



St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School

Handwriting Rationale



Handwriting

Intent

At St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, we believe that fluent, legible and automatic handwriting is an essential life skill that enables children to communicate confidently and effectively. We recognise that secure handwriting supports the writing process by reducing cognitive load, allowing children to focus on composition, vocabulary and the communication of ideas rather than the mechanics of letter formation.

Our handwriting curriculum is carefully sequenced from the Early Years through to Year 6, ensuring children progressively develop the physical skills, correct letter formation, joins and fluency required to become confident writers. We recognise that handwriting begins long before children pick up a pencil; therefore, in the Early Years we prioritise fine motor development, gross motor control, pencil grip and pre-writing movements as the foundations for successful handwriting.

We aim for every child to develop pride in the presentation of their work and understand that clear, fluent handwriting supports learning across the curriculum. Through high expectations, consistent modelling and regular practice, children develop handwriting that is accurate, efficient and fit for purpose, preparing them for the next stage of their education and beyond.

Implementation

Handwriting is taught explicitly through a progressive and consistent approach from Reception to Year 6.

In the Early Years and Key Stage 1, we follow the Letter Villages programme. Children develop the foundations of handwriting through carefully planned activities that strengthen fine motor skills, pencil control and correct letter formation. Letter families and formation patterns are taught systematically, enabling children to develop confidence and consistency before introducing joins. Frequent opportunities to practise handwriting are embedded across the curriculum, ensuring skills are applied in meaningful contexts.

As children move into Key Stage 2, handwriting teaching builds upon these secure foundations through the Nelson Handwriting programme. Teaching focuses on developing a fluent, joined handwriting style that enables children to write efficiently, legibly and with increasing automaticity. Regular practice supports children in refining letter size, orientation, spacing and presentation, enabling handwriting to become increasingly effortless.

Teachers consistently model the agreed handwriting style across the curriculum and maintain high expectations for presentation in all subjects. Handwriting is explicitly taught, revisited and reinforced through daily learning, with additional support provided for children who require further intervention to develop handwriting fluency.

Ongoing formative assessment enables teachers to identify children requiring additional support or challenge. Through consistent expectations across the school, children understand the importance of presentation and take pride in producing work of a high standard.

In Love with Christ: Be the Best I can. Be Kind to One Another. Amen.



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Impact

Through our handwriting curriculum, children develop fluent, legible and efficient handwriting that supports high-quality written communication.

Our children:

- develop secure pencil control, correct letter formation and a comfortable writing posture from the earliest stages of learning;
- write with increasing fluency, consistency and automaticity using the school's agreed handwriting style;
- present their work neatly and take pride in the quality of their written presentation;
- develop handwriting that enables them to focus on the composition and quality of their writing rather than the mechanics of transcription;
- apply their handwriting skills consistently across the wider curriculum;
- leave St Cuthbert's as confident writers whose fluent, legible handwriting supports success throughout their education and future lives.

In Love with Christ: Be the Best I can. Be Kind to One Another. Amen.