

Christ Church C of E Primary School

Handwriting and Presentation Policy



“Handwriting is a tool that has to work. It must be comfortable, fast and legible.” Angela Webb, Chair, National Handwriting Association.

At Christ Church C of E Primary School we believe that neat, well-formed handwriting and presentation of written work helps to raise standards as the pupils take pride in and have a sense of ownership of their work. As a school we teach cursive handwriting from Reception to Year 6.

Aims:

- To raise standards in handwriting across the school.
- To have a consistent approach across both Key Stage One and Two when teaching handwriting and consistent expectations for presentation of work

For pupils to:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters.
- Develop flow, speed and stamina whilst writing so that the children are able to produce letters with confidence and correct orientation.

Teaching and Learning

Handwriting is to be taught regularly through short, focused sessions and should be linked with spelling, grammar or phonics objectives. Teaching generally occurs outside Literacy lessons, although shared and guided writing also provides additional opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting.

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important; it is not sufficient to require pupils to copy models from a published scheme or worksheet.

The role of the teacher:

- To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting.
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling.
- To provide resources and an environment that promotes good handwriting.
- To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development.

Continuity and Progression

We acknowledge that handwriting is a developmental process with the following distinctive stages of sequential growth:

1. Readiness for writing: gross and fine motor skills leading to letter formation
2. Beginning to join
3. Securing joins
4. Practicing speed and fluency
5. Presentation skills

Foundation Stage

The emphasis at this stage is with movement and fine motor skill development. Letter formation (Starting at the right entry point and then moving in the right direction) learned at this early stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility. Pupils are taught to form their letters correctly and start from the correct place for each letter of the alphabet.

To aid movement, close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space. Teachers are vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not become ingrained and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils (for example, additional tracking and tracing of letters at the pre-writing stage) and those with special educational needs are met.

In the pre-communicative stage pupils play with writing and these experiments are recognised and praised as an important stage in the child's understanding that marks on paper convey meaning. Pupils are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements; a multi-sensory approach is used to help pupils feel the movement in the hand.

Key Stage 1

Building on the foundation stage, pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a legible style and continue to form their letters correctly, starting and finishing in the right place. They start to learn how to form lower case letters and upper case capital letters. This is dependent on ability not the age of each child. This is achieved in Year 1 by developing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and by practicing handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing. Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion are taught in line with the school's handwriting style. This continues in Year 2 with children beginning to join letters with the correct diagonal and horizontal strokes. Children also ensure that the spacing between words reflects the size of their letters.

Key Stage Two

The target for children in Key Stage Two is to produce a fluent, consistently formed style of fully joined handwriting with equal spacing between the letters and words.

- Children will have regular handwriting sessions using appropriate prepared resources, in the agreed handwriting style.
- Children will write with pencils until the class teacher assesses that they are joining competently and consistently. When children reach Year Four they will be able to receive a pen license. They will then be given a handwriting pen to use.
- Children will use a pen to complete the majority of class work, where appropriate and using a fully joined handwriting style.
- Pencils will be used in Numeracy or for drawing and completion of diagrams.
- All children in Key Stage Two will practice their letter formation when copying their weekly spellings.

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. Children should be expected to keep their books well presented. They should not 'doodle' on the front cover, or indeed on pages inside.

English – FS and KS1

During KS1, work should have a date and title, which should be underlined, using a ruler.

Children should be encouraged to write the date and titles themselves, though where necessary teachers may do this or use other methods such as date stamps or sticky labels with titles printed on. Children should be encouraged to write from the left hand edge of the page, or margin, though FS does allow for more freedom when first exploring letter shapes and formation.

English – KS2

All work should have the date and a title, underlined using a ruler. Children should write from the left hand margin. In all Key Stages a line should be left between the date and title and then another line left between the title and the first line of work. A mistake should be crossed out with one line through it and not removed with an eraser.

Other Subjects

The guidelines for English also take into account other subjects where written work is also produced. Diagrams should be drawn in pencil with labels in either pencil or pen depending on age. Pencil should always be used for Mathematics work. Guidelines for presentation of date, title etc. are as for English.

Display

Display of writing could take the form of a class book or work on a board. Children will be encouraged to redraft written work for display, understanding the purpose and audience for which they are writing. Any written work displayed will be of the highest standard for that individual child.

Monitoring & Assessment

Teachers assess handwriting and presentation as part of their normal marking in line with the marking policy. They use this formative assessment to inform their further planning.

Monitoring of handwriting and presentation comes under the main subject of English.

Monitoring can take the form of lesson observations, sampling and moderation of work, data analysis and looking at teachers' planning.

Christopher Needham

Subject Leader January 2021