

ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Handwriting Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

As the pupils, parents, staff and governors of St Patrick's school:

OUR MISSION IS TO FOLLOW THE LOVING EXAMPLE SHOWN BY JESUS CHRIST

Aims:

- to have a consistent approach to handwriting across the whole school to ensure high levels of presentation
- for children to achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting
- for children to develop fluency and speed in independent writing
- for all adults to model consistently the agreed handwriting script when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources

Working practices:

Foundation Stage:

- Children in Foundation Stage are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements; a multi-sensory approach is used to help them feel the movement in the hand. As physical development is integral in the development of writing children engage in 'Fidget Fingers' activities to develop fine motor control.
- To aid movement, close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space. Teachers are vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not become ingrained and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils (for example, additional tracking and tracing of letters at the pre-writing stage) and those with special educational needs are met.
- Children are introduced to pre-cursive letter formation – no lead in but a flick out. This needs to be taught explicitly starting with the letters in the child's name.
- Children learn pre-cursive letter formation as they are introduced to letters through phonics. The digraphs can be taught as a joined unit for those children who are ready.
- During the autumn and spring terms, children write on plain paper and whiteboards but when adults are writing, they could draw a line and model how the letter is correctly formed and how it sits on the line.
- The summer term is a transition term to prepare children for Year 1. Lined paper is introduced at this point (this could be loose, lined paper or handwriting books) and children begin practising sitting letters on the line correctly.

Key Stage 1:

Year 1

- During the Autumn term in year 1 children continue to practise pre-cursive letter formation in line with the agreed school script and sit their letters on the line.
- Children will develop an understanding of the different handwriting families which exist for letter formation.
- When a child is judged to be ready entry strokes can begin to be taught.

Year 2

- Children's handwriting skills will continue to be developed so that both exit and entry strokes become part of everyday handwriting.
- The **joining of letters** will be taught once a child has mastered the shape of individual letters. The four basic handwriting joins will be taught systematically. In line with National Curriculum guidance the expectation is that our children will be joining their letters in Year 2 providing they can form letters securely with the correct formation.

Key Stage 2:

The aim for children in Key Stage Two is to produce a fluent, consistently formed style of fully cursive handwriting with equal spacing between the letters and words.

- Children have regular handwriting sessions using appropriate prepared resources, in the agreed handwriting style, or specialist handwriting books.
- All children in Key Stage 2 practise their letter formation when copying their weekly spellings.
- Children in Years 3, 4 and 5 write with HB pencils.
- In Year 6 children use handwriting pens for final presentation of their written work.

Provision for left handed writers:

At least 10% of the population are left-handed, the majority of whom are boys. Teachers are aware of the specific needs of these children and make appropriate provision:

- Paper should be positioned to the left for right-handed children and to the right for left-handed children and slanted to suit the individual in either case.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt children's line of vision.
- Left-handed children should be positioned so they can place their paper to their right side.
- Left handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so they are not competing for space.

Appendix 1

Patter for correct letter formation

There are four main groups of letter forming movements. Those listed below do not take account of the entry and exit strokes.

Anti-clockwise round letters (curly caterpillar):

- c over the top and round
- o curly "c" all the way round
- a curly "c" up, down, flick
- g curly "c" all the way up, down and round
- d curly "c" up, all the way down
- q curly "c" up, all the way down, kick
- e start in the middle, curly "c" all the way round
- s curly "c" and round the other way

Down and retrace upwards letters (one armed robot):

- r down, up and over
- n down, up, over, down
- m down, up, over, down, up, over, down
- p straight down, up to the top, round to the middle
- h straight down, up to the middle, over
- b straight down, up to the middle, round to the bottom
- k straight down, up to the middle, loop and a kick

Down and off in another direction letters (long ladder):

- i short down, give it a dot
- j straight down, round, give it a dot
- l straight down
- t down and round, take your pencil off and across

u down, round, up, down

y down, round, up, all the way down and round

f over the top, straight down, round the other way and across

Zigzag letters:

v down, up

w down, up, down, up

x across and across

z straight across, down across, straight across

As exit strokes are introduced, these need to be referred to as giving a letter a 'flick' or in the case of those letters with descenders, forming a 'loop' and back up to the line.

Entry strokes will be described as 'start on the line' with the rest of the patten then followed.

Helpful websites:

<http://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk>

<http://www.letterjoin.co.uk/>

<http://www.kidzone.ws/cursive/>

Letter Formation Practice Sheet

a b c d e f g h i

j k l m n o p q r

s t u v w x y z

Appendix 2