



"Hand in hand, we listen to God's call, we learn from God's word and we share God's love through service."

Handwriting Policy 2022

Approved: September 2021

Reviewed: September 2022

Head Teachers signature:

Introduction

At St Augustine's we recognise that handwriting is an important skill and children's ability to write fluently for the rest of their lives depends on a good foundation of taught handwriting in the early years of their education.

We believe that handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from readiness for handwriting, through to letter joins, practising speed and fluency and higher presentation skills. A flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. This is an entitlement that needs skilful teaching if each individual is to reach their full potential at St Augustine's Catholic School.

Aims

We aim for our pupils to:

1. develop a legible style of handwriting.
2. develop a consistency in the size and shape of letters.
3. develop fluent and smooth flow and join of letters.
4. establish and maintain a high profile of handwriting and presentation skills.

Rationale

The National Curriculum statutory requirements are:

In year 1, 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.

In year 2, 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 un-joined.
- 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.

In years 3 and 4, 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 un-joined
- 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 the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch

In years 5 and 6, 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.

The non-statutory guidance also states that:

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.

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

"Handwriting is one of the most demanding movement skills which a child is expected to master. It needs to be systematically taught." (*National Handwriting Association*)

Handwriting Scheme

In order to achieve these aims in St Augustine's Catholic School, we have chosen to use the Nelson handwriting style.

Nelson Handwriting provides a clear, practical framework for implementing and developing a whole-school handwriting policy. Pupils are actively encouraged to explore different styles of handwriting and develop their own style, whilst learning to form letters and joins accurately. The scheme is introduced to children in reception classes (and in Nursery in the summer term when they begin RVI) and continues and develops with children throughout the stages into year 6.

Lessons

Handwriting will be taught 3-4 times per week. However, good handwriting skills and neat presentation will be continually reinforced in all work across the curriculum.

Introducing Joins

As children learn blends and digraphs, they will be taught to join these letters correctly. This reinforces an understanding of the sound as well as preparing the children for joined handwriting. The teaching of joining other letters will generally begin at the end of Key stage 1, although this might be earlier/later for some children.

Tools

Children should use a good quality HB handwriting pencil. Teachers and children should ensure it is always sharp and is not too short, (avoid overly sharp pencils for left-handed writers as this may drag on paper). Pens will be introduced from Y3 when a child's handwriting has reached an agreed standard, after demonstrating their handwriting is excellent and consistent across all writing. In Mathematics books pencil will always be used.

Grip

Children should be taught correct grip as early as possible and continually encouraged to hold their pencil using the Tripod grip.



Pencils should be held lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm from the point. The middle finger provides additional support. Children should be sitting comfortably with both feet on the floor. EYFS & KSI will follow RWI h/w Checklist displayed in classrooms.

Posture

Children should be encouraged to sit up straight with their feet on the floor. The non-writing hand must be used to steady the book or paper.

Left-Handed Children

Children who are left-handed should also be encouraged to hold their pencil with this grip. When joining letters, some left-handed children may find it more appropriate to leave 'f' and 't' un-joined. During handwriting sessions, it is recommended that right-handed children will not be seated on the left-hand side of a left-handed child. This ensures that their elbows do not collide.

Assessment

All handwriting skills are assessed by the teacher on an on-going basis when their work is marked. Children experiencing difficulties with handwriting will be supported by the class teacher and may receive extra focused sessions with an EA.

Working in Partnership with Parents

A leaflet outlining the letter formation and joins is shared with parents.

Evaluation and Review

In consultation with staff, governors, and pupils' the Leader of English is responsible for co-ordinating, monitoring and reviewing the impact this policy has upon the school and responding to the findings, always striving to improve the quality of learning and teaching at St Augustine's Catholic School.

The Leader of English will review this policy annually and will look at the evidence of progress in books and assessed pieces of work, and the impact the "Nelson Thornes" materials has.

