

St Mary and St Michael Catholic Primary School



***“Learning together as we follow in the
footsteps of Christ”***

Handwriting Policy

Reviewed: September 2025
Update: September 2027



At St Mary and St Michael Catholic Primary School we are very proud of our pupil's handwriting and take particular care in our handwriting style. We use Letter Join's online handwriting resource and Lesson Planners as the basis of our handwriting policy to help fulfil the requirements of the Bailiwick of Guernsey Curriculum.

Intent

Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum. By the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils should have the ability to produce fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy joined-up handwriting, and to understand the different forms of handwriting used for different purposes.

Our intention is to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.

Aims

- To develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style using continuous cursive letters, which leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing.
- To establish and maintain high expectations for the presentation of written work.
- For pupils to understand, by the end of Year 6, the importance of neat presentation and the need for different letterforms (cursive, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly.



Implementation

Expectations

All teaching staff are encouraged to model the printed or cursive style of handwriting chosen for each year group in our school in all their handwriting, whether on whiteboards, displays or in pupils' books.

Pupils should experience coherence and continuity in the learning and teaching of handwriting across all school years and be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work. Our objective is to help pupils enjoy learning and developing their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride.

Handwriting frequency

Handwriting is a cross-curricular task and will be taken into consideration during all lessons. Formal teaching of handwriting will be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure Key Stage targets are met.

Pens and pencils

Children will start handwriting using a standard HB pencil. When fine motor skills have been established and children are producing neat, legible, cursive letters in the agreed Letter Join style then a handwriting pen can be used. Children are encouraged to use a Berol handwriting pen, fountain pen or Frixion pen as these require less pressure and often produce neater handwriting.

Inclusion

For children who experience handwriting difficulties due to fine motor development, including those who are left-handed and those with special educational needs, the appropriate additional support will be put into place. Letter-join's Lesson Planners all include differentiation activities for extra practice/challenge.

Key Stage Teaching

Early Years

For our youngest pupils we teach short handwriting lessons on a daily basis, which will include the following:

- enhancing gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern-making and physical activities
- exercises to develop fine motor skills such as mark-making on paper, whiteboards, sensory trays, iPads, tablets, etc.
- becoming familiar with letter shapes, their sounds, formation and vocabulary
- correct sitting position and pencil grip for handwriting

Module 1 Print: Early Years teaches handwriting using the printed method. It starts with fine and gross motor skills warm-up exercises, correct sitting position and tripod pencil grip.

It is divided into three sections covering:

- pre-writing patterns
- easy letters and words
- harder letters and words

At the end of this module, children should be able to recognise and form all the printed, lowercase letters of the alphabet.

Key Stage 1: Years 1 and 2

Teaching progresses from five short, to four longer lessons per week:

- continuing with gross and fine motor skills exercises
- strengthening handwriting, learning and practice
- numerals, capitals and printed letters; where and when to use, learning and practice
- KS1 SATs SPaG exercises

Year 1

Module 2 Print to Cursive teaches how to correctly write capital letters, uses of printed letters, numbers, punctuation, maths symbols and other symbols. Pre-cursive patterns and cursive letters are then introduced in preparation for Module 3 when children are required to start joining their handwriting.

It is divided into three sections covering:

- warm-ups, letter families and capital letters
- uses of printed letters
- numbers and symbols
- introducing pre-cursive patterns and cursive letters

On finishing this module, children should be confident in writing all the capital and printed letters, numbers and symbols and start to become familiar with the orientation of cursive letters.

Year 2

Module 3 – Starting Cursive introduces children to cursive letters and how to join them. They will have regular practice in letter formation and joining their handwriting.

The sections in this module cover:

- cursive letters and words
- letter families
- high frequency words
- joining techniques
- sequencing sentences
- dictation exercises
- times table facts
- SPaG practice for KS1 SATs

With the regular handwriting practice throughout this module, children should now be developing the fluency and speed of their writing.

Year 3

Handwriting lessons will continue twice a week in Year 3.

Module 4 for Year 3 is targeted at pupils who should be using a cursive style throughout their independent writing in all subjects, helping to refine their handwriting in line with the requirements of each lesson. This module covers topics such as dictation, double letters, number vocabulary and statutory spellings. Pupils will continue to build on producing fluent, consistent and legible handwriting through the regular practice offered in this module's lessons.

Completion of Module 4 should ensure improvement in the legibility, consistency and quality of the children's handwriting through a variety of resources.

Year 4 – Year 6

Pupils will have completed formal handwriting lessons that follow the Letter Join scheme by this stage and should be producing cursive writing automatically, enabling them to focus on the content of their work rather than the process of writing. Pupils should be able to demonstrate fluent, consistent and legible handwriting across the curriculum. Teachers will continue to model our school's handwriting style when teaching at the interactive whiteboards, flipcharts and when providing feedback in pupils' exercise books.

Authors: Alex Mercer and Letter Join

Appendix 1: St Mary and St Michael's print handwriting style taught in Key Stage 1

Printed lowercase 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

Letter-join 

Letter-join Print Plus

bright sun

Appendix 2: St Mary and St Michael's cursive handwriting style taught from Year 2 onwards

Cursive lowercase 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

Letter-join 

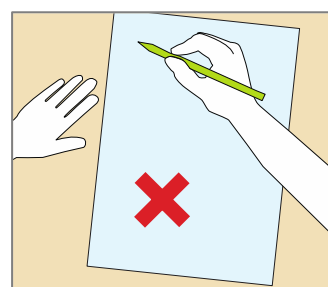
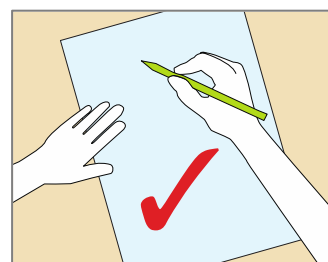
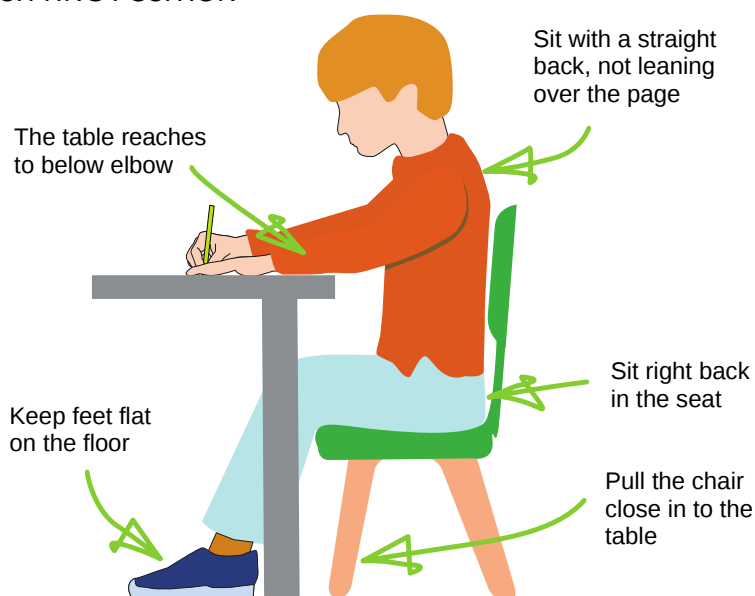
Letter-join No-lead

bright sun

Appendix 3: Correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting

Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

SITTING POSITION

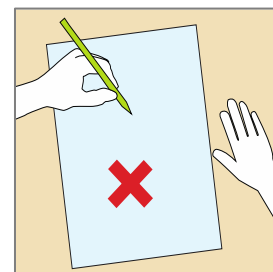
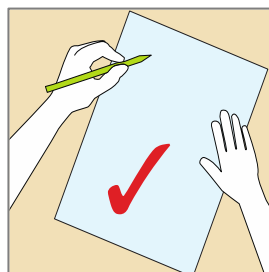
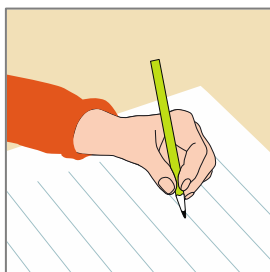
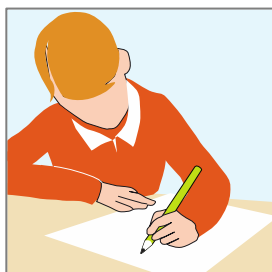


Paper position for right-handed children.

LEFT-HANDED CHILDREN

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow the movements of right-handed teachers as they model letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.

- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.

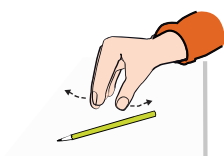


Paper position for left-handed children.

Appendix 4: The Tripod Pencil Grip

Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib. We use the Tripod Grip Rhyme:

Right-handed pencil grip



Point away the pencil,



Pinch it near the tip,



Lift it off the table,

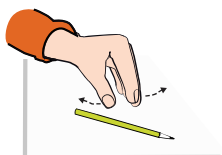


Spin it round...



and grip.

Left-handed pencil grip



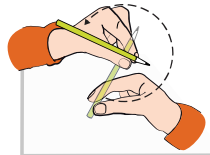
Point away the pencil,



Pinch it near the tip,



Lift it off the table,



Spin it round...



and grip.