

St James C of E Primary School

Handwriting Policy 2025

Overview

At St James, and in line with the primary curriculum statutory expectations, children are taught to write with ease, speed and legibility. We believe that fluent, cursive handwriting is a vital part in developing writing skills. It is important that a child's handwriting becomes a skill that ultimately requires limited use of their working memory so that creative and physical energy can be focused on the content of writing. As a school, we aim for children to have secure automatic generation of letters and by using a well-structured, progressive handwriting program with explicitly taught handwriting sessions, the children will build up a good skills base.

Aims and Objectives

Pupils should be taught:

- Handwriting both implicitly and explicitly
- The expected standard of handwriting appropriate for their year group
- Increasing fluency through the year groups
- To sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly using the tripod grip
- To form the letters correctly, starting and finishing in the right place
- To write in a clear, joined, fluent and legible style

Procedures and Progression of Skills

- Handwriting will be taught discretely and explicitly within and outside Phonics and English lessons.
- In books, usually, the children will use pencils in Years R, 1 and 2, and in Year 3 to 6, children will use a prescribed pen.
- Children on the SEND register or with specific needs may need supporting activities, handwriting tools e.g., pen grips, tracing patterns, prescribed fine motor / gross motor activities as well as additional small group work.
- We recognise that as children progress through the school, they will develop their own style and may do so provided that it remains clear, joined, fluent and legible.
- We will introduce and ensure children who join the school after Reception are taught to use our style and maintain our standards.
- Shared or modelled writing should be handwritten, ideally on paper.
- Ensure that a cursive script font is available on teacher laptops to use where appropriate and to support, encourage, demonstrate, and enable clear writing script e.g., Twinkl and Twinkl Cursive.
- All adults working with the children will model the St James script, appropriate for the age group they are working with, so that the children are immersed in our style.
- Whenever writing for children to see, for example, marking, board work, modelling, reading records etc the school script should be used.
- All children will be supported to be ready to write. Children will be supported in posture for writing, and pencil grip through the use of our posture rhyme (Appendix 4).
- When supporting children with letter formation, adults will use the Little Wandle letter formation phrases, alongside the 'walk towards....and walk away' phrase. For example, when forming the letter g, the following phrase would be used, "walk toward, round the goat's face and curl under it's chin, and walk away".
- All classrooms will display the St James script (Appendix 3) and posture rhyme (Appendix 4). Where possible, all notebooks, Powerpoints and displays will use the St James script.

EYFS

In EYFS, the order of teaching the lower-case letter formation follows the Little Wandle phonics programme. As phonemes are introduced, children are taught the corresponding graphemes. Teachers will teach the Little Wandle formation phrases (see Appendix 1) and, once all single phonemes have been taught, they will also make connections between letter families (see Appendix 2). From EYFS, children are taught that capital letters start from the top. Children are taught to have the correct posture for writing, using the posture prompt rhyme (Appendix 4), and to hold a pencil comfortably and correctly. Children are supported to make progress towards using a tripod grip through a variety of gross and fine motor activities. Triangular pencils are used to support children with the development of a tripod grip.

Each child will receive dedicated weekly fine motor handwriting tasks to support the development of tripod grip and letter formation.

Key Stage 1

In Year 1, explicit handwriting lessons take place at least three times a week. The Little Wandle formation phrases are built upon with the addition of a lead in and a lead out for each lower-case letter using the phrase 'walk towards....and walk away.' Links between letter families are also reinforced (Appendix 2). As soon as children start writing on lined paper they are shown that capital letters start from just below the upper writing line. When writing a whole word which requires a capital letter at the beginning, a small space is left after the capital letter and the next letter starts on the line. All capital letters are simple print letter shapes which do not join other letters.

In Year 2, children are then taught to join letters in a cursive handwriting script with letters of the correct size relative to one another. Explicit handwriting lessons take place three times a week.

Key Stage 2

When the children move to Year 3, all children are given a handwriting pen to use for their writing. They continue to have explicit handwriting lessons where teachers reinforce the cursive handwriting script taught in the infants and also to support the children in the transition of writing in pen.















In Years 3 & 4, children are taught how to increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting through continued explicitly taught handwriting lessons each week. Appendix 3 will be displayed in each classroom to remind children of the correct formation of the letters. Children will also be reminded of the different letter families.

In Years 5 & 6, the emphasis on handwriting will be to build the children's writing stamina when joining letters. They will be taught to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed. Appendix 3 will be displayed in each classroom to remind children of the correct formation of the letters.

SEND Children

Children on the SEND register or with specific needs may need supporting activities that further develop their gross and fine motor control, or handwriting tools for example, a pen/pencil grip as well as additional small group work. Whilst we have high standards for all children, and support children in reaching Key Stage expectations in handwriting, we do acknowledge that for some children, reasonable adjustments should be made, and a consistent legible, printed font should be celebrated as a success.



 Ss	Down the snake from head to tail.	 Aa	Around the astronaut's helmet and down into space.	 Tt	Down the tiger and across its neck.	 Pp	Down the penguin's back, up and around its head.	 Ii	Down the iguana and dot the leaf.	 Nn	Down, up and over the net.	 Mm	Down, up and over the mouse's ears.
 Dd	Round the ducks body, up to its head and down to its feet.	 Gg	Round the goat's face and curl under its chin.	 Oo	All around the octopus	 Cc	Curl around the cat.	 Kk	Down the kite, up to the top corner and down to the bottom corner.	 Uu	Down and around the umbrella, and back down to the ground.		
 Rr	From the cloud to the ground and over the rainbow.	 Hh	Down, up and over the helicopter.	 Bb	Down the bear's back, up and round his tummy.	 Ff	Down the flamingo to its foot and across its wings.	 Ll	Down the lollipop stick.	 Jj	Down the jellyfish and dot its head.	 Vv	Down to the bottom of the volcano and back up to the top.
 Ww	Down and up and down and up the waves.	 Xx	From the top, across the box to the bottom. From the top again across the box to the bottom.	 Yy	Down, around the yo-yo and curl around the string.	 Zz	Across the top of the zebra's head, zig-zag down its neck and along.	 Qq	Round the queen's face, down her robe and a flick at the end.				

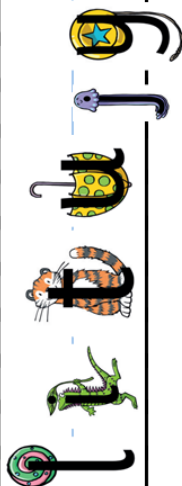
Appendix 2 – Letter Families



Curly caterpillar letters



Long ladder letters



One armed robot letters



Zigzag letters



Appendix 3

Aa Bb Cc Dd

Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii

Jj Kk Ll Mm

Nn Oo Pp Qq

Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv







Ww Xx Yy Zz

Appendix 4 – Posture Rhyme

1 2 3 4
1, 2, 3, 4...

?     
Are my feet flat on the floor?

5 6 7 8
5, 6, 7, 8...

  is    is 
My chair is in, my back is straight.

9 10 11 12
9, 10, 11, 12...

 is    is 
This is how my pencil is held.



Appendix 5 – Mark Making

Pre-Writing

Progression		First Pre-Writing Shapes				Second Pre-Writing Shapes with Flow			