



Handwriting at St. Vincent's

Rationale

The skill of handwriting needs to be taught and a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting needs to be established.

Aims

- To have a consistent cursive approach across the school to ensure high levels of presentation.
- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in books, on the whiteboard, on displays and resources.
- To enable children to achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting.
- To enable children to develop fluency and speed whilst writing

The Continuous Cursive Script

As recommended by the British Dyslexia Association, we adopt a continuous cursive style of writing. It's most important feature is that each letter is formed without taking the pencil off the paper. Consequently, each word is formed in one, flowing movement.

The key advantages of this script:

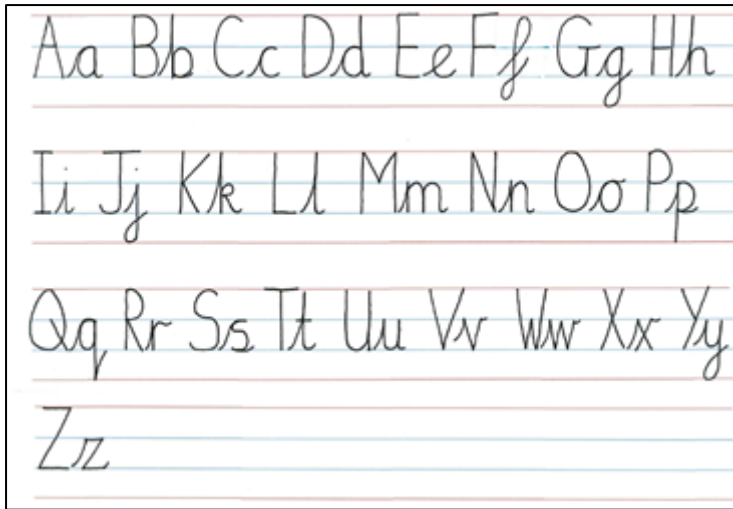
- By making each letter in one movement, children's hands develop a 'physical memory' of it, making it easier to produce the correct shape;
- The starting and finishing points for all Continuous Cursive letters are easier to remember (they all start on the line and, other than a few exceptions, all finish on the line)
- As letters and words flow from left to right, children are less likely to reverse letters which are typically difficult (ie b/d, p/q)
- There is a clear distinction between capital letters and lower case;
- The transition to joined writing is simple and occurs sooner, allowing children to concentrate on the composition of the writing, rather than thinking how to form the letters.
- Words written in one set of movement, without the pen being taken off the paper, helps the motor memory store spellings.
- The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling.

(The British Dyslexia Association)

Effective teaching of handwriting can only be achieved through modelling. Teachers must demonstrate letter formation and joins regularly and children must practise by carefully copying and repeating. During discrete handwriting, it is important to observe children writing to ensure they are forming letters correctly.

Our agreed continuous cursive script

Pre Cursive



Sayings to assist letter formation

We use the sayings from our phonics scheme, Read Write Inc, with the additional lead in and lead out strokes.

m In Maisie Mountain mountain out

b In down the laces to the heel, round the toe and out

a In round the apple down the leaf out

f In round the flower, down the stem, loop out and across the leaves

s In slither down the snake out

e In cut off the top, scoop out the egg and out

t In down the tower out and across

l In down the long leg and out

d In round his bottom, up his tall neck, down to his feet and out

h In down the head to the hooves over his back and out

i In down the body, out and dot the head

r In down his back, over his arm and out

n In down Nobby, over his net and out

j In down his body, loop out and dot his head

p In down the plait, up and around the pirate's face and out

v In down a wing, up a wing and out

g In round her face, down her hair and loop out

y In down a horn, up a horn, under his head and loop out

o In all around the orange out

w In down up down up and out

c In curl around the caterpillar

z In zig zag zig and out

k In down the kangaroo's body, round his tail, down his leg and out

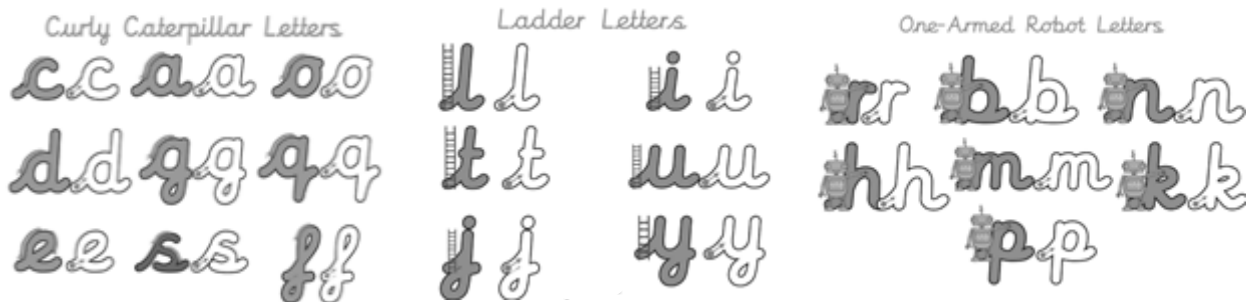
x In down the arm and leg, off, up the leg to the arm and out

u In down and under, up to the top, down and out

q In round her head, up to the top, down her hair and out

Teaching letters in groups

When teaching handwriting discretely i.e. in class handwriting sessions, we teach letters which are formed with a similar movement together e.g.



As well as the remaining letters - v, w, x, z

Pen and Pencil Grip

We will teach children the tripod grasp detailed in the picture above.

This should be reinforced at the start of every formal writing session in EYFS and KS1 and handwriting lessons in KS2. In KS1 other grips should be corrected. A close eye needs to be kept on children developing an awkward grip and a plan put into place. Although the basic tripod grasp is often considered to be the only 'correct' way to hold the writing instrument, there are a number of alternative grips that also work well. If a child has established a grip that he or she finds reasonably comfortable for long periods, it often causes more problems than it solves to insist that he/she changes it.

Delivering National Curriculum Expectations

EYFS: Good handwriting relies on hand eye coordination and secure motor control. Therefore, during the Foundation Stage, we will provide lots of opportunities for the children to develop physical control through large scale movements, manipulative skills and fine motor control.

Year 1: Pupils should be taught to:

- Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- Begin to form lower-case letters in the correct position, starting and finishing in the right place
- Form capital letters
- Form digits 0-9

Year 2: Pupils should be taught to:

- Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

Year 3 and 4: Pupils should be taught to:

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting

Years 5 and 6: Pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed

EYFS

In the Autumn term, letter formation is taught as part of RWI and children are taught the letter formation in line with the Read Write Inc program. As soon as Sound Set One has been taught, additional handwriting sessions are then introduced.

KS1 (Years 1 and 2)

Children in Key Stage 1 are taught the pre-cursive script which prepares them for joining their handwriting.

Year 1: Handwriting is taught discretely up to 4 times a week for 20 minutes.

Year 2: Handwriting is taught discretely, 3 times a week for 15-20 minutes.

Our aim is to make the transition into continuous cursive during years 1 and 2 depending on the ability of the children.

KS2

Year 3 & Y4: Handwriting is taught discretely at least once a week using words from the week's

Year 5 & 6: We emphasise the importance of neat, joined handwriting and presentation, but do not teach it discretely to the whole class. Individuals have handwriting intervention in small groups.

Posture, paper and position

Posture should be taught explicitly and children reminded at the start of every formal writing session until it becomes habitual. Children should sit with the upper body reasonably upright and squarely facing the writing surface, with feet on the floor and the non-writing hand supporting the work. Right-handers should rotate the surface slightly to the left. Avoid allowing pupils to rotate the paper further and further until the lines are virtually vertical, as this can become a habit difficult to break. Left-handers should either sit next to each other or on the left of a right hander so that elbows do not clash. Left-handers should rotate the writing surface slightly to the right.

Induction for new staff and pupils

New teachers and teaching assistants should be given a copy of the handwriting policy and some training if necessary. The year leader will be responsible for monitoring that new staff are following the policy. The senior leadership team will monitor new staff during the monitoring process of lesson observations and work scrutinies. New children to St. Vincent's in Rec -Y4 will be taught to use the continuous cursive style. In Years 5 and 6, new children may use a different but equally acceptable style of cursive handwriting and that is fine. Those whose handwriting is not functional when they arrive will be taught using our continuous cursive style.

Support for learning

Children experiencing difficulties with their handwriting will be brought to the attention of the year leaders and a programme of intervention will be set up as appropriate.

Parents

Parents are provided with a log-in to Letter-join to support handwriting practise at home.

Assessment, monitoring and moderation

Children in EYFS are assessed on an ongoing basis through observation and handwriting forms part of this. Within KS1 and KS2, handwriting is monitored during work scrutinies and is assessed as part of the children's writing assessments.

St. Vincent's subscribes to Letter-join to support pupils at school and at home.

