



Saint John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy

'For I know the plans I have for you; plans to give you hope and a future.' Jeremiah 29:11

Everyone who works at Saint John Fisher will work together and always try their best to help me make the most of my God-given talents.

Handwriting & Presentation Policy

AIMS

- To develop and celebrate the God given talents of our pupils.
- To reach high levels of achievement for all.
- To motivate, engage and enthuse all pupils in their learning
- To work in partnership with parents and carers.
- To encourage pupils to take pride in and have a sense of ownership of their work.
- To have a consistent approach across the whole school when teaching handwriting and presentation of work throughout the school.
- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.
- St John Fisher has adopted the fully cursive method of handwriting.

For pupils to:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting.

Rationale

Why is a handwriting policy important for a primary school?

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Given effective teaching, handwriting can be mastered by most pupils by the time they are seven or eight years old enabling them, with practice, to go on to develop a faster and more mature hand ready for secondary school and adult life. The surest way to ensure consistent teaching and the development of legible, fluent joined handwriting throughout the school is to have a written policy agreed and put into practice by all staff.

Handwriting is a movement skill, children need to practise handwriting movements correctly and often. The first handwriting lessons are vital and the most important issue is to ensure that the children we teach learn to form the letters of the alphabet with the correct sequence of strokes from the beginning. The correct formation of all letters needs to become quite automatic and may require a lot of practice.

Suzanne Tiburtius of the National Handwriting Association

Strategy for Implementation

Teaching and Learning

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important. Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed and the models provided is the key to effective learning. A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching is planned.

The role of the teacher:

To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting.

To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling.

To provide resources and an environment which promotes good handwriting.

To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development.

Continuity and Progression

Foundation Stage

The emphasis at this stage is with movement rather than neatness. Letter formation (starting at the right entry point and then moving in the right direction) learned at this early stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility. Pupils are to be taught to use lead-in strokes, following agreed policy, as soon as they are ready for letter formation. (For agreed letter formation please see Appendix 1).

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. Pupils are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements; a multi-sensory approach is used to help pupils feel the movement in the hand. As physical development is integral in the development of writing there are planned activities to develop fine motor control.

We teach children to join the letters in the digraphs as they are taught in phonics. This means children are recognising that the two graphemes (letters) are making one phoneme (sound). An example of how this might look in their writing is:

i [h^a a [r ¶,, i^a a^a c [,, ¶w â ¶l [l

Children are encouraged to join all letters when the teacher feels they are ready.

Key Stage 1

Building on the foundation stage, pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a legible style and begin to use fully cursive handwriting in Year One by starting to join their letters. This is dependent on ability not age/ year of the child. This is achieved in Year 1 by developing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and by practising handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing. Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion are taught in line with the school's agreed handwriting style. This continues in Year 2.

Key Stage Two

The target 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 new to the school, and those that need it, will have regular handwriting sessions.
- Children in years three, four, five and six will write with pencils until the class teacher assesses that they are joining competently and consistently.
- If the class teacher considers the child's work meets all the criteria for a pen licence, they must put the child's name forward to the leadership team. When their work has been approved by the leadership team, the child will be presented with a certificate and a handwriting pen.
- Pencils will be used in Numeracy or for drawing and completion of diagrams.
- All work, including 'Read it, Red it' responses and homework, will be written in the approved cursive style.

Presentation guidance

It is essential that all children should have pride in their work and that it is set out well.

- All work in exercise books will be completed in pencil unless the child has been awarded a pen licence; the pencil must be sharpened.
- Those children with pen licences must use a handwriting pen provided by the school.
- The date must be written at the left of the page (starting at the margin) and underlined with a ruler. In maths this will be in digit form – e.g. 30.09.15; in all other subjects this will be in full form – e.g. 30th September 2015
- The title will be written in the centre of the page on the line below the date, underlined with a ruler.
- Numbers or letters will be written in the margin.
- Writing on each line will start by the margin, except for each new paragraph, when a line will be missed and writing will be indented, and children will write from the margin to the edge of the page.
- There will be no other missed lines, except when there are four or fewer lines left at the bottom of the page.
- Mistakes should be crossed through once, or an eraser may be used at the teacher's discretion.
- Criteria for presentation of work will be discussed prior to commencement of work.
- The pages will be filled up – do not take a new page for a new piece of work.
- All exercise books should be kept in a neat, clean condition and clearly labelled with the child's name, class and curricular area. Graffiti anywhere on the book is unacceptable.

Numeracy

- One digit is written in each box.
- A line is left between each sum.
- A margin is drawn on the left of the page and another on the right; see specific guidelines for each stage of MMS for the specific measurement for each margin. This line must be drawn neatly with a ruler.
- All question numbers are to be shown by a bracket, e.g. 2)
- The decimal point is to be written on the line.

Resources

'Handwriting for Windows' is loaded on to all computers in the school and the default settings for individual letter formation are as agreed and these can be seen in Appendix 1.

Implements

- Children use a standard HB pencil, well sharpened. In Reception this is a 'fat' pencil, from year 1 this is a standard size pencil.
- When a member of the leadership team deems a child ready, they get a pen licence, and will be provided with a special handwriting pen.
- A pencil is always used within maths regardless of whether children have a pen licence.

Posture

Children should be taught the importance of sitting upright and correctly on their chair, with their feet on the floor.

Pencil grip

Children should use a tripod grip, and be given constant reminders until this is established. Triangular section pencils and shaped pencil holders are available in school for children who find them helpful.

Position of paper

Left handed children should be encouraged to tilt their paper slightly to the right to improve their view of what they are writing, and to reduce smudging. Right handed children may find it helpful to tilt paper slightly to the left. Paper should be steadied with the free hand.

Equal opportunities and Special needs

All children must have the opportunity and the encouragement to reach their full potential regardless of race, creed or sex. Children with Special Educational needs, where necessary, will be provided with specialist equipment such as pencil grips or wider ruled lined paper / handwriting paper. Children will also have the opportunity to use iPads to rehearse specific skills on a more regular basis. Intervention is available for children who experience significant difficulties to practice pre writing skills and fine motor coordination. Children may also attend physical literacy (from year 2 to yr 6) which is a set of exercises designed by physiotherapists to improve core stability and coordination which has been shown to improve handwriting.

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- paper should be positioned appropriately (see 'position of paper' above).
- pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision;
- pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child, so that they are not competing for space;
- extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.

Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when they are modelled by a right-handed teacher. Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis where necessary, even if the resulting writing by the teacher is not 'neat'.

Date policy written November 2015
By J Gilhooly
Review date November 2017

Signature Chair N.Weightman _____ Date _____

Appendix 1

This is how we write our letters:

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

All the lower case lessons start on the line. This is how we write our lower case letters:

^aa b ^ac ^ad â û ^aü h i y ,, l m
n ^a< p ^aq r ; t u v w ^ b z

All the numbers start at the top. This is how we write our numbers:

0 | 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

There is a 'jingle' for each number, see appendix 2.

Appendix 2

This is how we teach the formation of numbers in Maths Makes Sense

Sing to the tune of *Skip to my Lou*.

Actions

Practise forming all numbers standing up, so children can use their forefinger and whole arm to 'write' the number in the air. Progress to the smaller movements required to write on the page.

Lyrics

- 0 From the top, go all the way round (three times)
To make the number zero.
- 1 Go straight down and that is all (three times)
To make the number one.
- 2 Swing it round and then go right (three times)
To make the number two.
- 3 Swing it round and then once more (three times)
To make the number three.
- 4 Down, slide, cut in half (three times)
To make the number four.
- 5 Down, round, put on a hat (three times)
To make the number five.
- 6 Come on down and make a curl (three times)
To make the number six.
- 7 Slide to the right and slant on down (three times)
To make the number seven.
- 8 Make an S and go straight home (three times)
To make the number eight.
- 9 Make a loop and come straight down (three times)
To make the number nine.

Appendix 3

Assertive Mentoring

Progression in Handwriting

Stage 1 – 6

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
10. Sit correctly at a table, hold a pencil comfortably and correctly	9. Form lower-case letters to the correct size relative to one another	6. Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters
11. Begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place	10. Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined	7. Increase legibility/consistency/quality of handwriting (<i>ensuring downstrokes are parallel and equidistant</i>)
12. Form capital letters and digits 0 – 9	11. Write cap letters/digits of correct size/orientation/relationship to one another & to lower case letters	
13. Understand which letters belong to which handwriting ‘families’ (i.e. formed in similar ways) (<i>GH 1:14</i>)	12. Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters	
Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6
6. Understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined	6. Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters	6. Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: choosing the writing implement best suited for a task
7. Increase legibility/consistency/quality of handwriting (<i>lines spaced, ascenders/descenders not touching</i>)	7. Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: choosing the writing implement best suited for a task	