St Gregory's Catholic Primary School

Handwriting Policy September 2016

Handwriting Policy and Guidelines

Aims

For Teachers

1. To know the cursive letter style in handwriting to ensure consistency across the school.
2. To understand the progression in handwriting so that pupils develop a continuous cursive style and are taught in every lesson to create legible, neat handwriting.
3. To ensure high expectations in handwriting lessons and that pupils are expected to apply the same standards in other independent writing.

For Pupils

1. To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.
2. To develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style with continuous cursive letters including:

- Having a correct pencil grip
- Knowing that all letters start from the line with a lead in and a flick initially before beginning to join.
- Forming all letters correctly
- Knowing the size and orientation of letters

Teaching time

There should be 2- 3 x 15 handwriting lessons each week which could be used as English Starters or separate sessions. Children will need time to apply and practise and this could be incorporated in to spelling sessions.

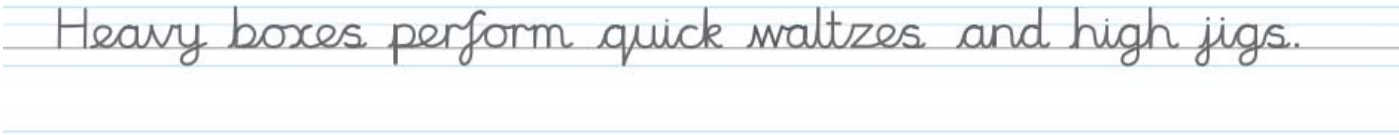
Model used

St Gregory's uses the cursive script and the Letter Join resource with the following letter formation:

Capitals

Lower Case

Cursive Script



Resources

Teachers can use the letter join website – www.letterjoin.co.uk

Pencils and Pens

Pupils will use HB pencils initially and move onto 'Staedtler' blue ink pens. (Berol hand-writing pens are available for some pupils who find it easier to write with these pens). They may start using pens in hand-writing lessons and then begin to use them in all lessons when there writing is neat and consistent enough. Pens must be introduced in hand-writing lessons in Year Four at the latest. When pupils start to use pens in their independent writing they may supply their own pen which must be a blue ink pen. Some pupils will find their writing is neater in pencil and should be given the choice to use pen or pencil in independent writing. However, all pupils should be taught to use them in hand-writing lessons.

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

Pencil grip

- 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 although some pupils will find a 'hook' more comfortable
- 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!

Assessment

Children must be assessed on entry into Year Three to see if they are using the correct letter formation for individual letters first. If they are not starting in the correct place they will not be able to join letters accurately. Pupils who need to learn correct letter formation for some letters must be taught this before they begin to join. Some pupils will have begun to learn and use joined handwriting in Year 2

Teachers will assess pupils at the start of the year. The year group starting points are a guide and teachers will need to use their professional judgement. However, be aware of the expectations at the end of the year.

Pupils should be grouped into 2 or 3 ability groups based on their handwriting ability (this may be different to their writing level). Work will be differentiated and additional adults can support as required.

Senior leaders should monitor children's writing and presentation in books regularly (as part of the monitoring cycle).

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 Level Descriptors in the National Curriculum?

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 Level Descriptors in the National Curriculum?

Teacher Modelling

It is essential that teachers model neat and cursive writing in shared writing on the whiteboard, interactive whiteboard and in pupils' books. Teachers' writing must be consistent with the cursive script.

Application

Pupils should be encouraged to apply the hand-writing they are taught in all independent writing. Teachers must have high expectations of all pupils and expect to see examples of what they have been taught in all books.

If pupils are learning joined hand-writing they should be expected to use this in their written work. Pupils should only attempt to join if they can write individual letters correctly with lead ins and flicks.

Teachers must monitor this and use praise and next steps marking to bring this to pupils' attention where appropriate.

Incentives

Rewards, incentives and praise will be used to encourage good practice. These include certificates in assembly, house points, written work for display boards and hand-writing competitions.

Pupils respond to positive praise. If we make our expectations clear and are consistent ourselves then the pupils will be.