



School Christian Values

Generosity, compassion, courage, forgiveness, friendship, respect,
Thankfulness, trust, perseverance, justice, service, and truthfulness.

Bible Reference

Luke 10: 27 'Love your neighbour as yourself'

Policy References

This policy is written with reference to the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Curriculum and Teaching and Learning policies
- Marking Policy
- PSHE and SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) Policies
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- SEND Policy and Able Gifted and Talented Policies
- Assessment Policy
- Single Equalities Policy.

Most of these policies are available on the school website. In addition, copies of the following policies are available, on request, from the school office.

Handwriting Handbook 2024-2025

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What is handwriting?

Handwriting is a means of expressing language, just like speech, and it leaves a lasting trace. It is often referred to as ‘Language by Hand’. It is a physical way of expressing thoughts and ideas and a means of communicating with others.

Vision

We want children to be able to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed and stamina to communicate their ideas, thoughts, and feelings through writing.

Our Curriculum

The key expectations at Skerton St Luke’s mirror those of the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum for Handwriting. We strive for children to meet the End of Year/Key Stage Statutory Requirements:

Year R	Year 1	Year 2	Lower Key Stage 2	Upper Key Stage 2
Pupils should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed 	Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place form capital letters form digits 0-9 	Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another start using some diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are 	Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by, choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters choosing the writing implement that is best for a suited task



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these 	<p>best left unjoined</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<p>(for example, by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch)</p>	
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Handwriting is a priority across school to allow all pupils to become successful writers to communicate and present their ideas, thoughts, and feelings in a legible handwriting style.

National Curriculum – Programme of Study (Sept 2014)

Year 1

Pupils' writing during Year 1 will generally develop at a slower pace than their reading. This is because they need to encode the sounds they hear in words (spelling skills), develop the physical skills needed for handwriting, and learn how to organise their ideas in writing.

- Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement should not be too large for a young pupil's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided. Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.



Year 2

In writing, pupils at the beginning of Year 2, should be able to form individual letters correctly, so establishing good handwriting habits from the beginning is essential.

- Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Lower Key Stage 2

Joined handwriting should be the norm; pupils should be able to use it fast enough to keep pace with what they want to say.

- Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support composition and spelling.

Upper Key Stage 2

Pupils should be able to write down their ideas quickly. By the end of Year 6, pupil's reading and writing should be sufficiently fluent and effortless for them to manage the general demands of the curriculum in Year 7.

- Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task (e.g. quick notes or final handwritten version). They should also be taught to use an unjoined style (e.g. for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra) and capital letters (e.g. for filling in a form).



Planning

At Skerton St Luke's, we use bespoke strategies to our school to meet the statutory requirements for handwriting.

Reception

On entry into Reception, we teach correct letter formation using the Sassoon Infant Standard aligned with Red Rose Letters and Sounds phonics program. A cursive style ready to learn the joins in Key Stage 1.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee
Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj
Kk/k Ll Mm Nn Oo
Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

We teach each letter and how to write it in order of when the letter and sound is introduced in the Red Rose Letters and Sounds phonics program. We teach correct letter formation using the Red Rose rhymes to ensure consistency and fluency across school.

Phase 2 Group 1 – s a t

Phase 2 Group 2 – p i n

Phase 2 Group 3 – m d g

Phase 2 Group 4 – o c k

Phase 2 Group 5 – ck e u

Phase 2 Group 6 – r h b

Phase 2 Group 7 – f ff l

Phase 2 Group 8 – ll ss



Phase 3 Group 1 – j v w

Phase 3 Group 2 – x y z zz

Phase 3 Group 3 - qu

This is through a multi-sensory approach to develop both gross and fine motor control and co-ordination to form each letter correctly.

Once Phase 2 Letters and Sounds has been taught, daily handwriting practice takes place through direct teaching then further opportunities for independent practice through continuous provision.

The letter shapes are then directly taught in ‘families’.

The four main groups are:

- Long ladder **i j l t u**

(Down and off in another direction, exemplified by the letter l)

- One armed robot: **r b n h m k p 2 3 5**

(down and retraced upwards exemplified by the letter r)

- Zigzag monsters: **v w x z 1 4 7**

(Straight lines)

- Curly caterpillars: **a c o d g q e s f 0 6 8 9**

(Anti-clockwise round, exemplified by the letter c)

It is important to teach the formation of numerical digits at the same time we teach formation of letters.

Digraphs and trigraphs are joined in Reception and Key Stage 1 in line with our Early Reading and Phonics Handbook.

Key Stage 1

Handwriting is discretely taught in Year 1 and Year 2 to continue the good practice in Reception. It is linked to phonics and spellings and when a child is secure in joining every letter correctly, then, and only



then will a child be shown how to join following the progression of joins.

Digraphs and trigraphs are joined and modelled in phonics.

Key Stage 2

Handwriting continues to be modelled and taught directly following the agreed teaching strategies and pattern of letter formation outlined in this handbook.

Pupils may be asked to write a verse of a poem, or a sentence formed during shared writing for additional handwriting practice but only after it has been modelled by the class teacher and the joins shown correctly. Handwriting in Key Stage 2 is linked to spelling practice.

Correct letter formation



We teach correct letter formation as the phoneme (sound) and grapheme (written letter) is introduced with fidelity to Red Rose phonics program. A rhyme represents each letter to teach the correct way to write the grapheme.

Letters we join



a c d e f h i k l m n o r t u v w

Letters we do not join

b g j p s x y

We do not join capital letters.

Letter joins

Pupils need to be aware of what sort of letter they are joining **from**, and what sort of letter they are joining **to**.

The two basic joins:

Diagonal join: this is the most common. It starts from the final flick on the baseline e.g. at.

Horizontal join: this join is formed from letters that finish at the top of the letter rather than the baseline e.g. op.

Letters that come before a horizontal join are: f o r u w

Progression of letter joins

1. Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ai ar un
2. Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ou vi wi
3. Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ab ul it
4. Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ol wh ot

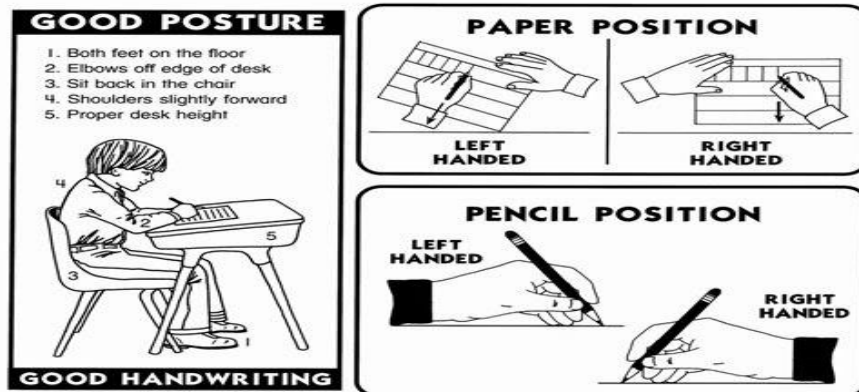
Red Rose rhymes are used to teach individual joins in discrete handwriting practice and modelled in shared writing across school.



Correct posture



A correct sitting position ready to write is introduced in Reception and is a statutory requirement to be taught in Year 1. Developing a good posture is as important as developing a good pencil grip. Pupils will be able to sustain writing longer if they become used to sitting comfortably.



- Ensure pupils have a correct pencil grip (pencil grips should be used as a last resort)
- Check that tables are large enough so that the children have enough space to write comfortably
- Check the height of the tables and chairs so children can sit comfortably, with their feet flat on the floor. Legs should be free and not come into contact with the table. They should be able to sit up at the table without having to lean over and stretch to reach it.
- The lighting needs to be sufficient so children can see their work
- Children need a direct view of the teacher/board
- Children should be taught to use their non-writing hand to steady that paper and bear some body weight
- The paper should be tilted slightly in the opposite direction of which hand you use to write

Left-handed writers

At least 10% of the population are left-handed – a slightly higher proportion are males. This needs to be considered when children are writing to ensure left-handed pupils are not at a disadvantage.



- Consider the seating in class – If a right-handed child sits next to a left-handed child, is there sufficient space for them both to write comfortably?
- Is the lighting adequate from the non-writing side?
- Model letter formation, sky writing, etc, specifically for left-handed children with your left hand
- Put a mark at the left side of the page to indicate where writing begins as some left-handed children mirror write from the right

Physical Development into Literacy Development

To develop good handwriting a child needs strength and stability in their body.

The five areas to support the body with handwriting:

1. Shoulder stability and strength
2. Crossing the mid-line
3. Wrist strength and Flexibility
4. Thumb and finger strength and dexterity
5. Whole hand strength and dexterity

Gross motor skills – the development of controlled movements of the whole body, or limbs such as arms and legs. Of particular importance in relation to handwriting is the development of good posture and balance.

- Sky writing, Squiggle while you Wiggle, digging, climbing, travelling, balancing, ball skills, aerobics, dance, sweeping, lifting, hand push ups on a wall, etc.



Fine motor skills – the smaller movements, usually of the hand and fingers.

- Dough Disco, peg boards, use of tweezers, sewing, weaving, cutting, threading, etc.

These skills need constant practice and development to ensure a child through primary education has the strength and stamina to be able to write fluidly with speed.

The muscles and body must be exercised and warmed up prior to handwriting sessions for maximum impact and development in handwriting. At least one exercise from one of the above 5 groups should be practised before teaching handwriting – see Teaching Handwriting for warm-up exercises.

Ideas can also be found in the ‘Speed Up’ intervention programme, use of playdough for dough disco, finger gym and finger aerobics.

Supporting children with SEND

We provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Children with SEND are provided with learning opportunities that are matched to their individual needs. Additional intervention packages are also used for any child who may need it – Speed Up! is a kinaesthetic programme to develop fluid handwriting and is implemented when groups of children are identified as needing additional intervention to planned handwriting taught sessions.

Useful websites to support the teaching of handwriting

- National Handwriting Association
- Teach Handwriting – Handwriting warm up activities.
- ICT games – Sky Writer
- Espresso



Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of children's work and the quality of handwriting across the curriculum is the responsibility of the Classteacher, Key Stage Leads and English Subject Lead. Regular book looks, learning walks and lesson observations ensure evidence of the quality of handwriting and progression across school. A piece of work chosen by the child written in their best handwriting will be passed to the next class teacher to be stuck at the front of the child's new English book to celebrate and showcase the standard of a child's handwriting and overall presentation as a means to continue to progress and develop their writing style.

In Year R and 1, at the start of every year the children will be asked to write their name as an assessment tool of letter formation.

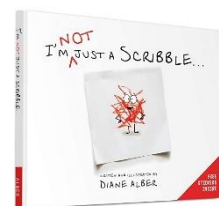
From Year 2 – Year 6, pupils will write the pangram 'The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog' without modelling as a baseline and to inform future planning of handwriting sessions.

National English Event

- National Scribble Day – March 27th, 2025

"I'm not just a scribble" by

Diane Alber



Whole school involvement to explore mark making into writing through the expression of Art.