



Handwriting Policy

Policy Approved/Updated	November 2023
Policy Review Date	November 2024
Reviewer	Anna Fitzpatrick

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Our Mission Statement

At Holy Cross, we are very proud of our school motto and our Catholic ethos; **Loved, Valued, Challenged.**

Loved: We love one another as Jesus taught us – our friends, our families and those who we may never meet.

Valued: We value everyone – everyone is important; pupils, staff, parents, governors, and members of the community– no matter their race, religion ability or need. We try to live like Jesus taught us.

Challenged: We challenge each other – not only with our learning but challenge each other to be more merciful to others, have a little more understanding of others’ needs and challenge each other to be better people.

Our Vision

At Holy Cross, we aim to develop a caring Catholic community based upon the life and example of Jesus Christ, which envelopes the life and lives of everyone and everything in our school. It is through Christ’s message of love and forgiveness that the children, staff, both teachers and ancillary, parents and governors, preserve the essential Catholic ethos of the school.

The school aims to provide a challenging curriculum that reflects our philosophy, broadly balanced and relevant, and to support the development of the whole child to his/her full potential. At Holy Cross, everybody matters, therefore we encourage all to show respect to each other and the environment.

Intent

Children must be able to write with ease, speed, and legibility. It is important that a child’s handwriting becomes a skill that requires little effort and thought, so that creative and physical energy can be focused on the content of writing, rather than upon the act.

Aims

- For handwriting to become an automatic process which frees pupils to focus on the content of their writing.
- For children to achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters.
- To help raise attainment for all pupils by using a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting throughout the school.
- To establish and maintain high expectations for the presentation of written work.

Curriculum

Progression in Handwriting

EYFS:

'Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed' EYFS Framework 2022

In Reception FS2:

Develop the foundations of a handwriting style which is fast, accurate and efficient:

- Encourage children to draw freely.
- Engage children in structured activities: guide them in what to draw, write or copy
- Teach and model correct letter formation.
- Continuously check the process of children's handwriting (pencil grip and letter formation, including directionality). Provide extra help and guidance when needed.
- Plan for regular repetition so that correct letter formation becomes automatic, efficient and fluent over time

Form lower-case and capital letters correctly:

- Teach formation as they learn the sounds for each letter using a memorable phrase, encouraging an effective pen grip.
- When forming letters, the starting point and direction are more important at this stage than the size or position of the letter on a line

Key Stage 1:

Year 1

- Sit correctly at a table holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.
- Form capital letters.
- Form digits 0-9
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways and to practise these.
- Begin to form lower case letters using a pre cursive style in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place. The cursive script has a lead in and exit line that naturally encourages children to join their handwriting. **The children begin to join when ready.** Learned at this early stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility.

Year 2

- Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another.
- Begin to use some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.
- Write capital letters and digits in the correct size, orientation, and relationship to one another and to lower case letters.
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.
- Write on the line.

If they have not already done so, children should begin to join their handwriting and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined.

Lower Key Stage 2:

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters.
- Recognise which letters (when adjacent to one another) should be left un-joined.
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting using a cursive style to ensure consistency in size and proportion of letters and the spacing between letters and words.
- Ensure that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

Upper Key Stage 2:

- Maintain legibility, fluency, and speed in handwriting through choosing whether or not to join specific letters.
- Choose the style of handwriting when given a choice.
- Choose the writing implement that is best suited to a specific task (e.g quick notes, letters).

Curriculum Implementation

Teaching and Learning

- Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly.
- Handwriting is a movement skill and correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is essential.
- Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed and the models provided is the key to effective learning.

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.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in EYFS are assessed against the pre-writers strokes to determine their readiness to write. The learning environment is designed to develop their gross motor and fine motor skills. Pencil grip and hand dominance is also assessed. Children learn the initial code using Sounds Write phonics. Handwriting supports the sounds which have been taught within a specific 2-week block. e.g. Week 1 and 2 children learn a i m s t. Handwriting practice reflects the learning within phonics. Order of sounds - Sounds write handbook p82

Once all single sounds have been delivered in phonics and handwriting, teachers will teach sounds within the handwriting families.

- Curly caterpillar - c a o q g d e s f
- Long ladder – l i j t u y
- One armed robot – r m n h b k p
- Zig zag monsters – v w x z

In Year 1

Children learn a precursive style as they begin to learn lead lines and flicks on each letter. This prepares them for a continuous cursive style of writing.

In upper KS1 and KS2

We adhere to the British Dyslexia Association's recommendations that children learn the continuous cursive style. The key advantages are:

- By making each letter in one movement, children's hands develop a 'physical memory' of it, making it easier to produce the correct shape.
- Because letters and words flow from left to right, children are less likely to reverse letters which are typically difficult.
- There is a clearer distinction between capital letters and lower-case letters.
- The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling.

When using the Sounds Write Phonics programme it specifies that if pupils normally join up their handwriting, it is necessary to ask them to write the letters separately when working sound-by-sound. This allows the teacher to hear whether the pupil is segmenting the word correctly. Our delivery will ensure that by the end of Year 6, pupil will understand the importance of neat presentation and the need for different letterforms (cursive, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly.

Assessment and Reporting to Parents

Checklist for Teachers:

If a child's handwriting is to develop into a legible and consistent style, it is helpful to examine each piece of writing in the light of the following criteria:

1. **Shape:** Are all letters properly formed and clear?
2. **Joining:** Are as many letters as possible joined consistently?
3. **Slope:** Is the slope of letters consistent? Letters should either be all perpendicular or all sloping (predominantly a forwards slope will be used, however backwards slopes can be developed).
4. **Evenness:** Are letters of a consistent and reasonable size? Capitals can be too big, tall letters too tall, small letters too small.
5. **Floating and Sinking:** Do letters sit on the line? Words sometimes float above or sink below the writing line. This happens because the writing hand is not moving steadily across the page.
6. **Particular Letters:** Which letters are really well formed? Which ones need careful practise?

Parents are informed of their child's progress during termly learning meetings. Parents can view their child's work at this time. Work is also shared via Class Dojo. If a staff member is concerned about a child's progress in handwriting, they will contact the parent/carer separately at the earliest opportunity.

Monitoring

Staff monitor children's handwriting progress daily. Children who fall below the expected standard for their age will receive targeted support and intervention from the class teacher or other support staff. Staff examine gross motor and fine motor development to determine if there are any underlying reasons why the child is unable to produce high quality written work.

The link between school and home is essential. Parents will receive support materials to work on at home.

Inclusion

Some pupils need more support to develop their handwriting and a specific individual or group programme will be drawn up in consultation with the SEN co-ordinator and linked to the child's IEP to give each child the best opportunities to achieve the expected standard. Some children require pencil grips or supports which are provided by the school.

Priorities for 2023 – 2024

- To ensure handwriting is taught daily.
- In EYFS and KS1 children must be taught daily, systematically and with clear sequenced lessons which follow the expected level of progress for that year group.
- Handwriting is modelled by the member of staff.
- Children need to be clear about the starting point of a letter and which direction to write in.
- Staff maintain their high expectations of presentation.
- Written work is produced to the highest standard so that children feel a sense of pride in their work and staff can understand what has been written.

Left-handed writers

The book or paper should slope in line with the left forearm. Moving the paper away from the body prevents writing becoming cramped at the foot of the page. The children are encouraged to hold their left hand below the line of writing to avoid smudging and to give a clear view of what is being written. Children should be discouraged from hooking their left hand above the line of writing to avoid smudging.

Ideas for Families to Develop their Child's Interest

[Teach Handwriting at home](#) – a wealth of information and fun games to play at home.

