printed form to joined-up writing using the school Handwriting Programme- Join-it and Nelson Handwriting Scheme.

YEAR 2:

At this stage, most pupils will be able to write legibly, using upper and lower case letters appropriately and with the correct spacing between words. Their ascenders and descenders will be correctly formed, a majority of the time. The speed at which they are able to write should increase as well as their stamina with longer lengths of writing. Towards the end of the year, most pupils should form joined-up writing using the school Handwriting Programme- Join-it and Nelson Handwriting Scheme.

YEAR 3 and 4:

In year 3 most pupils will continue to develop their joined handwriting, increase the speed at which they write and should be able to write for a sustained period of time. Most of the writing they produce will sit on the line.

In year 4 they are using joined handwriting a majority of the time in their work, letter are placed correctly on the line, including ascender and descenders. At this stage the letter formation should come naturally.

We should aim to have all children using pens by the end of year 4, having had their pen licence.

Year 5 and 6:

In years 5 and 6 pupils have consistent letter size, formation and spacing, their writing is joined up in all subjects, with the exception of maths. All of the letters are placed correctly on the line and in year 5 they are beginning to write with competency at a steady dictation speed, which will they will continue to work on and increase in year 6.

Left handed pupils:

Pupils that are left handed must have provisions made for them, teachers must be aware of their specific needs when teaching handwriting and they must make the appropriate adjustments to their teaching. Provisions should include the following:

- Paper should be positioned to the right for left handed pupils and slanted to suit each individual
- Correct pen/pencil grip should be taught and monitored-holding either too close to the paper can block the pupils line of vision
- Pupils should be sat to the left of a right handed pupil so they are not going to interfere with one another during writing (ie-knocking elbows)
- Pupils should be encouraged to bring their hands down and round so a hooked, claw like style doesn't develop
- Teachers need to be aware that letter which have a cross-stroke, T,t and f will be formed differently. The cross is formed right to left rather that left to right.

HANDWRITING IN OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS:

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that pupils' handwriting and presentation across all subjects is the neat. However, teachers must also teach pupils about different types of handwriting, for example-personal note taking, or best display presentation.

LETTER FORMATION USING JOINT-IT

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

LETTER SPEAK (BASED ON RUTH MISKIN'S READ WRITE INC)

a bounce: a-a-a, apple; write: round the apple and down the leaf

b bounce: b-b-b, boot; write: down the leg, up and around the toes

c bounce: c-c-c, caterpillar; write: curl around the caterpillar

d bounce: d-d-d, dinosaur; write: round his bottom, up his tall neck, down his feet

e bounce: e-e-e, egg; write: lift off the top and scoop out the egg

f (unvoiced) stretch: fff, flower; write: down the stem, draw the leaves

g bounce: g-g-g, girl; write: round her face, down her hair and give her a curl

h (unvoiced) bounce: h-h-h, horse; write: down the head to her hooves, over her back

i bounce i-i-i, insect; write: down the body, dot for the head

j j-j-j, jack-in-a-box; write: down its' body, curl and dot

k k-k-k, kangaroo; write: down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg

l stretch: lll, leg; write: down the long leg

m stretch: mmm, mountain; write: Maisie, mountain, mountain

n stretch: nnn, net; write: down Nobby, over his net

o bounce: o-o-o, orange; write: all around the orange

p (unvoiced): bounce: p-p-p, pirate; write: down the plait and over the pirate's face

q bounce: qu-qu-qu, queen; write: round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair

r stretch: rrr, robot; write: down his back then curl over his arm

s stretch: sss, snake; write: slither down the snake

t bounce: t-t-t, tower; write: down the tower, across the tower

u bounce: u-u-u, umbrella; write: down and under, up to the top then draw the puddle

v bounce: v-v-v, vase; write: down a wing, up a wing

w bounce: w-w-w, worm; write: down up, down up

x bounce: x-x-x ('ks') kangaroo; write: down the arm and leg, repeat the other side

y bounce: y-y-y, yak; write: down a horn up a horn and under his head

z stretch: zzz, zip; write: zig-zag, zig-zag

sh stretch: shhh

th (voiced AND unvoiced)- stretch, thhh

ch bounce: ch-ch-ch

nh stretch: nnnnng

nk bounce: nk nk nk

Assessment and Impact

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, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form. (*English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2 National curriculum in England*)

Pen licence

Pupils who have developed a fluent, comfortable, and legible joined up handwriting style should receive a pen licence- once they have earned this they will use a handwriting pen in all subjects, except for maths.

Displays and CT/TA handwriting should include models of cursive script.