



St Joseph's Handwriting Policy



Handwriting is an essential skill which, like reading and spelling, affects how children access the curriculum and potential opportunities that will be open to them as they grow throughout their lives. Despite our increased use of chromebooks to support learning, handwriting remains a crucial skill that must be honed and developed. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. Furthermore, being able to write with fluency relieves some of the cognitive load many children experience when trying to focus on their handwriting as well as the many composition skills and SPaG objectives they are taught.

Aim

At St Joseph's, we teach handwriting in line with the National Curriculum to ensure a clear progression from mark making and sitting at the table correctly in EYFS, through to writing fluently, legibly and with their own style by the end of year 6.

We understand that:

- Good handwriting increases children's motivation.
- Writing involves many processes, so having fluent handwriting is one less thing to think about.
- Children, and even teachers, often judge a piece of legible, well-formed writing as better than one that isn't.

(Read, Write Inc)

The National Curriculum

EYFS

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

(Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, 14.07.25)



Year 1

Pupils should be taught to:

- Sit correctly, and hold a pencil comfortably and correctly
- Begin to write lower-case letters starting and finishing in the right place
- Write capital letters and digits 0 to 9
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' and practise them

Year 2

Pupils should be taught to:

- Form lower-case and capital letters of the correct size relative to one another, including appropriate spacing
- Understand which letters shouldn't be joined up, and start using handwriting strokes needed to join letters

Years 3 & 4

Pupils should be taught to:

- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, including sufficient spacing
- Begin joined handwriting consistently

Years 5 & 6

Pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly and fluently with increasing speed by choosing which shape of a letter to use, and choosing the correct writing implement

Teaching and learning

Expectations for handwriting are extremely high across the curriculum and children will be expected to use the correct handwriting in all of their written work. During marking, children will be asked to correct incorrect letter formation.



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Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are exposed to correct letter formation in addition to Read Write Inc lessons for ten minutes a day once they have learned to read the set 1 sounds. Additionally, children are provided with lots of opportunities to build physical strength in their core, upper body, hands and fingers. They are taught that print carries meaning and writing is modelled to them to show how to solve problems, understand language problems, develop their thinking skills and make sense of their experiences. In their time in EYFS, children will be taught the 'Perfect Handwriting Position':

- Sit at a table
- Put two feet on the floor
- Push their bottom to the back of the chair
- Tuck their chair under the table
- Hold their pencil in a tripod grip
- Place the other hand on their book or paper, so it doesn't move around.

In year 1 children learn the relative size of letters and to form letters that will flow easily into a joined style. They are reminded of the 'Perfect Handwriting Position'. Children will be taught handwriting for ten minutes a day using the letter village videos on the Read Write Inc website. During these lessons children will be provided with a suitable pencil and handwriting book. The letters are taught in handwriting groups:

- 'Around' letters: c a o d g q
- 'Down' letters: l t b p k h i j m n r u y
- 'Curly' letters: e f s
- 'Zig-zag' letters: v w z x.

In year 2, when they are ready, children will learn how to join letters using two basic joins (the arm join (diagonal) and the washing line join (horizontal)) whilst maintaining the 'Perfect Handwriting Position'. Handwriting lessons will happen for 10 minutes each day following the letter village videos which will be released in the later part of the autumn term.

Once children move to Lower Key Stage 2, they will be expected to begin to join letters in any writing that they do. They will begin to increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting. It is often the case, when moving from printing to joining, that they will begin to write less and writing may look 'scruffy'. As they build their confidence this will correct itself. Handwriting is taught for 10 minutes a day in the morning, 4 days a week. There will be plenty of opportunities for the children to see modelled handwriting across the curriculum and handwriting will be displayed in the classroom.



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In Upper Key Stage 2, it is expected that children are writing legibly, fluently and with increasing speed. Children should now be joining appropriate letters as they have been shown. Handwriting will be taught for 10 minutes, 4 days a week and will focus on improving the quality of handwriting.

Throughout the school, handwriting (which is suitable for the year group being taught) will be modelled by all members of staff, including student teachers and teaching assistants. This includes writing on flipcharts, writing put on displays and marking in books. Teachers will plan regular opportunities to model writing across the curriculum.

Struggling, reluctant and left handed writers.

Left-handed children have a tendency to form some letters incorrectly and start writing on the wrong side of the page. This is common and will be addressed by ensuring they:

- Have more space to write by placing them to the left of a child who is right-handed so their arms don't nudge each other.
- Are able to slant their paper to the right so they can see more of their writing.
- Know how to grip their pencil at a slightly higher point so they can see around their fingers.

We understand that there are some factors which may cause barriers to writing for some children and we will take the necessary steps to overcome these, such as pencil grips.

It is our hope that struggling writers will see the benefit of writing as a way of expressing their ideas and emotions, a way of communicating with others and will be encouraged by the passion shown by their teachers. Writing will be celebrated throughout the school and rewards given to those children who are trying their best to improve their handwriting.



Appendices

Letter formation in EYFS - stage 1

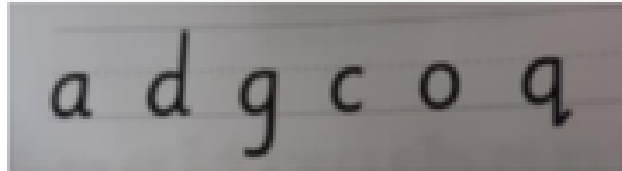
My Sound Mat

								
Maisey mountain mountain	Around the apple, down the leaf	Slither down the snake	Round his bottom, up his tall neck and down to his feet	Down the tower, across the tower	Down the body, dot for the head	Down Nobby and over his net	Down the plait and over the pirate's face	Round her face down her hair and give her a curl
								
All around the orange	Curl around the caterpillar	Down the kangaroos body, tail and leg	Down and under, up to the top and draw a puddle	Down the laces, to heel, round the toe	Down the stem and draw the leaves	Lift off the top and scoop out the egg	Down the long leg	Down the head, the hooves and over his back
								
Down his back, hen curl over his arm	Down the body, curl and dot	Down a wing, up a wing	Down a horn, up a horn and under his head	Down up, down up	Zig-zag-zig	Round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair	Down the arm and leg, repeat the other side	

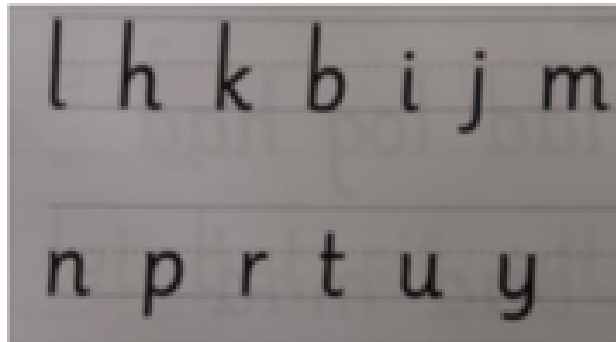


Letter formation in year 1 - stage 2

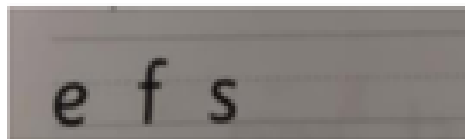
'Around' letters:



'Down' letters:



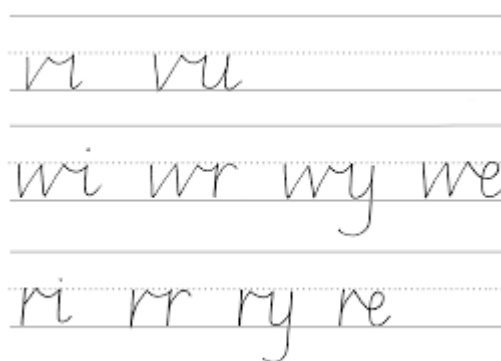
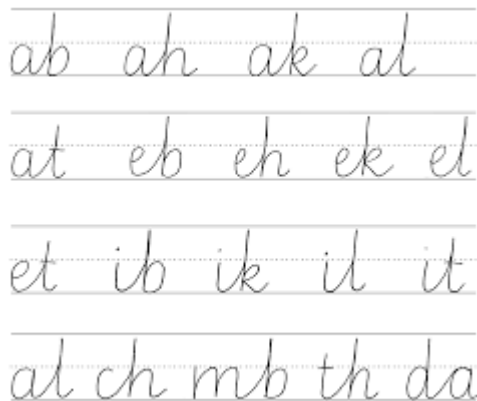
'Curly' letters:



'Zigzag' letters:



Letter formation in year 2 - stage 3





Letter formation in key stage 2

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

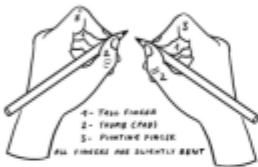
The Writing Framework, 2025

Appendix A: Handwriting guidance

Maintaining a correct and comfortable sitting position and pencil grip

Teachers should encourage pupils to maintain correct finger positioning. Most pupils find the tripod grip the easiest to learn and support grips can help. Teachers should show pupils how to pinch the pencil with the index ('pointing') finger and the thumb, about a finger space from the end (on the coloured part just above the sharpened point); and how to rest the middle finger underneath the pencil to support it. If necessary, a sticker can show pupils where to place their fingers. The way a child grips the pencil will affect the quality, speed and flow of the handwriting. The grip should be relaxed, not pressing too hard on the pencil or the paper.

Finger positioning using the tripod grip:



Paper positioning for left-handers:

Paper positioning for right-handers:

