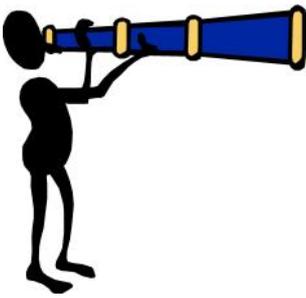


All Saints C of E Primary School

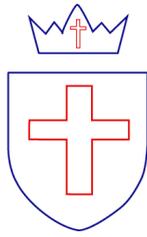
Continuing the
Handwriting Journey



*“Drawing each letter by hand
substantially improves subsequent
recognition”*

*Professor Gentaz, University of
Geneva*





All Saints C. E. Primary School

***Through Christian teaching, we aim to develop
an inclusive learning community,
where through strong relationships
the achievements of all are celebrated.***

Handwriting Policy

Handwriting is a complex skill which involves a wide range of cognitive, linguistic and perceptual-motor abilities. It is the way we record our thoughts on paper, using a generally understood system of symbols.

Like reading, spelling and maths, handwriting is a skill which has to be taught. Time taken to help children learn to write fluently and quickly is well spent, since handwriting will be required in almost every school subject.

At All Saints we aim to:

- teach children to write with a flowing hand which is legible and pleasant to look at.
- teach correct letter formation.
- teach children to write with fluency and speed.
- encourage children to experiment with different styles once they have developed a fluent and legible joined handwriting style.
- ensure that children of differing abilities are provided with appropriate and achievable goals.
- assist children in taking pride with the presentation of their work.
- support the development of correct spelling and to aid in the elimination of letter reversals by the learning of word patterns and the correct joining of letters.
- display excellent examples of handwriting in every classroom and around the school.
- have staff members as positive role models for neat and fluent handwriting.

Handwriting Guidelines

Font

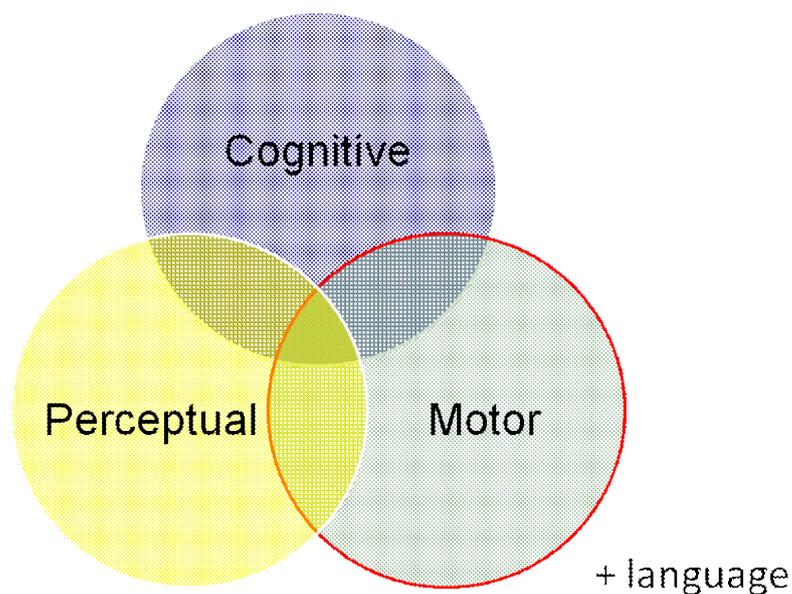
- Sassoon Primary

a b c d e f g h A B C D E F G H
i j k l m n o p I J K L M N O P
q r s t u v w x Q R S T U V W X
y z Y Z
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Language

- EYFS and KS1
 - Capital and small letters
 - Sticks and tails
- KS2
 - Upper and lower case letters
 - Ascenders and descenders

Principles to Practice



- The ability to write comes late and does not develop spontaneously. Consequently, it is really important to teach the basic movements as early as possible.
- Handwriting is a skill which involves very fine spatial judgment and good control of the body parts.
- Handwriting is rather different from other movement skills in that it is language-based and involves learning rules specific to our language system.
- **Movement Memory**
 - As we learn complex sequences of movements, such as those involved in forming letters, the brain develops an image or memory of the movements, which can be generated 'automatically'. Our objective must be to help children to reach this stage.
- **Feedback**
 - Children do not benefit from simply being told their handwriting is untidy. Specific faults should be identified as soon as they occur, dealt with one at a time, and the way to change should be made explicit to the child, either by demonstration or by some other means. Praise should be given whenever appropriate and as often as possible.
- **Fluency and Content**
 - Research has shown that there is a relationship between HOW a child writes and WHAT they write.
 - Children who struggle with handwriting and spend so much time on the physical act of forming letters may have less 'attentional capacity' to devote to spelling, grammar and composition.
 - Poor handwriting is often associated with underachievement and low self-esteem.
 - Many children with poor handwriting do less well in school than might be expected of them –
 - they become frustrated by the way their work looks,
 - the effort of writing may be tiring and/or demoralising,
 - they think so much faster than they write which is depressing and so on.

Teaching Progression

- *Learning to write is most effective if movements are 'done large' before they are 'done small' (e.g. letters in air/on large sheets of paper).*
- *Children need a good level of gross-motor stability and control before they can effectively make fine-motor movements with their fingers. Therefore gross-motor activities will help with writing.*

- **Readiness**

Is the child ready for:

1. Holding a pencil

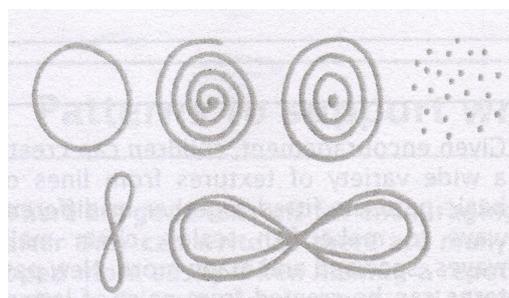
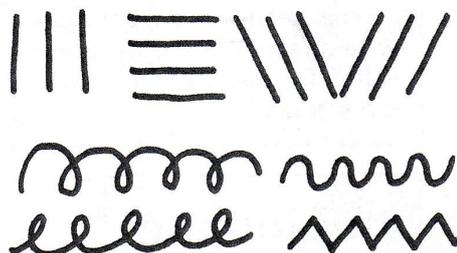
Can the pupil manage to do?

- bead threading
 - modelling
 - weaving
 - finger play
 - cutting
 - pasting
 - hammering
 - picking-up objects between their forefinger and thumb
- ***On-going practise and increased fluency in carrying out these activities will help develop pencil control and 'flow' when writing.***

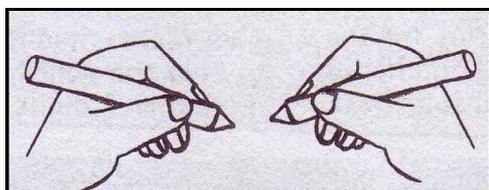
2. Letter formation

Can the pupil make:

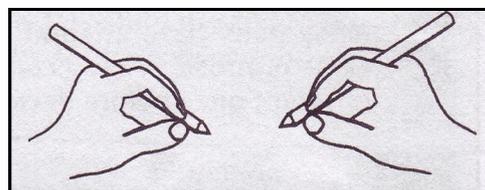
- horizontal lines left-to-right, both straight and wavy
- straight scribble
- round and round scribble
- a diagonal cross
- a horizontal/vertical cross
- an anti-clockwise circle
- a clockwise circle
- a vertical line in downward direction
- a vertical line in an upward direction



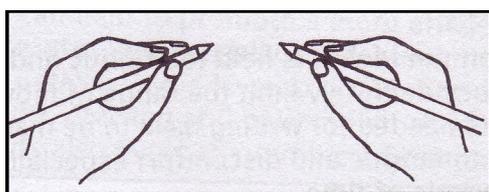
- **Grip**
 - Children should be taught how to hold a pencil effectively as soon as they are ready to do so.
 - They should be taught to use a tripod grip.



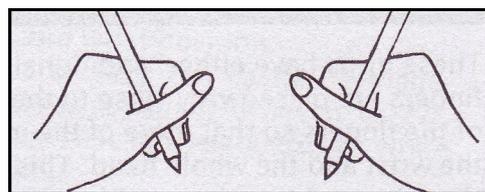
Dynamic Tripod



Alternative Tripod

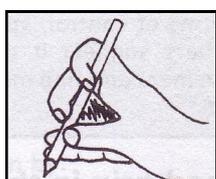


Static Tripod

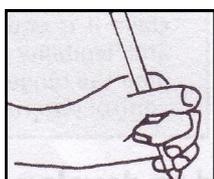


Lateral Tripod

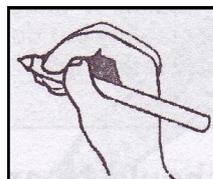
- The following grips need to be discouraged as they limit the range of movements and can cause fatigue and discomfort.



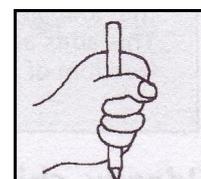
Javelin



Thumb Wrapper



Thumb Tuck



Stab

- **Writing own name**
 - Teachers should give priority to ensuring that children learn to write their names, forming these letters correctly, as soon as possible after entry to school.
- **Frequency**
 - Handwriting should be taught on a daily basis for between 10 and 15 minutes per pupil.
 - EYFS and Y1
 - Activities in and outside the classroom to support gross and fine motor control (inc. Developmental Movement Play area).
 - Handwriting Table. With pre-writing activities and then patterns.
 - Time with an adult teaching the children the correct grip and letter formation.

- Y2 and KS2
 - It is recommended that children complete patterns independently as they arrive in registration.
 - Every class needs to spend at least 10 minutes at the end of the day on handwriting development.
 - Lessons should include:
 - Warm-up activities
 - Patterns
 - Letter formation / joins
 - Applying in spelling patterns and words
- **Handwriting Patterns**
 - These should precede the teaching of letter formation.
 - In the formation of handwriting patterns children are making and repeating the movements they need to make the letters without the anxiety of completing a letter correctly.
 - They also encourage fluency and help the children to write with flow rather than drawing letters.
- **Forming Letters**
 - Children should be taught how to form letters in families and not in the order they appear in the phonics scheme of work.
 - These families are:

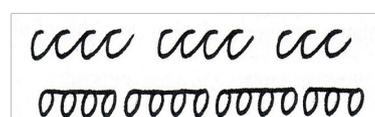
Long Ladders

l i j u t y
L I J U T Y



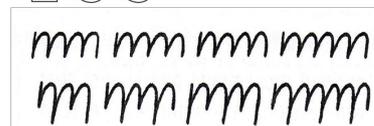
Curly Caterpillars

c a d g q o e s f
C A D G Q O E S F
0 6 8 9



One-armed Robots

r n m h b k p
R N M H B K P
2 3 5



Zig-zag Monsters

z x v w
Z X V W
1 4 7



- **Warm-up Activities**
 - Before handwriting lessons (or before extended writing) the children should do a number of different warm-up activities for 5 minutes. They should start with exercises for gross movements and progressively move towards fine movements.
 - These include activities for the:
 - Shoulders
 - Elbows
 - Wrists and fists
 - Flat hands
 - Fingers and thumbs
 - Control of a pencil
 - Grasp and grip

- **Entry/exit strokes**
 - In our school children will not do entry strokes with nearly all the start positions being at the top of the letter (see Page 1 of the guidelines).
 - When children are forming letters they should be taught to add an exit flick to the letter in preparation for joining.

- **Capital letters**
 - Children should be taught the formation of upper case letters once they are secure with the formation of lower case letters.
 - Pupils should be aware of the upper and lower case forms of each letter and be able to relate them to one another.

- **Positioning**
 - Children should be taught about the difference between letters with sticks (ascenders) and those with tails (descenders).
 - Children should be instructed to use pieces of card or finger spacers to make spaces between words. They should not be using their own fingers as, particularly for left-handers, this is very awkward and can obstruct the writing.

- **Joining**
 - Once they are able to form, orientate and align letters accurately and consistently they will be taught how to join letters in the following way:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

- It is at this time that children may be awarded their 'Pen License'. Once they have demonstrated a neat, consistent and well-formed handwriting style they will be awarded with a certificate and school pen. They should then be expected to write in pen in all lessons (in line with the Presentation Policy).
 - **Joins should be taught in the following order:**
 - Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders
 - Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders
 - Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders
 - Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders
 - Teachers should teach joining using spelling patterns that link to phonic phases or letter strings that link to the spelling scheme of work.
- **Fluency, Speed and Styles**
 - Once children have developed a legible and controlled joined-up handwriting style they should move on to developing fluency and speed.
 - Children need to consider the purpose of their writing.
 1. Good quality and neat and used for more formal purposes when the occasion demands.
 2. Fast, note-taking hand which is used when time is of the essence.
 - The latter may be more untidy than the 'best' writing but it should still be legible.
 - The children should also learn different styles (e.g. italics, gothic, loops) which they can use for a range of different purposes.
- **Left-handed Children**
 - There is no doubt that the English left-to-right writing system is 'the wrong way round' for them.
 - Teachers should consider the following:
 - Demonstration for left-handed children.
 - If guiding a left-handed child then the teacher needs to use their left-hand.
 - Left-handers should sit next to each other or on the left of a right-hander, so that elbows do not clash.
 - Left handers may benefit from a slightly higher seat so it makes it easier for them to see what they are writing.
 - Some left-handed children adopt a 'hooked' penhold. If they can manage well like this then there is no need to alter it just because it looks awkward to a right-hander.

- A left-hander should rotate the writing surface slightly clockwise when writing.
- The pen used needs to be comfortable and one which will not smudge if the writing hand passes over it.

- **Year group expectations**
 - Nursery
 - Gross and fine motor control.
 - Forming letter families when ready to grip a pencil effectively.
 - Reception
 - Forming letters correctly with flow and using the correct start positions.
 - Space between words.
 - Year 1
 - Letters orientated and formed correctly which sit on the line.
 - Form capital letters and digits.
 - Understand which letters belong to which handwriting families.
 - Year 2
 - Very clear letter formation with letters the correct size relative to one another.
 - Ascenders and descenders distinguished.
 - Capital letters not mixed within words.
 - Begin to use diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.
 - Year 3
 - Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders.
 - Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders.
 - Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders.
 - Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders.
 - Year 4
 - Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting (for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch).
 - Year 5
 - Joined handwriting is consistent, joined and fluent.
 - Choose which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters.
 - Year 6
 - Handwriting for different purposes.
 - Speed vs Presentation
 - Different styles (inc. loops, italics, gothic etc)

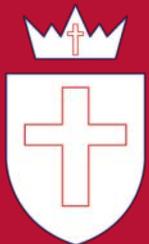
- **Children with difficulties**
 - Children who do not meet the expected outcomes need to be assessed individually and a consultation with the SENDCo may be required (see S.E.N. policy).
 - This assessment considers:
 - Letter formation and joining
 - Letter shape
 - Letter size
 - Slant/slope
 - Alignment
 - Spacing
 - Posture
 - Pen grip
 - Paper position
 - Pressure and fluency
 - Speed
 - Resources
 - Staff should be aware of the variety of resources available to support children who are having difficulties. These include: grips, light-up pens, carbon paper, sloping writing surfaces, cushions, different styles of pen.
 - Computers (see Computing Policy)
 - For those children who need to frequently use alternative forms of recording they should be taught how to use word processing features of the software with ease and be able to type at a speed which matches or surpasses their normal handwriting speed.
 - Children should be taught to 'touch type' to as high a standard as possible where they are at least using all their fingers and their thumb for the space bar.
 - It is important that children who are using alternative forms of recording for most of the curriculum are supported in improving their handwriting.

- **Display**
 - Each classroom should include:
 - Letter formation poster.
 - Handwriting examples to show what is expected in that year group.
 - Children's handwriting with positive comments.
 - Many examples of the Sassoon font being used around the room.
 - Date and objectives written following the school handwriting policy.

- **Practical Matters**
 - *Writing instruments*
 - There is no one best pen or pencil for children; they need to be given a choice.
 - Classrooms need to include a variety of pens:
 - pens/pencils that are different thicknesses
 - rubberised barrels
 - grips included in the barrel
 - fibre tip
 - ball point
 - grips
 - *Furniture*
 - Teachers need to ensure that children are sitting in chairs and at tables which are the right size for them. This may mean swapping furniture with another class.
 - *Posture*
 - Children need to develop a good posture from the beginning.
 - Sitting with the upper body reasonably upright.
 - Squarely facing the writing surface.
 - Feet on the floor.
 - Non-writing hand supporting the work.
 - All staff should issue general reminders about this before writing activities begin.
 - *Light*
 - Staff should ensure that all pupils have good light when they are writing.

- *Paper and position*
 - Good quality, smooth paper can make quite a difference to the ease of writing.
 - Left-handers should rotate the writing surface slightly clockwise and right-handers should rotate to the anti-clockwise.
 - Staff should avoid allowing children to rotate the paper further and further until the lines are virtually vertical.
- *Lines*
 - Children, except those just beginning to hold a pencil, should be provided with lined paper to write on, with lines that are not too faint and at **appropriate** width for the pupils.
 - Teachers need to adapt the type of lined paper to suit the children they are teaching (e.g. using tram-lined paper to help the children learn the difference between ascenders and descenders).
- **Contact with parents**
 - Attainment in handwriting needs to form part of teacher reporting at parents' afternoons and in end of year reports.
 - Teachers should provide advice and resources in open afternoons and share end of year expectations with parents.
 - If a child is struggling with handwriting and outside agencies need to be involved then parental consent needs to be provided (in line with S.E.N.D. policy).
- **Transition**
 - When children struggling with handwriting leave Year 6 the secondary school to which they are going to need to be made aware of the child's specific need and the strategies used to support them.

John Sharp
 English Subject Leader
 November 2017



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