

ST PAUL'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL (CROMPTON STREET) WALKDEN

Handwriting Policy

November 2023

Handwriting is a skill involving fine motor control, visual observation and muscle memory, affecting written communication across the curriculum. At St Paul's we aim for all our children to write with ease, speed and legibility.

Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters through a series of flowing movements. The cursive style we use is set out in alphabetical order below:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstu  
vw

xyz

abcdefghijklmnopqrstu  
vwxyz

Handwriting skills are taught regularly and systematically throughout school from EYFS to Year 6. The principal aim of our policy is that handwriting becomes an automatic process which frees pupils to focus on the content of the writing. In order for this to occur, handwriting is taught in ways that ensure correct letter formation that progressively develops into a fluent, cursive style.

Children are systematically taught how to:

- a) Hold a pencil correctly with a tripod pencil grip
- b) Adopt the correct posture when writing
- c) How to write from left to right, top to bottom of a page
- d) To start and finish letters correctly
- e) To form letters of regular size and shape
- f) To put regular spaces between letters and words

To achieve a consistent and fluent style for all children, we take the following action:

Modelling:

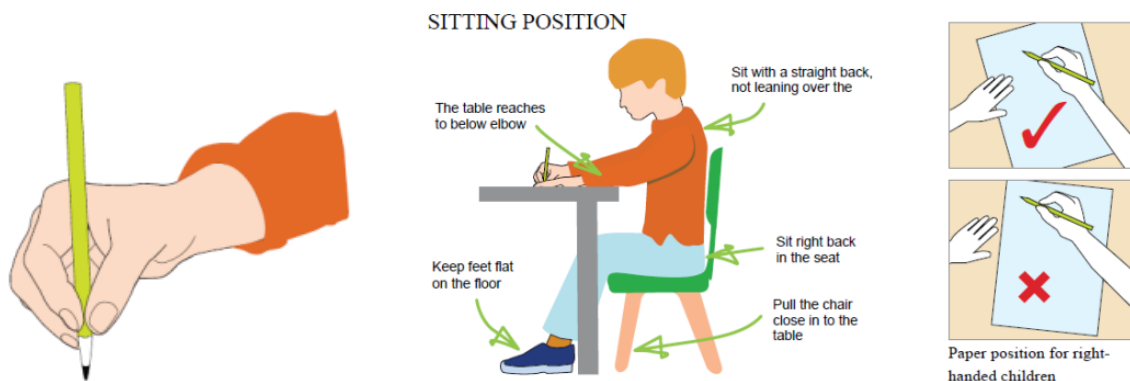
- Excellent examples of handwriting are displayed in every classroom and around the school
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants model the appropriate orientation, joins and style at every opportunity
- Handwriting is taught at the start of every English lesson

## Curriculum and Assessment:

- Teaching of handwriting begins in Nursery with the development of correct letter formation
- The teaching of spelling is linked with correct handwriting formation and presentation
- Writing activities across the curriculum expect high quality presentation
- Handwriting is assessed through marking with extra practice indicated in books as needed
- Teachers establish high expectations for the development of a legible and fluent handwriting style

## Posture and Pencil grip:

We actively promote a tripod pencil grip and correct posture when writing.



## Equipment:




Children will use lines appropriate to their stage in writing. Children will practise using their normal English book to ensure their handwriting skills are transferable.

Children should use a sharp HB pencil for all handwriting initially. When KS2 teachers assess that children are using a neat joined handwriting style consistently then they will be awarded a pen licence and be able to use a black biro pen for their writing.

In some cases, depending on the specific needs of individual children, pencil grips or special pens may be used.

## **EYFS**

Children are introduced to letter sounds in EYFS and correct letter formation as part of the teaching of phonics and to assist self-registration. ELS Phonics teaching is followed which gives rhymes for each letter shape to assist the children in correct formation.

s		snake – swerve around the snake
a		ant – around the head, down the body
t		teacher – down her body and cross her shoulders

Expectations:

- \*form capital letters and lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- \*form lower-case letters of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another
- \*use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

### **Key Stage 1**

Handwriting is taught regularly in focused sessions during phonics and English sessions. In Year 1 children focus on pre-cursive letters using hooks in and out, starting on the line. When ready, children in Key Stage 1 will use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.

### **Key Stage 2**

Handwriting is taught daily at the start of English sessions to embed the appropriate formation of letters and joins. Children are expected to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and maintain legibility when writing at speed.

All children will have opportunities to watch adults writing and attempt writing for various purposes using features of different forms such as lists, stories and instructions. Erasers are used within Foundation Stage. In Key Stage 1 and 2, errors within written work are crossed through with a single line.

### **How we teach the cursive script**

The Foundation Stage provides valuable opportunities to develop fine and gross motor skills during focused tasks and self initiated play; use of small manipulative toys, finger paints, plasticine modelling, tracing and drawing, in addition to climbing blocks and other large outdoor equipment.

When introducing children to individual letters, the teacher should always model the formation of a cursive letter on a flip chart or whiteboard, talking about how a letter is formed. It is important to refer to 'entry' and 'exit' strokes for pre-cursive letters ready to join.

The order for teaching lower case letters begins with c and letters that look like c:

c a d s g o q

Then moves to letters with a tall ascender to start:

l t h b k

The rest of the alphabet is grouped as follows:

r b m p    i j    u y    v w x    e    f    z

### **Left handed children**

Left handed children need to be monitored and require specific teaching to ensure they develop the cursive style appropriately.

### **Learning and Teaching**

Most people are able to write their name and address with their eyes closed and can do it quite easily, this is because the movements of your hand when writing are firmly established in your movement memory because you have made them so often. This is why children need to practise handwriting movements correctly and often.

The first handwriting lessons are vital and the most important issue is to ensure that the children we teach learn to form the letters of the alphabet with the correct sequence of strokes from the beginning. Children who have been allowed to invent their own ways of forming letters will find it harder to change the longer they are allowed to persist, but unless their own ways of forming letters will find it harder to change the longer they are allowed to persist, but unless these habits are 'unlearned' (often at great effort since the movement memory is very retentive and will tend to revert to old habits) it will be impossible for them to learn a fluent, joined hand. The correct formation of all letters needs to become quite automatic and may require a lot of practice.

Each class teacher will plan for handwriting and fine motor interventions within their classroom as needed.