



# Handwriting Policy



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*"Small school, big hearts.  
Wise, responsible, kind like the Good Samaritan."*

### **Our Mission Statement**

**We are a caring, village school which promotes Christian values, where each child receives a high standard of education that is broad, challenging, exciting and encourages creative thinking. We encourage every learner to be the best they can be, to reflect and plan the next steps in their learning journey, demonstrating a respect towards others and contributing to the communities of which they are a part.**

### **Our Vision**

**Our vision is to nurture unique individuals who are outstanding learners, demonstrating wisdom, responsibility and kindness within their communities. Using the Good Samaritan as our role model, we know that loving others as we would like to be loved is upmost for happy, healthy lives.**

### **Values**

**Wise** - we think wisely and are committed to learning. We relish and retain knowledge and value high standards. We have high expectations, high aspirations and enjoy challenge. Like the wise man who built his house upon the rocks (Matthew 7), we think creatively and use learning to make good decisions. We have firm foundations for our lives.

**Responsible** – we are responsible for ourselves – our well-being, our behaviour and our learning. We strive to be the best people we can be and the best person for others. We have a responsibility to others inside and out of school and at times need to be patient, tolerant and courageous in demonstrating this. As Noah had to step up when God asked him to, so must we. We are a school family whose strength is in our ability to work together. We know that perseverance and hard work will bring reward and that resilience is about coping with challenges positively.

**Kind** - we are kind. Through support, nurture and understanding we all flourish. Each one of us is unique – on the outside and inside. We value diversity and respect difference. There are hundreds and thousands, millions of us but God knows everyone and God knows me!

### **Curriculum Intent**

Our curriculum is designed around our Christian values. Each term, we focus on 3 values across the school and develop a working understanding of them through our choice of texts and foundation subject learning, embedding reading and maths at the core. Our approach is to deliver knowledge rich, sequential learning which excites and inspires, provides opportunity for recap and challenge, raises questions for debate, develops learners' confidence and enables independent learning to flourish. High standards, collaboration and valuing individuals' well-being is at the heart of this process. We believe that how we teach is as important as what we teach and that enrichment experiences are an entitlement. We want our curriculum to enable our children to be wise, responsible and kind in line with our school core values.



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## **Aims**

Handwriting is a taught skill and it is important that teachers are seen to put a high value on teaching and sustaining good handwriting. We believe that children's self-esteem and pride in their work can be raised by good quality presentation. Our aim in this policy is to teach children correct letter formation, joining and good handwriting habits, so that they can write fluently and legibly and by the end of KS2 begin to develop a distinctive style.

This policy is one of our English policies and we seek to make links across the subject. In particular, children are encouraged to practise spellings using clear letter formation and a joined hand (see Spelling policy) as well as use their joined font in all of their work in other subjects.

## **Teaching and Organisation**

We seek to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum and EYFS Curriculum. Planning is based on objectives taken from these frameworks, which ensures a progressive structure. In their short-term planning, teachers outline specific objectives for groups of children and individuals in order to ensure progress.

We use a cursive script throughout school, thus ensuring there is a continuity and progression across classes.

Handwriting is taught regularly and at least weekly, as a class and / or group lesson in all year groups. Teachers use cursive resources from our purchased programme which include photocopied sheets KS1 and KS2 and the ability to change any text into the correct cursive script.

During lessons we ensure that children sit, position their paper / book and hold their writing implement correctly, using their other hand to hold their work firmly. Chair height is checked to ensure it is correct.

It is important that children in the early years and at Key Stage 1, are observed closely during the lesson to ensure that letter formation is correct. For children who are still forming some letters incorrectly in KS2 this close observation and subsequent correction is vital.

In addition to specific handwriting lessons, children are expected to apply their learning in their exercise books and to show care for the presentation of their work (see Presentation policy). Regular opportunities for children to produce presentation work are also planned, for example in topic books or for display.

It is important for teachers to set a good example to children by modelling good handwriting when writing on the board, IWB or when marking children's books. Teachers strive to model the cursive style and use the appropriate joins, demonstrating the fluency and legibility of the style.

Children are expected to show care for their work-books, present their work neatly, date work, underline where necessary and not make any marks on the covers.

## **Handwriting Materials**

A range of writing materials, including larger chunky pencils, are available in the early years. Activities enable children to physically feel the shapes of the letters and the way they are formed, e.g., drawing shapes in sand, finger painting, using large brushes with water on outside walls.

Pencil grips are used selectively for children who are experiencing difficulty with hand control and triangular pencils are available in the early stages. Pencils should be used for all work in Key Stage 1 and for most of the work up to the end of year 4, although there may be occasions when children who are beginning to join letters correctly and with some fluency may wish to use a Berol (black) pen for presentation work after having received their pen licence.

Children will use pencil in their workbooks until Year 5. At this stage when teachers consider it appropriate, according to the stage of each child's development, children will be given a pen licence and the choice to work in Berol pen. Children do not have to work in pen in their exercise books (though they do often choose to do so) but should do so for handwriting lessons and presentation work. In Year 6, we encourage most children to work in pen in their books, particularly in terms 5 and 6, as they prepare for secondary school.

Pencils should continue to be used throughout the school for notes, drafting, all maths work, diagrams, charts and maps. Children are encouraged to write with a sharp pencil and to use rubbers to correct mistakes, or cross through with a single line.

Ink cartridge pens may be used in year 6 for final draft and display work. These should always be used with black ink. Biro's will not be used.

## **Handwriting Books**

Four-line handwriting books / boards should be used up to and including year 3 and by some children in year 4. Single line handwriting books should be used by most children from year 4 onwards, but children with handwriting problems in Key Stage 2 may use four-line handwriting books at the discretion of the class teacher or if a child's Support Plan specifies it. As children are ready, from Year 4 onwards, they will cease to have a specific handwriting book.

## **EYFS / Key Stage 1**

In order to develop a legible style, pupils should be taught:

- How to hold a pencil/pen
- To write from left to right and top to bottom of a page
- To start and finish letters correctly
- To form letters of regular size and shape
- To put regular spaces between letters and words
- How to form lower- and upper-case letters
- How to join letters (Year 2)

- The importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate their meaning effectively

## Key Stage 2

Pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed
- Use different forms of handwriting for different purposes (for example, print for labelling maps or diagrams, a clear, neat hand for finished presented work, a faster script for notes).

## Scheme of Work

We teach a cursive script. Teachers encourage individual children to move to the next stage when they are ready, so whilst the following guidance provides a structure for progression, where children are ready to move to the next stage they will be taught to do so. EYFS and Year 1 children focus on correct letter formation. Children start to learn how to write with a cursive script from Year 2 once they are forming letters correctly. Most children will have a neat cursive script by the time they enter year 3.

## Assessment

Teachers provide oral and written feedback to children about their handwriting. Children are encouraged to self-assess their skills, in line with our Assessment and Marking and Feedback policies.

Handwriting is formally assessed 3 times a year, as part of our Assessment week English assessment.

## Encouraging Good Handwriting

The following guidance may be useful in diagnostic assessment of pupil attainment:

- Position at the desk/table, height of chair and table in relation to body size.
- Position of paper to body: right handers need this over to the right, left handers to the left. Slanting the paper helps take account of visual factors to body size.
- Grip of writing implement: most children should use a conventional tripod grip, but other holds are possible. Check also tightness or floppiness of grip.
- Letter formation: should follow conventional direction.
- Spacing between words: a letter space is usually sufficient (or a finger space for beginning writers).
- Slant of letters: notice whether this is roughly in the same direction.
- Position of letters on the line: check that mid-zone letters or parts of letters are sitting on the line.
- Size of writing: appropriateness.
- Proportion in letters.
- Orientation difficulties (e.g. mirror writing).
- Problems associated with left-handedness. Staff are aware of the need to provide particular guidance to left-handed children in relation to their pencil-



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grip, positioning of themselves and their paper and where necessary resources are adapted accordingly.

- Problems older primary children have with maintaining legibility at speed.

## **SEN**

We recognise that children identified as having SEND will often have a target specifically relating to handwriting. These children will receive additional support in the form of resources and TA / teacher support and will be subject to reviews of progress 3 times a year (see SEND/Inclusion policy).

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

It is the role of the English subject leader to monitor the teaching and learning of handwriting throughout the school. This is done through regular work sampling, analysis of assessment pieces and lesson observations. Feedback from this monitoring is used to inform staff of necessary developments.