

Handwriting and Presentation Policy



The wellbeing of our school community is at the heart of all that we do and is linked to our Core Values of Belief, Effort, Community & Kindness. These values help us to better understand and improve the wellbeing of our school community with this policy, and all others, being consistent in promoting those values.

Approved by: [Name] **Date:** [Date]

Last reviewed on: [Date]

Next review due by: [Date]

Introduction

Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. If they have difficulty, this will limit fluency and inhibit the quality and quantity of their work. It is important that the 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. We adhere to The British Dyslexia Association's recommendation 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 (like b/d or p/q)
- There is a clearer distinction between capital letters and lower case.
- The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling

Aims

We aim for children to:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting
- Develop flow and speed to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes
- To automatically use clearly formed and joined handwriting in all of their writing
- Use their skills with confidence, in real life situations

Teaching and Learning

In order to achieve these aims, the following principles are followed:

- Patterns relating to letter formations are first introduced using a variety of tools and multi-sensory methods. This develops free flowing hand movements and muscle strength. Letters are also introduced in varied, multi- sensory sessions: writing letters in the air, on backs or hands; orally describing letter shapes and joins with children using 'letter speak'; using a variety of writing materials including whiteboards, chalk, paints, felt pens, crayons, plasticine, cornflour mix, shaving foam etc.
- The cursive font, with lead-ins is taught as a specific skill, at least once a week for about 20 minutes, with additional, individual or group practise where necessary.
- Correct pencil hold and letter formation are taught from the beginning and handwriting is frequently linked with spelling.
- As digraphs are introduced, their corresponding joins are taught.
- When marking or writing comments, members of staff use cursive handwriting as appropriate.
- Teachers model cursive script on IWB, whiteboards, flip charts etc.
- Displays around the school and classroom should model clear joined handwriting as well as other fonts.
- The cursive font should be displayed in classrooms to ensure familiarity with the style.
- Older children, especially those joining the school, will not be expected to adopt the cursive joined style if they already have a fluent, legible handwriting style.

Handwriting Progression

Early Entitlement & Nursery	Children are to take part in activities that develop fine and gross motor skills.
Reception	<p>Pupils are taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hold writing instruments appropriately • write from left to right • discriminate between letters <p>Children are supported from the earliest stages of learning to write. Guidance is given about how to create the conditions for good writing: atmosphere, seating and posture, and pencil grip. Children are taught that text runs from left to right and learn to discriminate between letters based on their shape and the phonic sounds that they represent.</p>
Year 1	<p>Pupils are taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • form upper- and lower-case letters that are usually clearly shaped and correctly orientated <p>All of the lower-case and capital letters are taught with clear and consistent instructions about how to start and finish letters. The digits 0-9 are covered too. Letters are grouped into sets based on how they join to other letters, and children practise these in a cumulative manner.</p>
Year 2	<p>Pupils are taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • form upper- and lower-case letters accurately and with consistent size <p>In Year 2, children revise the previously-learned joins with an emphasis on relative height. Children re-cap their learning of lowercase and capital letters and practise forming them with consistency. Children are also given the opportunity to continue to practise using print letters, and are introduced to the idea that some letters are best left un joined when next to other letters.</p>
Year 3	<p>Pupils are taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce legible handwriting and present work appropriately joining letters in some words <p>Throughout Years 3 and 4, children continue to practise and develop their handwriting skills. The idea of writing with a slope is introduced for the first time. Children practice joining using diagonal and horizontal strokes as well as the 'break letters' that are best left un joined. There is an emphasis on spacing letters consistently and on keeping ascenders and descenders in proportion.</p>
Year 4	<p>Pupils are taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce handwriting which is clear and legible and may be cursive

	Throughout Years 3 and 4, children continue to practise and develop their handwriting skills. The idea of writing with a slope continues to be introduced. Children practice joining using diagonal and horizontal strokes as well as the 'break letters' that are best left unjoined. There is an emphasis on spacing letters consistently and on keeping ascenders and descenders in proportion.
Year 5	<p>Pupils are taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce legible, cursive handwriting with increasing fluency <p>At Years 5-6, the school continues to provide structured practice for the skills that have been developed so far. Children continue to practise the joins and the break letters, looking at consistency of sizing and spacing. The school endeavours to empower children to develop their own style of handwriting from a secure base, choosing their writing implement and style as appropriate to the occasion.</p>
Year 6	<p>Pupils are taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce fluent and legible handwriting <p>The school continues to develop writing fluency. Speedwriting challenges help children practise automaticity and speed. Children are taught about the difference in expectation between informal jottings and final presented versions and given opportunities to practise these. A range of contexts, from writing addresses to labelling maps and diagrams, help them learn the contexts in which joined or unjoined writing is most appropriate.</p>

Techniques for teaching letter formation and joins

- Always model good handwriting
- Demonstrate formations
- Talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Children form letters in the air and on parts of the body
- Finger trace over tactile letters
- Write in sand with finger or a stick

Basic structure of a handwriting session:

- Gross and fine movement warm up
- Posture check: feet flat on the floor, back straight and touching the chair
- Teacher modelling
- Children practising independently with a teacher model, then from memory

The daily phonics session throughout school provides opportunities to correct handwriting errors and staff should be aware that it is appropriate to correct pencil grip, letter formation, letter joins etc. at this time.

Provision for left handed children

Left handed children always sit on the left side of right handed children, so their elbows don't bump and knock each other. They are encouraged to find a comfortable orientation for their paper, usually slightly to the left centre of their body, and to have their fingers about 1.5cm from the point of their pencil. Pens appropriate for left handed writers will be provided, to avoid smudging.

Resources and writing materials

Children are given experience of a variety of writing tools. Pens (handwriting pens not biros) should be used by those who have achieved a consistent, cursive style. All children should write in blue ink. The children are to practise their handwriting in a handwriting book chosen for this specific purpose. Guidelines should be used when writing on plain paper.

Exercise books are ordered centrally by the school office at the start of the year and will be given to teaching staff at the end of the Summer Term. All exercise books should have a printed sticker with the following information in the following order:

- Child's first name and surname
- Year Group in Welsh
- Subject in Welsh

A template for the stickers can be found on staff common and labels are kept in the secretary's office.

Presentation

Pupils will learn that different levels of presentation are appropriate for different pieces of work and different circumstances. However, pupils are expected to:

- Look after exercise books and not draw or scribble in or on them
- Increasingly plan their work to make it look attractive and well presented
- Not use writing or drawing media that is not approved or not fit for purpose
- Use rulers to draw straight lines
- Set out, number and annotate work appropriately
- At appropriate times, pupils may be encouraged to experiment with alternative means of presenting their work for specific reasons.
- Cross through mistakes or editing alterations with a single line. Erasers should only be used very occasionally and with the express permission of an adult.

Teachers are expected to:

- Ensure that classrooms are well equipped with the essential tools that will assist pupils to create work with a high presentational standard
- Organise the classroom in such a way that materials and resources are easily accessible and systems for their return and maintenance are robust (self- service classroom)

- Ensure that children look after resources and materials so that they learn to respect equipment and good value for money is assured.

Policy Success Criteria

We know St Ethelwold's VA School Handwriting and Presentation Policy is effective if:

- A scrutiny of work confirms the appropriate development in handwriting skills
- Specific difficulties are addressed in the marking of handwriting tasks
- A scrutiny of work confirms that the presentation protocol is adhered to

Presentation Protocols

St Ethewold's VA School Presentation Protocols					
	EE, Nursery & Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Years 3 & 4	Years 5 & 6
Writing Implements	A selection of 'beginners' thick and fine writing implements. Chunky triangular pencils are introduced Consortium Triangular School Pencils	Thin triangular pencils with grips then fine pencils with grips for most pupils Staedtler Noris Triangular Pencils Consortium Pencil Grips	Fine pencils Staedtler Standard Pencils	Introduce handwriting pens (blue) as appropriate for Literacy and written work. Pencil for Maths work. Manuscript Handwriting Pen Stabilo Easy Original Rollerball for LH ch Staedtler Standard Pencils	All pupils should be using handwriting pens for written work. Pencils for maths. Manuscript Handwriting Pen Stabilo Easy Original Rollerball for LH ch Staedtler Standard Pencils
	Felt tips should not be used where they will come through onto the reverse of the paper in books.				
Self-correction	Simple, straight line through to show where they have self corrected.				
Ruler use		All straight lines to be drawn with a ruler. Younger pupils will need to be taught how to do this.			
New work	New work to commence on a new page	New work will usually commence on a new page, unless advised against by the teacher.		New work to be commenced after ruling off previous work, if there is usable space available.	
Date	All work to be dated by an adult (short date)	All work to be dated by child or teacher at top left hand side (short date)		All written work to be dated by child, at top, left hand side and underlined (short date)	

Titles	Succinct title related to the skill being taught should be written by the teacher	Succinct title related to the skill being taught should be written by the teacher or the pupil and underlined	Succinct title related to the skill being taught should be written by the pupil and underlined
Books	Books are ordered centrally by office staff.		

Version	From	To
1	Spring 2024	