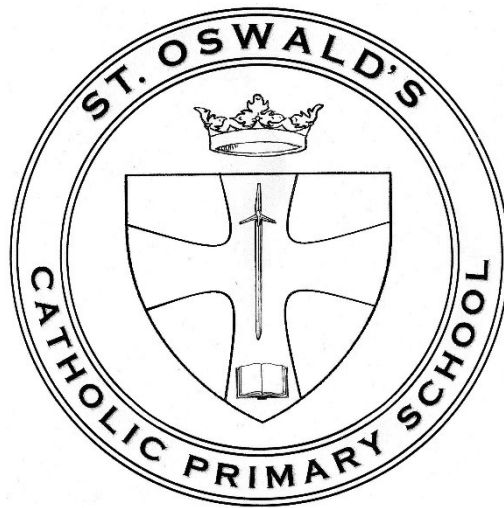


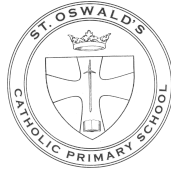
September 2023

# St Oswald's Catholic Primary School



## Handwriting and Presentation Policy 2023-2024

Approved by:	Approval date	Renewal date
Standards Committee	28 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Autumn 2024



## **St Oswald's Catholic Primary School** **Handwriting and Presentation Policy**

This Policy is set within the context of the whole school aims and mission statement:

*Together with Jesus,  
We will Learn and Grow in Faith*

### **Rationale:**

Updates to the National Curriculum in 2014 state that children must be able to produce 'fluent, legible, and, eventually, speedy handwriting'. Handwriting is important for a number of reasons:

- Most of children's future assessments will be hand-written, so pupils whose work is not legible are likely to suffer.
- Children that can write comfortably at speed can access higher-level aspects of composition and content, meaning their work is likely to be more creative.
- Handwriting is important for note-taking, an essential element of education as children get older.
- It engages more motor and cognitive skills and activates the brain more than using a keyboard.
- Good handwriting helps with communication in other areas of life.

Handwriting will be taught alongside phonic and spelling knowledge at all stages. Effective teaching of handwriting can only be achieved through modelling. Teachers demonstrate letter formation and joins regularly and children will practice by carefully copying and repeating. Our teachers observe children writing to ensure they are forming letters correctly.

A consistently high standard of presentation and handwriting is promoted across the whole school which all children and staff recognise, understand and follow. For children and teachers, this aims to foster a sense of pride and respect in their work. Self-esteem is raised when children are able to communicate meaning accurately.

### **Read Write Inc Handwriting**

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St Oswald's follows the RWI handwriting scheme in Reception and Year 1. There are regular 5-10-minute timetabled slots for handwriting to ensure that children build up their handwriting skills every day.

We make the *physical* process of writing – handwriting – enjoyable from the start, so children see themselves as writers. We use mnemonics – memory pictures – to help children visualise the letter or join before they write it down. Children need to practise handwriting under the guidance of a teacher so they do not develop habits that will be difficult to undo later.

There are three handwriting stages.

### **Stage 1**

These lessons are taught while children read the Red, Green, Purple, Pink and Orange Storybooks.

Stage 1a: Children practise correct letter formation using the same picture mnemonics they have already learnt in the Speed Sounds Set 1 Lessons.

These letters are now 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**

Stage 1b: Children learn where to place the letters on the writing line.

Picture mnemonics help children to visualise the size and placement.

- Some small letters are called 'boat letters': **a c e i m n o r s u v w x z**.
- Letters that are written below the line are called 'water letters': **g j p q y**.
- Tall letters are called 'sun letters': **b d h k l t f**.

### **Stage 2**

These lessons are taught while children read the Yellow, Blue and Grey Storybooks.

Children learn a mature style of writing that will lead to joined-up writing.

### **Stage 3**

These lessons are also taught while children read the Yellow, Blue and Grey Storybooks.

Children learn the two basic joins: the arm join (diagonal) and the washing line join (horizontal) and the two variables for each join.

The same routine will be followed in each handwriting session-demonstrate, practice and review.

### **Handwriting sitting position with RWI**

The children are taught that when you use the handwriting signal they automatically go into the perfect handwriting position:

- feet flat on the floor
- bottom at the back of the chair
- body one fist from the table
- shoulders down and relaxed
- back leaning forward slightly
- left/right hand holding the page
- left/right hand ready in a tripod grip.

### **Handwriting after RWI**

Children who have completed RWI, are taught the continuous cursive handwriting style. Handwriting will be taught explicitly, in short, frequent sessions. It will be modelled by the teacher then monitored throughout the session. Children will be encouraged to self-assess, looking for consistency. Where possible, handwriting teaching will be linked to phonics and spelling patterns. This will help with handwriting and with the 'muscle memory' of spellings. Teachers will model good handwriting at all times, e.g. when writing on the whiteboard, display work and when marking books.

#### **Year 3-4 pupils should be taught to:**

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left not joined.
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

#### **Year 5-6 pupils should be taught to:**

Write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed and personal style by:

- Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding, as part of their personal style, whether or not to join specific letters.
- Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters).

In handwriting sessions, spellings, relevant key vocabulary or sentences/paragraphs related to core texts will be modelled by an adult then practised by children.

Children are given a handwriting book from Year 1, which continues throughout the school.

### **Writing Tools**

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Early Years - Use thick soft pencil.

Year 1 and 2 - HB pencil. A few children may still need a thick pencil.

Year 3 and 4- HB pencil for maths and majority of written work -occasional use of blue Handwriting pen if children have received a pen licence.

Years 5 and 6 – Pencil for maths books. Blue pen used for writing.

### **Paper**

Early Years and year 1: Appropriately spaced wide lines.

Year two: Narrow lines in exercise books. Handwriting book with guidelines provided to indicate correct size, proportion and placing of the letters.

Year 3, 4, 5 and 6: Narrow lined exercise books with margins. Handwriting book with guidelines provided to indicate correct size, proportion and placing of the letters.

### **TEACHING PROCEDURES**

- Handwriting practice need to be regular sessions for approximately 30 minutes per week. These may be broken down into shorter time slots, especially for the younger children.
- It is essential for the teacher to demonstrate the writing skills for all the children to see.
- It is essential for the teacher to observe the children as they write and to intervene to give support and encouragement.
- The children need to be reminded of a correct pencil grip; the appropriate pressure and suitable posture.
- The children need to accumulate a vocabulary appropriate for describing the movements of handwriting. This could include ascender, descender, clockwise, anticlockwise, vertical, horizontal, diagonal, parallel, consonant, vowel, sloped, and joined.
- Display writing throughout the school includes cursive writing and computer- generated continuous cursive writing.

### **Supporting individual children**

- Children will be encouraged to use the correct pencil grip and sit with a good posture.
- Left handed children should sit to the left of right-handed children to avoid their writing arms from bumping each other. The angle of the paper depends on the handedness of the pupil.

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- Left-handers should sit with their body and paper at a slant to the right. This enables them to see their pencil tip, prevents them smudging their work with their writing hand and allows the pencil to move more freely.
- A left-hander may also benefit from holding the pencil higher up. Some children with specific difficulties may benefit from using a sloping surface and special equipment e.g. triangular pencil grip for a short period of time.
- A sharp pencil is essential for all early handwriting activities.
- Fluent and neat writers should move on to pen from Year 3 upwards

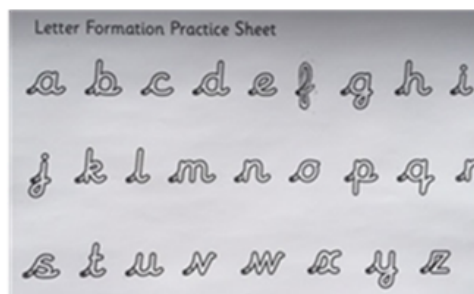
### **SEN Provision**

Some children with poor coordination may need to use specially adapted writing tools e.g. pencil grips, triangular shaped pencils and felt pens. They may need enlarged format work sheets or wider lines.

Writing patterns to develop coordination can be fun when different media are used e.g. chalk, crayons, wet sand, felt pens, white boards, writing in the air etc.

We use an intervention program called 'Write from the Start' to support pencil control and develop fine motor skills as well as other appropriate activities such as cutting and threading etc. The school has purchased writing slopes, pencil grips and spaces for children with specific handwriting needs.

**Our agreed cursive style is shown below.**



**Joined Cursive Script**

It is a sunny day in May.

Shout out loud at the cloud.

I can read while I am sitting on my seat.

The boy's toy broke so he was annoyed.

Why did the whale whisper?

### **Pen licences**

A pen licence is a formal acknowledgement a child receives from their teacher once their handwriting is accepted to be of a good standard.

The pen licence grants children permission to use a pen instead of a pencil when writing in class and motivates children to continue to develop their handwriting skills. Pencils will continue to be used in maths books in all year groups.

Children from year 3 and 4 may achieve their pen licence. The majority of children in year 5 and 6 should be writing in pen. The children will receive a certificate in assembly to acknowledge their achievement.

### **Parental Involvement.**

The school's preferred handwriting style will be shared with parents via the school website.

### **Implementation**

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff. This policy links closely with the marking policy and presentation guidelines that are given in other subject policies.

### **Monitoring, Evaluating and Review of the Handwriting policy.**

The literacy coordinator in consultation with SMT will monitor this policy.