



We live, love and learn together joyfully in Jesus' name.

St. Jude's Catholic Primary School

Handwriting Policy

Curriculum Statement

Intent

At St. Jude's School, the importance of children being able to write legibly, fluently and at a reasonable speed is recognised. With these skills, children have a much greater chance of being able to reach and demonstrate their true potential throughout their school careers and in their lives beyond school.

In the EYFS children are taught to use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds, as well as some common words with irregular spellings. Planned opportunities are provided for the children to develop writing simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Children develop the use of effective pencil grip throughout their time in Reception.

In KS1, handwriting practice focuses on ensuring that children form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another. It develops their use of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and promotes understanding of which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. Children also develop accuracy in writing capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case

letters and use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters. Children are taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Throughout KS2, emphasis is placed on children's development of writing legibly, fluently and with increasing speed. Emphasis is placed on children being taught to choose which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters, as well as choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

Implementation

At St. Jude's Primary School we follow the Martin Harvey (ISHA scheme - Improvement in Schools through Handwriting and Art) method for teaching handwriting (saved in Staff Shared area).

This means that we do not follow a bought 'scheme'; rather we use a consistent approach of teaching handwriting throughout the school using Martin Harvey's guidelines and clear terminology. The approach progresses through the school with an emphasis being placed on the use of consistent language. Across the school, handwriting is carefully modelled by the teacher and outcomes are recorded by the children in their English books. The use of patterns to support letter formation and appropriate letter-joins is also embedded enabling children to also further develop their fine motor skills.

Impact

This systematic approach ensures development in the skill of handwriting throughout each year group. Children take pride in their written work and achieve proficiency in their own handwriting using Martin Harvey's guidelines and clear terminology. Outcomes in children's wider curriculum work, as well as in their English books and school displays, evidence the progress that children make in this area, as well as the consistency of the approach across the school.

Teaching and Learning

In order for children to achieve a high standard of handwriting, they need to be explicitly taught the skills needed. The semi-cursive style is clear and it does not have 'loops' or 'lead-ins'

which are features of more complex handwriting styles.

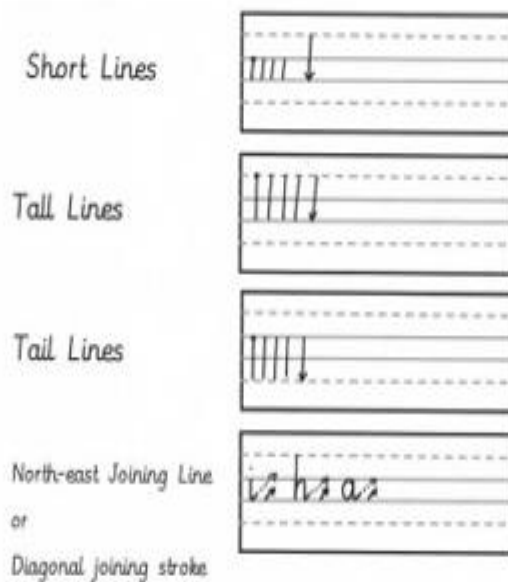
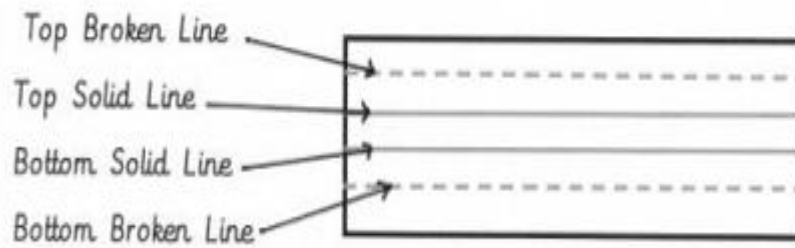
We have high expectations in handwriting lessons and make sure that children are expected to apply the same standards in other writing as well. Handwriting practice has a clear focus, with key teaching points demonstrated to the class. Each session provides allocated time for children to practise the specific handwriting skill. Extension activities will allow for further practice, development and challenge.

Prior to a handwriting session, staff will ensure that the children are prepared to write by:

- **Two hands** Children will use two hands when writing. One hand to hold the paper and one hand to write with.
- **Six feet** Children will keep six feet on the floor. Their own two feet and the chair's four feet. This means that the child does not kneel or sit cross legged on the chair. Neither do they rock backwards or forwards on the chair.
- **BBC** Children will always sit in the BBC position – Bottom Back in Chair. This means that they never sit with the chair sticking out and their bottom on the front edge of the chair.
- **TNT** Tummy Near Table. This ensures that the child is sitting with their body close to their work, instead of having to stretch forward to write.
- **Paper position** The paper should be upright when the child is writing or at an angle not greater than 45 degrees. When children turn their paper to an angle greater than this, it is often because the pencil is being held with the thumb in a position which blocks the child's view of the pencil point.
- **Good pencil grip:**
 - Hold pencil between thumb and two fingers where black/yellow starts.
 - Thumb helps fingers to hold a pencil

- Rest pencil on 'pencil bed'
- End of pencil points over their shoulder

During a handwriting session, staff will remind children of the following key elements of letter formation and where letters sit on the line by:





At St. Jude's School we believe:

Consistency is a key word.

Consistency in terms of the handwriting style and letter shapes being taught

Consistency in terms of how handwriting lessons are taught

Consistency in terms of the way teaching materials and writing tools are used

Consistency in terms of the teaching language which is used

Consistency in terms of all members of staff supporting and believing in this drive for excellence in handwriting. It has to be seen that this is what we are doing as a staff. It has to be seen that this is something that is happening in every class. It has to be seen that this is something we all believe in. The more that teachers give strong messages to pupils, showing they are really passionate about high quality presentation of work, the greater the likelihood of high standards being achieved.

Assessment

Teacher assessment:

Teachers will assess children's handwriting progression during lessons as they write as well as once they have completed their writing.

Criteria for assessment may include:

- Does the child adapt the correct posture?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movements when forming/joining?
- Does the child write fluently?
- Is the writing legible?
- Is the writing appropriate?
- Is the child's handwriting developing in-line with statutory curricula?

Pupil assessment:

Throughout the writing process, children are encouraged to assess their handwriting. The expectation for a high standard of handwriting is also communicated prior to writing tasks. When explicitly indicated in the children's success criteria, this is an aspect of the outcome which is reviewed and assessed by each child on completion of the task. Neat presentation is always recognised and praised by the class teacher and children are encouraged to review their handwriting as part of the writing process. In Handwriting sessions children are encouraged to give feedback to their peers by saying 'If that was my handwriting I would be proud of it because...'

Whole-school assessment:

The subject leader for English will regularly assess handwriting across the school. Criteria for whole-school assessment may include:

- Is the handwriting generally legible and pleasant?
- Are letters being shaped correctly?
- Are joins being made correctly?
- Are spaces between letters, words and lines correct?
- Is writing size appropriate?
- Are the writing standards demonstrated by the majority of children in line with statutory curricula?

Planning and Resources

At St. Jude's School, we will teach the children to write by using a consistent approach of teaching handwriting throughout the school using Martin Harvey's guidelines and clear terminology. The most up-to-date edition of the 'Martin Harvey approach' guides children through carefully structured stages from pre-writing patterns all the way to the development of the semi-cursive joined style.

Organisation

From Reception through to Year 6 handwriting sessions are as follows:

- Foundation stage – daily fine motor skill activities
- Year 1-2 – 3 times a week
- Year 3-4 - 3 times a week
- Year 5-6 - 3 times a week

These sessions can be adjusted according to the need of the particular class.

HANDWRITING TOOLS

In order to produce excellent handwriting, children must have good quality tools:

HB Pencils

- Pencils must always be sharp. A pencil is not a pencil unless it has a point.
- Pencils must never be sharpened at both ends. This is dangerous and also shows complete disrespect for the writing tool.
- Pencils must not be too small for the child's hand.
- Pencils do not go in children's mouths!

Pens

Children are provided with handwriting pens which are conducive to achieving excellence in handwriting.

- Children will be given the opportunity to use pen in handwriting lessons first, when they have shown consistently that they are able to write really neatly in pencil.
- Where pens are used, children are provided with their own to keep in their drawer, rather than have the pens in a communal pot as we believe all pens do wear according to the handler.
- Pens are used only for writing tasks where good presentation is required.

Equal Opportunities

All children have equal opportunities to reach their full potential in handwriting, regardless of their race, gender, cultural background, and ability, or of any physical or sensory disability.

Inclusion

Children with English as an additional language

Children with EAL are encouraged to make the same outstanding progress in handwriting as their peers. To support their understanding of letter formation handwriting should be consistently modelled by the class teacher.

Children with Special Educational Needs

Some children experience difficulties making good progress in their handwriting development. They may need additional support with their fine motor development, pencil grip or letter formation. The class teacher should liaise with the English subject leader and SENDCo to put into place the most appropriate form of support.

This could include:

- Pencil grip or jumbo triangular pencil
- Fine motor skills intervention
- Additional handwriting group
- Additional handwriting homework

Role of the Subject Leader

The role of the subject leader is to coordinate the teaching of handwriting across all phases of the school. This is in order to secure a consistent approach across the school and to ensure progression.

Some key duties that the literacy subject leader should undertake over the course of the year include:

- Monitoring of handwriting in English books
- Monitoring of the application of handwriting across other subject exercise books
- Helping identify and facilitate the professional development needs of staff
- Liaising with the school SENDCo to best support children with handwriting difficulties
- Organising, maintaining and cataloguing handwriting resources
- Keeping abreast of new initiatives in the teaching of handwriting