

St Monica's RC Primary School Handwriting Guidance 2021

Here at St. Monica's, we recognise that we are all cherished members of God's family.

We love and care for one another and trust God to guide us in all we do and say.

By learning together, we aim to achieve and working together, we will succeed.

This policy sets to outline our approach to teaching; reflecting the school's aims and objectives in relation to the teaching and learning of handwriting. It sets a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and the 2014 National Curriculum. These set out the rationale for teaching each area of the English Curriculum and specify the skills that will be developed for the majority of pupils in each year group.

Intent

1. To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
2. To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by;
 - Having a correct pencil grip
 - Knowing that all letters start from the top, except d and e which start in the middle
 - Forming all letters correctly
 - Knowing the size and orientation of letters

Implementation

Teaching time

There should be a **minimum** of 3 x 15 minute taught handwriting lessons each week as well as time to practise. Children who find handwriting difficult should be targeted for regular intervention.

Models used

In the Foundation Stage at St. Monica's, our children will use the R.W.I. scheme to link handwriting to phonics. Children need to start with large scale motor movements. Handwriting is then taught alongside phonics making use of kinaesthetic learning to help children internalise the letter shapes that go with the sound.

The Nelson Handwriting Scheme forms the basis for our teaching In Key Stages 1 and 2. Children will be taught to join their writing using the following letter formations.

Lower case letters

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Capitals

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

Numbers

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

The Four Joins

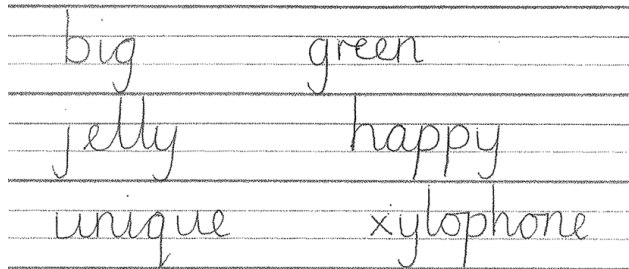
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1. to letters without ascenders
2. to letters with ascenders
3. horizontal joins
4. horizontal joins to letters with ascenders

The break letters (letters that are not joined from) are:

b p g q y j z x

See below for examples of the break letters



Teaching Sequence

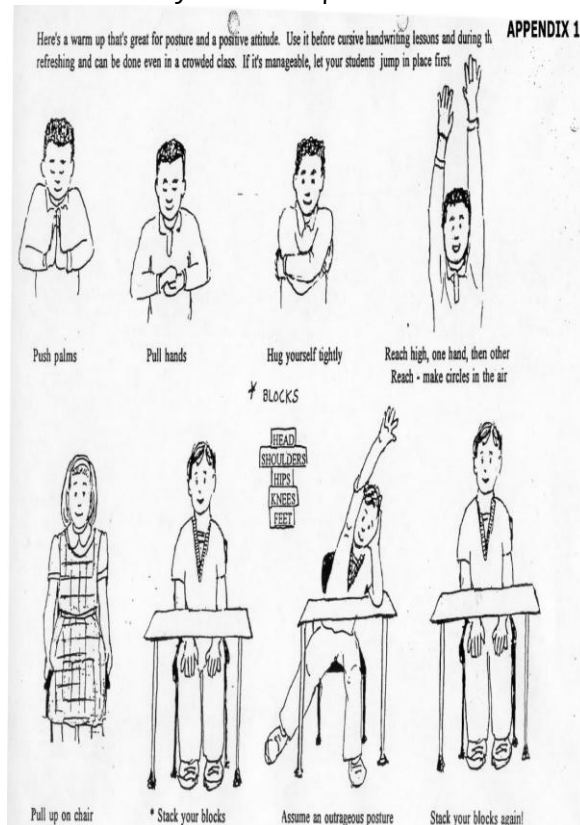
- Hand and finger strength
- Physical preparation
- Tracing
- Patterns
- Over teacher's writing (highlighter)
- Under teacher's writing (directly under words – write in large letters, leave large spaces between words)
- Independence

Getting ready to write

Seating and posture

- Chair and table should be at a comfortable height
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Encourage children to sit up straight and not slouch
- The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor
- Tables should be free of clutter
- Rooms should be well lit
- Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners

See Appendix 1 below for warm up exercises.



Pencil grip

- Children should write with a pencil (or handwriting pen when introduced in Y5). Pencils should be reasonably sharp.
- A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil

For right handers:

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point
- The paper should be placed to the right tilted slightly to the left
- Use the left hand to steady the paper

For left handers:

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger
- Hold about 3cm from the tip
- The hand should be kept below the writing line

- The paper should be tilted slightly to the right at about 20 - 30°
- Use the right hand to steady the paper

NB It is very important that a right-handed child is NOT seated on the left hand side of a left-handed child as their elbows will collide!

Please refer to Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book - The Writing Process for further information

Assessment

Members of the Senior Management Team and the literacy coordinator should monitor children's writing and presentation in books termly. The following should be considered:

- Is the writing generally legible?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with the recommendations in the National Curriculum?

Samples of children's writing will be taken to monitor the progress throughout the year.

Individual assessment

Children should be observed as they write during handwriting lessons – the teacher must circulate, monitor and intervene. Teachers also need to monitor and mark whole pieces of writing. The following should be considered:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movement when forming and or joining letters?
- Are any letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
- Is the writing easily legible?
- Is the pupil's handwriting development in line with the recommendations in the National Curriculum?

Links to spelling

Linking handwriting with spelling is one of the most powerful ways of developing the visual memory. Handwriting should be practised using letters, blends, strings or digraphs so that patterns are internalised.

Remember to use Look – Say – Cover – Write – Check

The child:

Looks at the word carefully

Says the word

Covers the word so that it cannot be seen

Writes the whole word from memory

Checks the word is written correctly

If not, repeat.

Resources

Nelson Thornes Handwriting Teaching Online Resource
Nelson Thornes Handwriting Teacher's Book
Nelson Thornes Handwriting CD Roms

Order of teaching

The National Curriculum for English suggests a sequence for teaching letter sounds which is supported by Ruth Miskin's Read Write Inc. Programme. Handwriting can then be coordinated with Phonics teaching where two letters stand for one sound. The digraph can be taught as a joined unit so that visual and kinaesthetic learning reinforce the idea of the digraph.

Please see the Handwriting progression maps per year group for more detailed lesson by lesson mapping - APPENDIX 2

Single letters (N and YR)

- c a d g q o
- e s f
- i l t
- u y j k
- r n m
- h b p
- v w x z

Supporting activities

- tracing patterns
- tracing
- copying over (letters, numbers and words)
- copying under (letters, numbers and words)

Single letters (YR and Y1)

- c a d g q o
- e s f
- i l t
- u y j k
- r n m
- h b p
- v w x z

Supporting activities

- tracing patterns
- tracing
- copying over (letters, numbers and words)
- copying under (letters, numbers and words)

Techniques for teaching letter formation

- Model good handwriting all the time
- Demonstrate
- Talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Children form letters in the air
- Finger trace over tactile letters
- Write over highlighter pen (or dotted letters)
- Draw round templates
- Write in sand with finger or stick
- Write with chalk on chalkboard
- Wax resist letters
- Form letters with pegs on pegboard
- Form letters with beads in plasticine
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the back of the person in front of you

Joins Y1 and Y2 (going into Y3)

Introduction of the four handwriting joins

- First join; un um ig id ed eg an or ing ung
- Second join; ch th tl ll ill li lu ck ack ti ink unk
- Third join; od pg re ve oon oom
- Fourth join; wl vl of ff fl flo
- Practise the break letters b p g q y j z s
- Practise capital letters

Supporting activities

- Match and copy captions
- Trace and copy patterns
- Copy words
- Copy sentences
- Write out menu
- Copy poem
- Alphabetical ordering

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p30 for learning outcomes and further information

Joins Y3 (going into Y4)

Revision

- Practise the break letters b p g q y j z s
- Practise capital letters

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p30 for learning outcomes and further information

Further practice of the four handwriting joins

- in ine
- ut ute
- ve vi
- ok oh
- as es (practising joining to the letter s)
- ri ru ry (practising joining from the letter r)
- oa ad as (practising joining to and from the letter a)
- ee ea ed (practising joining from the letter e)
- ow ov ox (practising joining from the letter o)
- ky hy ly (practising joining to the letter y)
- ha ta fa (practising joining to the letter a)
- od oo og (practising joining from the letter o)
- er ir ur (practising joining to the letter r)
- ai al ay
- o you oi
- re oe fe (practising the horizontal join to the letter e)
- fu wu vu (practising the horizontal join to the letter u)
- ot ol ok (practising joining to ascenders)
- ai al ow ol (practising all the joins)

Supporting activities

- copy words
- copy sentences
- copy poems
- match questions to answers
- copy jokes
- make and copy compound words

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p54 for learning outcomes and further information

Year 4

- ning ping ting
- oc od oo
- ake ome are
- fla flo fle
- who wha whe
- ie in il
- inly ky ny
- ap ar an
- ick uck ack
- practise writing with a slope
- he
- we
- re
- fte fir fin
- wra wri kni (silent letters)
- ii ll tt rr nn mm cc oo dd ff ee
- ew ev ex (spacing)
- th ht fl (proportions)
- ac ag af
- Capital letters
- Decorated capital letters
- Practising with punctuation ! ? – “ “ , ‘

Supporting activities

- Copy words, sentences, poems
- Trace and copy
- Copy tongue twisters
- Copy instructions

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p78 for learning outcomes and further information

Years 5 and 6

- Practise consistency and size of letters
- Practising using a diagonal joining line
- Practising leaving an equal space between letters
- Practising joining to the letter y
- Practising using a horizontal joining line
- Practising the size and height of letters
- Practising joining from the letter i
- Practising joining to and from the letter v
- Practising consistency in forming and joining letters
- Practise speedwriting
- Practising crossing double tt on completing the work
- Practising joining to and from the letter e
- Practising joining to and from the letter w
- Practising printing
- Practising drafting and editing
- Practising joining to the letter t

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p102 for learning outcomes, activities and further information

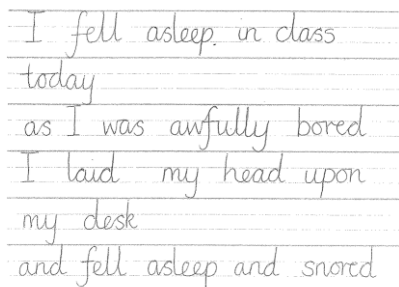
- Ensuring letters are consistent in height and size
- Practising with punctuation
- Practising break letters
- Practising joining from the letter m
- Ensuring the ascender on the letter t is the correct height
- Practising spacing within words
- Developing fluency
- Practising printing
- Practising forming and joining the letter f
- Practising presentation
- Practising printing
- Practising speed writing
- Revision
- Looking at different handwriting styles

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p126 for learning outcomes, activities and further information

- Revision of all skills

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p150 for learning outcomes, activities and further information.

APPENDIX 3 – examples of the joins



I fell asleep in class
today
as I was awfully bored
I laid my head upon
my desk
and fell asleep and snored