



Handwriting policy

Created December 2023	Signed Head teacher: Mrs G Emsley
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Safeguarding Statement of Intent

At Clayton St John CofE Primary we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Clayton St John CofE. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access the school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying. We also work to ensure that our pupils are aware of Online Safety and who to talk to if they feel vulnerable or scared.

Vision Statement

‘Growing together in God’s Love’

Rooted deeply in God’s love, we flourish as individuals and as a community. Within a nurturing environment, we develop curiosity, creativity and a love of learning. We learn and grow when things go well and things go wrong. In all we do we hope to be the best we can be.

Ephesians 3 v 16 and Jeremiah 17 v 7 & 8

Statement of Intent

At Clayton St John CofE Primary we strive to ensure that our pupils are safeguarded against any form of harm. We ensure that our staff are trained appropriately, can identify signs of abuse and follow policy and procedures for reporting concerns, disclosures and allegations.

Our Vision

At Clayton St John CofE Primary we pride ourselves on developing a positive ethos built on the foundations of the Christian faith. This ethos is based on the following Values and principles that, as stakeholders, we all aim to uphold:

RESPECT

R: Resilience- Trying our best to work hard, we never give up when things get difficult. We show the determination and strength to learn from our mistakes, showing our courage and self-belief.

E: Enjoyment- We are motivated by our family, friends and teachers and rejoice in God's love; we are fulfilled by all that this brings. Our love of learning is inspired through fun, creativity, curiosity and excitement.

S: Security- The love, care and responsibility we are given make us feel safe at school. We value honesty and trust and achieve more when we feel protected.

P: Pride-When we achieve success we feel fulfilled and satisfied. We are happy for each other and confident in all we believe.

E: Excellence- We challenge ourselves and one another with high expectations and aspirations. Together God's greatness, we achieve brilliance through our efforts and dedication.

C: Collaboration- Working together, sharing and helping, we respect our differences and listen to each other. We are a team built on trust and co-operation, celebrating diversity and acceptance.

T: Trust- With faith in God's love and each other, we show kindness, loyalty and patience. We are a strong community, helping each other by showing forgiveness and honesty.

Introduction

"Handwriting is a tool that must work. It must be comfortable, fast, and legible." (Angela Webb, Chair, National Handwriting Association)

At Clayton St John we expect that children must be able to write with ease, speed, and legibility. If they have difficulty, this will limit fluency and inhibit the quality and quantity of their work. It is important that the child's handwriting becomes a skill that requires little effort and thought, so that creative and physical energy can be focused on the content of writing, rather than upon the act. We help children to achieve the steps towards independently using a continuous cursive style.

The national curriculum specifies that children should be taught to correctly form letters of the correct size and orientation prior to starting to use some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters. Delaying teaching joined handwriting in reception gives teachers and children time to focus on other aspects of the writing process, such as composition, spelling and forming letters correctly.

Research supports the idea that writing letters may be important for supporting children's early reading development, because it stimulates the areas of the brain known to underpin successful reading. There is also evidence that repeated practice in handwriting, going beyond accuracy to fluency, leads to success in higher level writing tasks.

At Clayton St John we aim for children to:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in a continuous cursive handwriting.

- Develop flow and speed to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- To automatically use clearly formed and joined handwriting in all their writing.
- Use their skills with confidence, in real life situations.

Teaching Handwriting – it's complicated!

Handwriting is a very complex task. Moving a pencil to make letters is primarily a motor skill.

However, recognising letters is a visual and memory skill. Knowing letter names and sounds relies on hearing, memory, and language. Writing words and sentences requires the ability to combine all these skills.

At its core, writing letters correctly on the page is a motor skill. It requires pencil control, knowledge of the formation pattern and the ability to perceive visually distances. Motor skills require practise to become proficient.

How handwriting is learnt at Clayton St John.

Handwriting is not a skill that humans are innately born to do. Walking, we naturally learn. General fine motor skills are learnt through play. Anyone who has watched two and three years olds play know that they are forever repeating skills. They open, close, fill, dump and constantly explore with their hands. This repetition improves their skills.

When toddlers pick up a crayon they explore. This exploration might include drawing on the walls and sofa! It then becomes more refined. They draw shapes, they draw people, and they draw things. Then, they are taught to write their name.

How handwriting is taught at Clayton St John.

A daily session of ten minutes is provided for young children learning letter formations. For older children, three sessions of 15 – 20 minutes per week is provided, unless targeted individual intervention is required.

Reception children are taught how to correctly form letters of the correct size and orientation to enable them to focus on other aspects of the writing process, such as composition, spelling and forming letters correctly.

At our school, KS1 & KS2 are explicitly taught handwriting 2-3 times a week for 15–20- minutes a time.

Children from Reception to yr. 6 children will have a handwriting book.

All children who are fluent in their handwriting will be provided with a handwriting pen.

At Clayton St John we follow the RML handwriting scheme.

There are regular daily timetabled slots for handwriting to ensure that children build up their handwriting skills every day.



We make the physical process of writing – handwriting – enjoyable from the start, so children see themselves as writers. We use mnemonics – memory pictures- to help children visualise the letter or join before they write it down.

Children practice handwriting under the guidance of a teacher following the **I do, we do, you do** school approach.

There are three handwriting stages.

Stage 1

These lessons are taught while children read the Red, Green, Purple, Pink, and Orange story books.

Stage 1a: - Children practice correct letter formation.

Stage 1b: Children learn where to place the letters on the writing line.

Stage 2

These lessons are taught while the children read the yellow, blue, and grey story books. Children learn a mature style of writing that will lead to joined up writing.

Stage 3

These lessons are taught while children read the yellow, blue, and grey story books.

Children learn the two basic joins: the arm join(diagonal) and the washing line join (horizontal) and the two variables for each join.

Please see handbook pg. 25 – 28.

Handwriting position

This is to be taught and to use the handwriting signal so that they automatically go into the perfect handwriting position:

- Feet on the floor.
- Bottom at the back of a chair.
- Body one fist from the table.
- Shoulders down and relaxed.
- Back leaning slightly forward
- Left/ right hand hold the page.
- Left or right hand in a tripod grip.

Support and consideration for left-handed pupils. They will have the same sitting position, tilt the paper and to hold the pencil/ pen higher up the shaft of the pen/ pencil but with the same tripod grip.

Interventions

The expectation of Clayton St John primary school is that all children will form letters which are of correct size and form whilst using the tripod grip leading to joined writing. Pupils who are identified as needed specific support are highlighted on their learning plans, small group additional interventions will take place

after analysis by the SENDCO for any specific need. Pencil grips will be provided for any pupil who require them.

CPD for adults in school

Staff meetings regarding the teaching and modelling of handwriting are added termly to the quality assurance calendar and additional adults are trained termly to ensure consistency.

Whole school provision of handwriting

	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Nurs	Movements to enhance gross motor skills such as air writing, pattern making, dancing. Gross and fine motor skill exercises such as making marks on paper/iPad and dough disco dough disco	Mark making to communicate a message. High emphasis on pencil play activities Physical development lessons to focus on fine motor skills	Letter learning to familiarise letter shapes, formation, and vocabulary. Know the RML characters to support movements/ phrases (letter family songs)
Rec	Know/reinforce the RML characters/phrases to support movements (letter family songs) Tripod pencil grip. Sit correctly on a chair at a table when writing. Letter learning to familiarise letter shapes, formation, and vocabulary. Gross and fine motor skills exercises including dough disco , air writing , mark making/patterns on paper (using the RML characters/phrases)	Reinforcement of Tripod pencil grip Sit correctly on a chair at a table when writing.	Reinforcement of Tripod pencil grip Sit correctly on a chair at a table when writing. Correct formation and use of ascenders and descenders Be confident in writing numerals, capitals and printed letters and where and when to use them. Learning and practise of correct sizing of capital letters and number formation
Year 1	Correct formation and use of ascenders and descenders Consolidate all letter shapes continuing to use RML phrases. (When are all letters are formed correctly and consistently) Reinforcement of letter families begin handwriting reinforcement, learning and practise and introduce lead in lines.	Consolidate all letter shapes continuing to use RML phrases. Developing fluency and speed in sentence construction. Developing fluency in capital letters, printed letters, numbers and symbols. (When are all letters are formed correctly and consistently) Reinforcement of letter families begin handwriting reinforcement, learning and practise and introduce lead in lines.	Children aim to be confident in writing year 1 sentences beginning in a cursive style. Embedding fluency and speed in sentence construction When it is developmentally appropriate the children can then begin to form letters in books: Develop lead ins for letter formation starting and finishing in the correct place. (in RML remember it is 'up then'.. See attached sheet.) to begin to develop a cursive writing style Reinforcement of letter families.

Year 2	Be confident in capital letters, printed letters, numbers and symbols. Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation, and relationship to one another and to lower case letters. Reinforce space between words reflecting the size of letters. When it is developmentally appropriate the children can then begin to form letters in books: Develop lead ins for letter formation starting and finishing in the correct place. (in RML remember it is 'up then'.. See attached sheet.) to begin to develop a cursive writing style Reinforcement of letter families. Start using diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters continuing to use RML phrases.	Reinforce space between words reflecting the size of letters. Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting continuing to use RML phrases. When it is developmentally appropriate: Continue to develop fluency with lead ins for letter formation starting and finishing in the correct place to develop a cursive writing style continuing to use RML phrases. Continue to use diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters continuing to use RML phrases.	Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting continuing to use RML phrases including focusing on 'tricky double letter joins'. Continue to develop confidence and fluency for all lead ins that support a cursive writing style continuing to use RML phrases. Confidently 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.
Year 3	Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting [for example, by demonstrating an awareness of handwriting size and 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 the line].	Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting [for example, by demonstrating an awareness of handwriting size 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]. Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters. Improve the <i>speed and stamina</i> of the writer to write for longer periods of time using a consistent style.	Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting [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]. Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters. Improve the <i>speed and stamina</i> of the writer to write for longer periods of time using a consistent style.
Year 4	Increase the speed and legibility of handwriting, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say during the creative writing process using 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 speed and legibility of handwriting, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say during the creative writing process using the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. The children should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an unjoined style, for example,	Increase the speed and legibility of handwriting, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say during the creative writing process using the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. The children should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email

Year 5	Maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed using the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. Also understanding when an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form. Understand when 'speedy handwriting' can be used e.g. for note taking and dictation where neatness is not as important and shortcuts, such as + instead of 'and' can be used.	Maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed using the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. Also understanding when an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form. Understand when 'speedy handwriting' can be used e.g. for note taking and dictation where neatness is not as important and shortcuts, such as + instead of 'and' can be used.	Maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed using the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. Also understanding when an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form. Understand when 'speedy handwriting' can be used e.g. for note taking and dictation where neatness is not as important and shortcuts, such as + instead of 'and' can be used.
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Year 6	Maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed using the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. Also understanding when an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form. Understand when 'speedy handwriting' can be used e.g. for note taking and dictation where neatness is not as important and shortcuts, such as + instead of 'and' can be used.	Maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed using the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. Also understanding when an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form. Understand when 'speedy handwriting' can be used e.g. for note taking and dictation where neatness is not as important and shortcuts, such as + instead of 'and' can be used.	Maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed using the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. Also understanding when an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form. Understand when 'speedy handwriting' can be used e.g. for note taking and dictation where neatness is not as important and shortcuts, such as + instead of 'and' can be used.
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Appendix 1

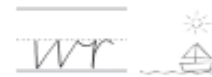
Explain to children that there are two basic joins:

- the arm join (diagonal)
- the washing line join (horizontal).

The arm join has three variations:

- **a.** arm to boat The letter 'ai' is written on a three-line grid. The 'a' starts on the top line, goes down to the bottom line, and curves back up to the middle line. The 'i' starts on the middle line, goes down to the bottom line, and has a dot above it. To the right is a small boat on a wavy line.
- **b.** arm to sun The letter 'ab' is written on a three-line grid. The 'a' starts on the top line, goes down to the bottom line, and curves back up to the middle line. The 'b' starts on the middle line, goes down to the bottom line, and has a loop that goes up to the top line. To the right is a small sun on a wavy line.
- **c.** arm to sister. The letter 'ic' is written on a three-line grid. The 'i' starts on the middle line, goes down to the bottom line, and has a dot above it. The 'c' starts on the top line, goes down to the bottom line, and curves back up to the middle line. To the right is a small sun on a wavy line.

The washing line join has three variations:

- **d.** washing line to boat The letter 'wr' is written on a three-line grid. The 'w' starts on the middle line, goes down to the bottom line, and has two loops that go up to the top line. The 'r' starts on the middle line, goes down to the bottom line, and has a loop that goes up to the top line. To the right is a small boat on a wavy line.
- **e.** washing line to sun The letter 'wh' is written on a three-line grid. The 'w' starts on the middle line, goes down to the bottom line, and has two loops that go up to the top line. The 'h' starts on the middle line, goes down to the bottom line, and has a loop that goes up to the top line. To the right is a small sun on a wavy line.
- **f.** washing line to sister. The letter 'va' is written on a three-line grid. The 'v' starts on the middle line, goes down to the bottom line, and has two loops that go up to the top line. The 'a' starts on the middle line, goes down to the bottom line, and curves back up to the middle line. To the right is a small sun on a wavy line.

a. The arm to boat join

The arm join should not be too straight or too curly.
(This depends on the school's adopted style.)

Phrase: 'Sweep up your arm to touch... (say letter).'

Checklist

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the curl gentle – not too round, not too spiky
- ✓ make the 'arm' sweep up in a gentle curve
- ✓ write the downstroke of the second letter very straight

Use for joining:

a c d e h i k l m n t u

to:

e i j m n p r u v w x y z

See examples on the following pages.