



ST CHARLES' CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL

HANDWRITING
AND
PRESENTATION
POLICY

<u>HANDWRITING AND PRESENTATION POLICY</u>	
<u>AGREED: JUNE 2017</u>	<u>NEXT REVIEW: JUNE 2019</u>

Our Mission at St Charles' Catholic Primary School is to...
LOVE, LEARN, GROW TOGETHER

St Charles' Catholic Primary School
Handwriting and Presentation Policy

Handwriting

The importance of handwriting should not be underestimated. It is vital that children can write quickly, comfortably and legibly as it is a skill needed in many curriculum areas. When communicating ideas in writing, it is important that children use a handwriting style which is neat and legible. Children's self-esteem is also heightened when they are able to take pride in their handwriting.

Aims

To develop a joined, confident handwriting style that is clear, legible, fluent and consistent throughout Year 2 and Key Stage 2.

To instil a positive attitude towards handwriting.

To present work in a neat and orderly fashion appropriate to the task.

Provision

Handwriting and expected standards of presentation should be taught as a whole class activity. Intensive teaching is recommended at the start of each school year to clarify expectations, with further reinforcement in weekly lessons. Some additional lessons at the beginning of a term may be necessary.

Teaching Time

There should be a minimum of 2 x 15 minutes handwriting lesson each week as well as time to practise. The lesson structure should be:

- 3 minutes: Brief warm-up exercises led by teacher. Children to check the three 'P's (paper, pen grip, posture). See Appendix 1 for warm-up ideas.
- 4 minutes: Teacher models letter formation of letters in isolation, joins or words.
- 8 minutes: Silent, independent work. Teacher circulates and intervenes to secure understanding and progress.
- The teacher should act as a model when writing on the board or marking work, using a fluent joined style where appropriate. A model of the agreed handwriting style (Nelson) should be displayed in all classrooms. In addition, posters around the school environment should also model expectations for handwriting and presentation.

The Nelson Handwriting Scheme

At St Charles' Catholic Primary School, we use the Nelson Handwriting Scheme to help children develop their handwriting. Children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units before learning to join. Letter formation as per the scheme is as follows.

Lower case letters

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Capital 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

Numbers

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Letter sets

The Nelson Handwriting Scheme groups letters into five overlapping 'sets', as follows.

Set 1	a c d e h i k l m n s t u	Twelve letters with exit flicks, plus 's'.
Set 2	a c d e g i j m n o p q r s u v w x y	Nineteen letters which start at the top of the x-height.
Set 3	b f h k l t	Six letters which start at the top of the ascender.
Set 4	f o r v w	Five letters which finish at the top of the x-height.
Set 5	b g j p q x y z	Eight letters after which no join is ever made. Joins are not made to or from the letter 'z'. Note that f, g, j and y do NOT have loops.

Letter Joins

Basic Join	Set 1 → Set 2	to letters without ascenders
Second Join	Set 1 → Set 3	to letters with ascenders
Third Join	Set 4 → Set 2	horizontal joins
Fourth Join	Set 4 → Set 3	horizontal joins to letters with ascenders

Physical Environment

The Three 'P's:

- Paper
- Pen grip
- Posture

Attention to posture and seating arrangements is important. All teachers need to ensure the following are in place:

- Paper or books should be slanted at 11 o'clock for right-handed children or 1 o'clock for left-handed children.
- Chair and table should be at a comfortable height (height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor).
- Table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor.
- Children should be encouraged to sit up straight and not slouch.
- Tables should be free of clutter.
- Rooms should be well lit.
- Left-handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners.

Children who display specific difficulties with handwriting will have these addressed through such interventions as rubber pencil grips and/or using alternative writing media etc.

Pen Grip

A comfortable pencil grip is taught in Reception and consistently applied throughout the school. This generally consists of thumb and forefinger gripping the pencil with the middle finger supporting it. Other writing grips may be applied for children who may struggle with this grip. Writing grip triangles may be attached to the pencil if children find this comfortable and an aid to their natural pencil grip. The focus is for a comfortable recognised grip which maintains legible handwriting. Left-handed children are encouraged to position their fingers about 1.5 centimetres from the end of the writing implement to avoid smudging their work.

Presentation

It is very important to ensure consistency towards presentation of work across the school. Staff should focus on the following guidelines to ensure this consistency, taking into account age and ability of children where necessary

Aims

- to ensure a consistent high standard of presentation across the school in exercise books, in order to raise children's self-esteem and pride in their work.

Writing Equipment

Children will write in pencil until they demonstrate sufficient ability to write fluently and legibly, at which point they may use a handwriting pen as supplied by the school. Children should write in blue ink, ideally with a Manuscript or Berol Handwriting Pen. Gel pens, fineliners and biros are not permitted.

Layout of Work

When children are starting work on a new page of their exercise book or on lined paper, they should:

- Write the date on the top line (not the gap at the extreme top of the page), miss a line, followed by the learning objective and then miss another line before starting their work. These should be underlined and aligned on the left side of the page, against the margin.
- The date should be written in long form in all subjects apart from mathematics e.g. Monday 5th September 2016, Friday 18th April 2017.
- In Key Stage 2, 'L.O.' should be written inside the margin, and underlined along with the full learning objective.
- Errors should be neatly crossed out with a single line, e.g. ~~recieve~~ receive

Books

Children should be expected to keep their books well presented. They should not 'doodle' on the front cover, or on pages inside. Children may be asked to rewrite work on paper to be stuck over messy work in books which are not kept well-presented.

Pencils should be used in all subjects to draw pictures and diagrams, along with rulers if necessary. Gel pens, fineliners and felt tips are not permitted in exercise books, as these can smudge or bleed through paper. Crayons and coloured pencils should be used instead.

R Battersby
English Subject Leader
June 2017

Appendix 1

Handwriting warm-up ideas

Push Palms	Pull Hands	Hug yourself Tightly	Reach high with one hand, then the other. Make circles in the air.
Pull up on a chair	Stack your blocks	Strike a pose	Stack your blocks again
Blocks = Head, Shoulders, Hips, Knees, Feet			

<p>I Don't Know! Shrug shoulders up, down, forwards and backwards, as if you were saying 'I don't know!'</p>	<p>Crocodile Jaws Raise your arms in the air with one above the other. Then snap your hands together like a crocodile snapping its jaw. Take turns having the left and right arm above each other for this activity.</p>	<p>Air Traffic Controller Start with your elbows bent and your hands in a fist in front of each shoulder. Then straighten your elbows, moving one arm out from the body and the other arm to the side of your body. Alternate arms back and forth.</p>
<p>Butterfly Begin with your arms straightened in front of your body. Link your thumbs together to make an "X" and turn your hands facing out. Using the shoulders to move make small circles with the hands, moving from left to right (remember to do this movement from the shoulders, not the fingers or hand).</p>	<p>SHOULDER, HAND AND FINGER WARMUPS FOR HANDWRITING</p>	<p>Finger Push-Ups Place the tips of your fingers together and straighten the fingers while pushing the finger tips against each other.</p>
<p>Piano Drum your fingers on the table or desk as if playing the piano. Make sure each finger touches the desk. Vary speed of movements. Use both hands. (Bilateral coordination skills).</p>	<p>Baton Twirling Twirl pencils in the air like a baton, spinning them both horizontally and vertically in the air. This combines some shoulder and finger exercises together.</p>	<p>Imaginary Gloves Apply pressure to the fingers and back of hand as you pull on gloves. This prepares the muscles for movement.</p>

Appendix 2

Explanation of Handwriting Terms:

baseline: the line on which most letters rest.

x-height: also called the midpoint, it is the height of all letters that are not ascenders or descenders. Letters that do not go above the x-height are: a c e m n o r s u v w x z

ascender: a letter that goes above the x-height. Letters that go above the xheight are: b d f h k l t and all CAPITAL LETTERS.

ascender line: the line that ascenders go up to. If there were a line across the top of b d f h k l, that would be the ascender line.

descender: a letter that goes below the baseline. Letters that go below the baseline are: f g j p q y. The part that goes below the baseline is called the tail.

descender line: the line that descenders go down to. If there were a line across the bottom of f g j p q y, that would be the descender line.

upstroke: any movement upward with the writing instrument.

downstroke: any movement downward with the writing instrument.

stem: the vertical line in a letter: B b D d F f g H h I i J j K k L l M m N n P p R r T t u Y

crossbar: the horizontal line through these letters: A E F f G H T t

counter: the white space inside a closed letter like these: A a B b D d e g O o P p Q q

flourish: an ornamental stroke, also called a swash.

hook: a tiny flourish, usually on the end of a letter.

slant: to left or right in comparison to vertical angle, also called gradient.

weight: the thickness of the lines