



ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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St Mary's Catholic Primary School Handwriting Statement

Our aim is for children to develop legible, fluent, efficient handwriting.

In handwriting, as with other skills, children will develop at different rates; for that reason, it is important that there is a consistent style of handwriting throughout the school, and that all staff consider themselves to be teachers of handwriting, with a clear understanding of the progression of skills, and of how to remedy errors. It is not sufficient to expect children to improve their handwriting; the different elements need to be taught and practised. Early intervention is essential at every stage, to prevent the acquisition of bad habits which are difficult to correct.

Staff collectively agreed a personalised handwriting style that has been used as a training model in other schools. A reference sheet showing an alphabet of capital, lower case and joined letters is included in the Appendix and is available to children in every classroom, and to parents.

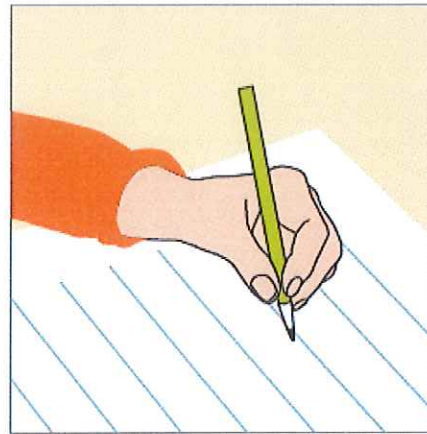
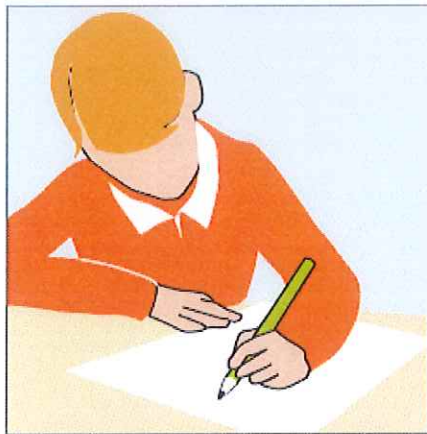
The following is a brief outline of our agreed statement:

Gross and fine motor skills: activities to develop gross and fine motor skills are essential to the development of good handwriting. In Reception, children will continue to practice patterns and all children are exposed to finger fitness before handwriting lessons.

Left handed children:

LEFT-HANDED CHILDREN

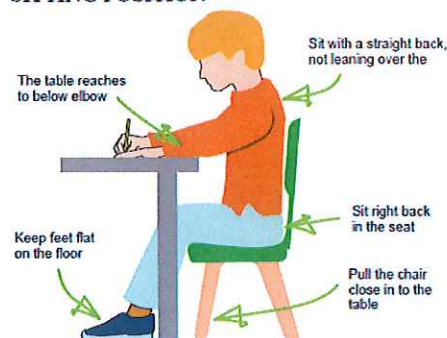
Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow right-handed teachers as they demonstrate letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.



Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space. 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.

Posture: children should be taught the importance of sitting upright and correctly on their chair, with their feet on the floor.

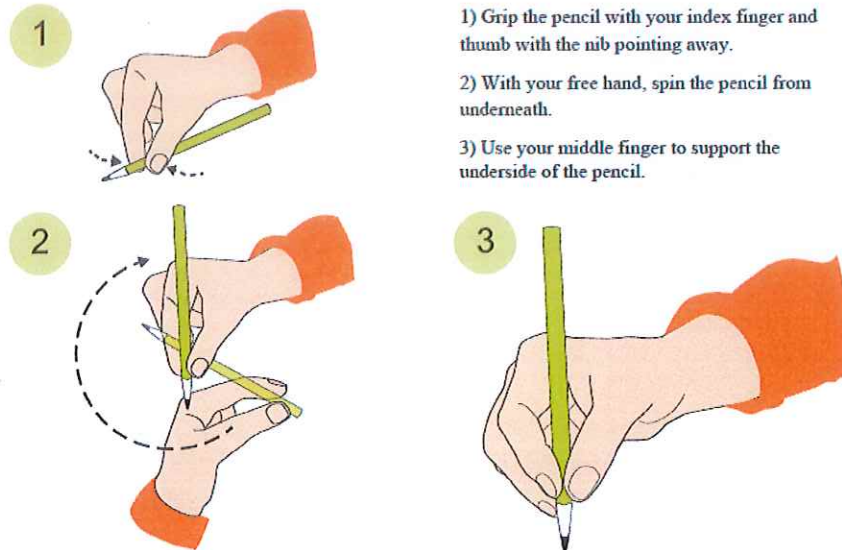
SITTING POSITION



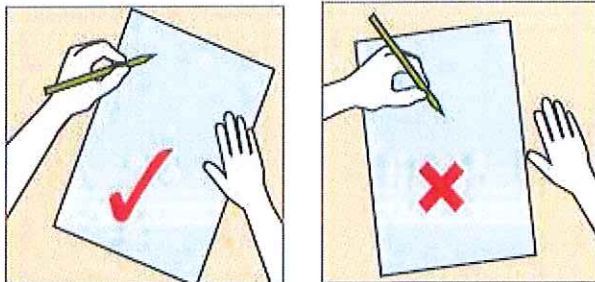
Pencil grip: children should use a tripod grip, and be given constant reminders until this is established. Triangular section pencils and shaped pencil holders are available in school for children who find them helpful. Remember: pinch, flip, grip.

THE TRIPOD PENCIL GRIP

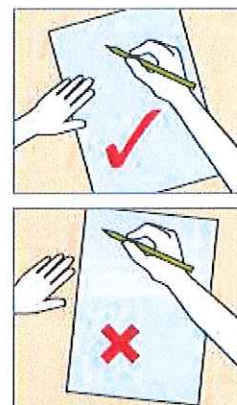
Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib.



Position of paper: left handed children should be encouraged to tilt their paper slightly to the right to improve their view of what they are writing, and to reduce smudging later on when they write in ink. Right handed children may find it helpful to tilt paper slightly to the left. Paper should be steadied with the free hand.



Paper position for left-handed children



Paper position for right-handed children

Correct letter formation: children are taught to form letters correctly, paying attention to the starting point for each letter, the direction of pencil movement, the shape and orientation of the letter, and the relative heights of the body of each letter, and any ascender and descender. Teaching will be multi-sensory and appropriate to the needs of the child. The school's pre-cursive letter formation is included in the Appendix.

Order of letters: the letters are grouped according to how they are formed and should be taught in order. The groups and order are included in the Appendix.

Joining letters: children should be introduced to joined handwriting as soon as they have mastered the shape of individual letters. In Reception, the children are taught the letter formation first, while still being exposed to our school's cursive font and handwriting. An example of our cursive font is included in the Appendix.

Fonts: materials prepared in school for children will use the school's handwriting font, available on all computers and laptops.

Our handwriting rules:

- Daddy Bear (b, h, k, l, d)
- Mummy Bear (f, t),
- Baby Bear (i, j, n, m, r, p, c, a, g, q, u, y, o, v, w, e, x, z, s)
- Capitals are Daddy Bear letters
- Never join capitals
- No letters starts on the line
- Letters should sit on the line
- No lead ins, remember letters with lead outs (p, b, o, v, w, s)
- Pre-cursive x: starts on the left at the top, cross from the right at the top
- When joining x, always join from the top on the way in and from the bottom on the way out.

Appendix 1

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

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

Appendix 2

The quick brown fox
jumps over the lazy
dog.

Appendix 3

The quick brown fox
jumps over the lazy dog.

Appendix 4

Order of letters being taught.

Lovely straight back letters:

l t i f j

Down up and over letters:

n m r p b h k

All the way round up and down:

c a g q d u y

Saggy washing line letters:

o v w

Other letters:

e x z s