



The Cathedral School of St Mary Handwriting Policy



Handwriting is an essential skill which, like reading and spelling, affects how children access the curriculum and potential opportunities that will be open to them as they grow throughout their lives. Despite our increased use of chromebooks to support learning, handwriting remains a crucial skill that must be honed and developed. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. Furthermore, being able to write with fluency relieves some of the cognitive load many children experience when trying to focus on their handwriting as well as the many composition skills and SPaG objectives they are taught.

Aim

At the Cathedral School of St. Mary, we teach children handwriting in line with the National Curriculum to ensure a clear progression from mark making and sitting at the table correctly in EYFS, through to writing fluently, legibly and with their own style by the end of year 6.

Teaching and learning

Expectations for handwriting are extremely high across the curriculum and children will be expected to use the correct handwriting in all their written work. When children are joining their writing, they will be taught to form letters cursively. Handwriting books are used across the key stages and children are expected to use blue handwriting pens in Key Stage 2.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children are provided with lots of opportunities to build their physical strength and control in their core, upper body, hands and fingers. They are taught that print carries meaning and writing is modelled to them to show how to solve problems, understand language problems, develop their thinking skills and make sense of their experiences. In their time in the EYFS they will be given opportunities to mark-make, write their name and begin to form sentences, meaning they will be taught how to sit at a table correctly, how to form numbers and letters correctly and how to separate words using finger spaces.

In Key Stage 1 children's handwriting practices will be consolidated from EYFS. Additionally, they will be taught which letters are ascenders and which are descenders and which letters change when they are used as a capital letter.



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Once children move to Lower Key Stage 2, they will be taught to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and they will be taught which letters are best left unjoined (capital letters, g, j, q, y). Once they have mastered this, they will begin to increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting. It is often the case, when moving from printing to joining, that they will begin to write less and writing may look scruffy. As they build their confidence this will correct itself. Handwriting is taught for 20 minutes a day in the morning, 4 days a week. All writing is modelled by the teacher ensuring that letters are formed and joined correctly. Children will be reminded of these expectations regularly.

In Upper Key Stage 2, it is expected that children are writing legibly, fluently and with increasing speed. Children should now be joining appropriate letters as they have been shown. Handwriting will be taught for 15 minutes, 4 days a week and will focus on improving the quality of handwriting.

Throughout the school, handwriting (which is suitable for the year group being taught) will be modelled by all members of staff, including student teachers and teaching assistants. This includes writing on flipcharts, writing put on displays and marking in books. Teachers will plan regular opportunities to model writing across the curriculum.

Furthermore, to embed correct letter formation across the school, all slides and worksheets will be made using the correct font. In EYFS and KS1, the 'Patrick Hand' font will be used, whilst in KS2 the 'Petit Formal Script' will be used.

Struggling, reluctant and left handed writers.

Left handed children have a tendency to form some letters incorrectly and start writing on the wrong side of the page. This is common and will be addressed at the earliest opportunity.

We understand that there are some factors which may cause barriers to writing for some children and we will take the necessary steps to overcome these, such as pencil grips.

It is our hope that struggling writers will see the benefit of writing as a way of expressing their ideas and emotions, a way of communicating with others and will be encouraged by the passion shown by their teachers. Writing will be celebrated throughout the school and rewards given to those children who are trying their best to improve their handwriting.