



Hoole St. Michael Church of England Primary School

Handwriting Policy

Member of staff responsible: L Topping

Date policy written: March 2023

Date to be reviewed: March 2025

Vision Statement

Within God's love, our school seeks to build, in partnership with parents, carers and the Church, a learning community of respect, self-worth and excellence; a community where all are safe and secure to maximise their full potential. A community that is proud of its Christian heritage, yet open and sensitive to the wider world.

Bible Verse: I can do all through Christ who strengthens me. [Philippians 4:13](#)

Overall Intent of our School

Achieving excellence within the light of God.

We encourage our children be **bold** and **courageous** in their learning, willing to **take risks** within a **supportive, caring Christian ethos**. Our **Christian Values** underpin everything we do at Hoole St Michael. Hoole St Michael children develop **confidence, resilience and a thirst for knowledge** to **prepare them for the future**. As a small Christian family, children build **strong relationships**, learn to **work together** and **support** each other through life's celebrations and challenges. **Growth Mindset and Sumo principles** teach our children to approach all areas of learning positively. Our children are **active learners** who thrive when learning outdoors; we provide outdoor learning and Forest School sessions on a weekly basis. Although we are a village school we reach out to develop **meaningful partnerships** within the **local community and wider world**. We provide **enrichment activities** regularly for our children to **broaden their experiences** and love of learning

Rationale

At Hoole St Michael Church of England Primary School, all start school in an environment where they are exposed to a mixture of printed and cursive text. In EYFS children learn to print individual letters and are introduced to cursive writing from Year 1. We believe this raises standards in the Early Years which has impacted throughout the whole school, developing confidence, accuracy and fluency and improved presentation.

The rules of the Cursive Style help:

- to minimise confusion for the child as every letter starts on the line with an entry stroke and leads out with an exit stroke with the flow of Cursive Writing as letters naturally flow into each other, it is impossible to write separate letters without joining.

- form spacing between words as the child develops whole word awareness
- develop a child's visual memory
- all children's writing skills regardless of academic ability
- to develop skills of punctuation and grammar

All children write with a pencil, although older pupils are introduced to blue ink pens, including a fountain pen.

Aims

- To provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in handwriting
- To produce clear, concise, legible handwriting
- To present work to a variety of audiences neatly
- To develop accuracy and fluency
- To help children recognise that handwriting is a form of communication and as such should be considered important in order for it to be effective
- To promote confidence and self-esteem
- To encourage children to take pride in their work
- To build in cross curricular links to broaden experience
- To help children recognise that handwriting as a life-long skill and will be a fundamental element of all forms of written communication throughout their lives
- To display neatly presented work around the school as a model of excellence for others to aspire to

Development of learning and teaching handwriting

Reception

On entry, Reception children are involved in a variety of activities to develop essential pre-writing skills in line with the Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage.

Activities to develop gross motor control, for example rolling hoops and running with a hoop, ribbon movement, chalking, painting on a large scale, SMART board activities to develop fine motor control: e.g. tracing, colouring within guide lines and pictures, pattern work, using glue spreaders in small pots, painting with the tips of the fingers, cotton buds, plasticine, threading. All these develop spatial awareness "P.E. on paper."

Children develop the basic handwriting patterns found in letter formation. As children begin to write letters they are encouraged to use the cursive lead-ins.

Children are introduced to actual letter formation in conjunction with the introduction of phonic skills.

Sounds are closely linked in handwriting patterns and the children's visual awareness of words is harnessed e.g. 'cat', 'hat'.

Practise of particular High Frequency Words helps to develop good visual and writing habits e.g. 'the', 'and'. Usually by the end of the Reception Year all children will have been introduced to all

letters of the alphabet through patterns as shown above and introduced to more independent writing.

Year 1

As the children move to Year 1 they are introduced to pre cursive writing. Children learn to correctly write each letter with cursive lead in and out, consolidating correct formation, concentration and accurate precision work. All children write in pencil. Again spellings are closely linked with handwriting activities assisting the children with phonic skills required for successful reading.

Year 2-6

The Cursive style continues to develop through close links with the Primary Framework for literacy. Phonic, spelling and awareness of grammar are all taught through handwriting practise and as fluency and accuracy develops, pupils are encouraged to write with an ink pen. (Usually in Year 4, although exceptions may be made for younger, more able pupils as appropriate.)

Handwriting is timetabled in short, regular sessions and where possible is integrated across the curriculum, e.g. practising scientific vocabulary, cloze procedure linked to history.

All handwriting activities are undertaken as class activities for the following reasons:

- to develop effective and efficient pen hold
- to develop the habit of concentration which is crucial to good handwriting
- to place a strong emphasis on the insistence of perfection
- to provide the class teacher with the opportunity to help assess individuals' progress and monitor areas requiring reinforcement.

Lessons usually begin with a warm-up activity (e.g. exercising hand/fingers to music, 'air-writing'), including writing patterns or phonemes, etc which is led by the teacher modelling writing on the board. Children copy into their books, applying the same techniques, closely monitored by the teacher. In some lessons, it is also appropriate to practise speed-writing (usually written at the back of their book), which also helps them to think quickly and remember spellings.

Children complete handwriting using their English book or using resources and formats found on Letter join.

There is no set timetable for handwriting lessons, they are planned when the teacher feels they are appropriate for the cohort.

The use of IT

All teachers use the Interactive Whiteboard in direct teaching: use of the lined writing templates are an essential tool for learning, as the teacher can demonstrate the correct letter formation and joins clearly to the whole class at once if necessary.

Younger children rehearse 'large letters/joins' on a blank screen, using different colours and thicknesses of line. Use of Letter join is a useful learning aid for independent work in All years, as it provides activities to develop gross and fine motor skills and progresses onto lesson that support handwriting throughout school.

Handwriting and Reading

In school, children are exposed to both cursive and print styles as well as commercial print. They develop awareness for reading in print and writing in cursive side by side in their learning, such as prompts around classrooms/school – teachers lettering, labels on displays/teaching aids e.g. alphabet on tables and through teachers modelling of writing.

Left Handed Children

Each left-handed child is identified and closely monitored by the class teacher to ensure success. The following guidelines are useful to help left-handed children.

Guidelines for writing left-handed:

- The writing surface and chair are suitable for the child's own height
- The child sits towards the left of their partner leaving plenty of space for writing on the left side of his/her – mid line (this allows maximum space for arm movement)
- The writing paper is to the left of the child's body midline.
- The paper is tilted up to 32 degrees in a clockwise direction
- A writing tool which moves smoothly across the paper is used
- The paper is supported with the right hand
- The writing forearm is parallel with the paper edge as the child writes
- The writing tool is held sufficiently far from its point to ensure that the child can see what he/she is writing.

Children with difficulties

Sometimes some children may experience difficulties but this is often due to a coordination problem or adapting a left handed style.

Activities to develop 'gross motor skills' can be promoted as these will assist fine motor skills, as will plenty of pre-writing activities to loosen up the wrist and upper arm. Older children needing additional support are given short bursts of handwriting practice, one -to-one with a Teaching Assistant, as often as possible (daily preferably.) Use of a small whiteboard and pen is often the most successful aid as they are less restrictive and enable the child to feel less inhibited. These children will also be given writing supports and equipment appropriate to their needs.

Monitoring

The presentation of all work is monitored through annual work scrutinies.

Signed..... Date..... *(Chair of SEC)*

Signed..... Date:..... *(Headteacher)*