



Stanley St Andrew's Church of England Primary School

Handwriting Policy

As a church school we believe that every person, every child and every adult is unique and special with God given gifts and talents which is our job to nurture and cherish.

The new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance for 2020 includes handwriting as part of 'Physical Development' (Moving and Handling). Most of our Reception children will be accessing the 30-50 months or the 40-60 months objectives:

- Draws lines and circles using gross motor movements.
- Holds a pencil between thumb and 2 fingers.
- Holds a pencil near point between first 2 fingers and thumb and uses it with good control.
- Can copy some letters, e.g. from own name.
- Shows a preference for a dominant hand.
- Begins to use anti-clockwise movement and retrace vertical lines.
- Begins to form recognisable letters.
- Uses a pencil and holds it effectively to form recognisable letters.
- Handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing. (Early Learning Goal)
- If more able children are ready, kicks and flicks can be demonstrated and encouraged in their work. (Nelson Handwriting Scheme)

So, the teaching of handwriting in Reception starts with the children making large/gross-motor movements with their arms (links to 'Physical Literacy') and using things like squeeze bottles, big paintbrushes, markers and chalk outside to mark make. They also copy and continue patterns such as swirls, zig-zags and lines to develop left-to-right orientation and seeing text go from top to bottom of page. They use chunky/triangular pencils and are taught how to pick up and hold a pencil in a 'tripod' grip. Reception children do lots of overwriting, sky-writing, copying over dots and underneath text. Children also learn the 'pattern' for each letter (e.g. "around, up, down, around"). Learning to write is a multi-sensory experience and our children are encouraged to handle and feel tactile letters (such as squidgy or sandpaper).

Year One continues with children learning and practising the correct formation of both upper and lower case letters in 'cursive' script (i.e. the flicks are there ready for joining later). They use narrower pencils and write along lines. They also practise handwriting during Phonics. We teach a new sound every day and show how to form/join each letter. They listen to instructions on where to start letters and how to form them correctly and then try independently on their whiteboards.

The National Curriculum statement for handwriting in Key Stage1 and 2 says that:

Development School
National Curriculum 2014

How Does Handwriting Fit into the New Curriculum?

The focus on handwriting in the new curriculum is much greater, highlighting its importance and making the connection between a child's handwriting and their composition and spelling ability. This we believe is a great step forward!

Foundation Stage (4-5 years old)

Early Learning Goal – Writing

Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly, and others are phonetically plausible.

Typical behaviours that relate to handwriting for this learning goal:

- Uses some clearly identifiable letters (most of which are correctly formed) to communicate meaning, representing some sounds correctly and in sequence.
- Write own name and other things such as labels and captions.
- Attempt to write short sentences in meaningful context.

Core learning skills for handwriting:

- Use a pencil and hold it effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases, to form recognisable letters, most of which are formed correctly.
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery to improve fine motor skills.
- Teachers will use their professional judgement as to when to introduce cursive writing.

'Early year's outcomes'; September 2013; Department of Education.

'Statutory framework for early years foundation stage' effective September 2021; Department for Education.

Key Stage 1 (5-7 years old)

Statutory Requirements - Handwriting

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.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

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 easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided.

They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

We practise handwriting during Phonics. We teach a new sound every day and show how to form/join each letter. They listen to instructions on where to start/join letters and how to form them correctly and then try independently on their whiteboards.

Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.

Year 2

Statutory Requirements – Handwriting

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 unjoined.
- 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.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

We practise handwriting during Phonics. We teach a new sound every day and show how to form/join each letter. They listen to instructions on where to start/join letters and how to form them correctly and then try independently on their whiteboards.

Lower KS2 (Year 3 & 4)

Statutory Requirements – Handwriting

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 down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should be joining 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 what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

Upper KS2 (Year 5 & 6)

Statutory Requirements – Handwriting and Presentation

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 whether or not to join specific letters.
- Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

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 the printed 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'; September 2013' (up-dated for implementation September 2014); Department for Education.

From Y2 upwards, staff will model joined handwriting as much as possible and children will be encouraged to join when appropriate. They will be taught the joins and will practise and consolidate joined handwriting as often as possible. The learning environment will try to show the Nelson handwriting font to support children visually the expectation. We use the 'Nelson' scheme materials to teach formation and joining.

Pencil grips will be given to children who require additional support with holding pencils. Pens and 'Pen Licences' are used in KS2 when it is felt the child is ready to make the progression from pencil to pen.

It is our aim that by the time our children reach Y5/Y6, they have developed their own comfortable, legible joined-up handwriting style and are able to use both printed and joined script to produce neat written work.

Throughout school provision is made for left-handed children.

Policy Review

This policy was reviewed by the Subject Lead for English Jayne Middleton in June 2021.

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the English Lead in accordance with our schools' policy delegation schedule.

We will review this policy earlier than the scheduled review date should there be any change in guidance or legislation related to this policy or if we feel that an earlier review is necessary.