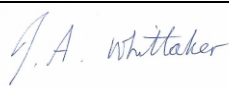




*"I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full."* John 10:10

# Handwriting Policy

## Spring 2024

Policy Review Details	
This policy will be reviewed in line with our policy review schedule.	
Date of Issue: Spring 2024	
	
Governor Signature	Headteacher Signature
Date of next review: Spring 2027	

## Version Control

### Change Record

Date	Author	Version	Reason for Change
31.01.24	J Whittaker	1	Fully revised policy Change of approach re: scheme and timing for introduction of cursive script

## **Summerseat Methodist Vision & Values**

At Summerseat Methodist Primary, our vision, ethos and values are at the core of everything we do. They underpin our teaching and learning, and provide an environment which prepares our children to become lifelong learners; creating a safe and inclusive learning environment that nurtures individuality and enhances potential.



“I have come so that they may have life  
and have it to the full.”

John 10:10

As a church school, we have identified and uphold the following core Christian values that help us achieve our ethos and vision: joy, teamwork, love, respect, care, trust, forgiveness and equality.



## **Safeguarding Statement**

At Summerseat Methodist Primary School we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We work to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. The procedures contained in the Safeguarding Policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors

## Introduction

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns. The development of this fluid style when mastered allows children to apply their energy into the content of their writing as opposed to the formation of the letters themselves. Handwriting skills are taught regularly and systematically throughout the school.

## Aims

At Summerseat Methodist Primary School our aims in teaching handwriting are:

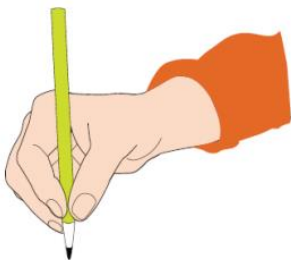
- To enable children to write in a consistent, well presented and legible format.
- To have a consistent and progressive approach across Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and 2 when teaching handwriting.
- To ensure that from the Summer Term of Year 1 to the end of Year 6 children are using a cursive writing style.
- To make sure all children know the difference between lower and upper case letters.
- To encourage pride and high levels of presentation in their own work
- To adopt a consistent approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.

## Implementation

Children will be taught to:

- hold a pencil correctly

*Children should be encouraged to use a tripod pencil grip, where the pencil is gripped between the index finger and the thumb. The middle finger is then used to support the underside of the pencil as shown below.*



*We say – nip it, flip it, grip it*

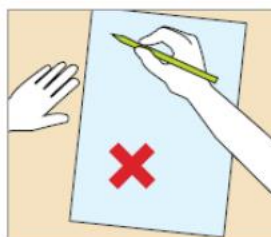
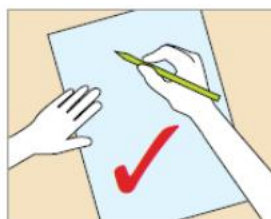
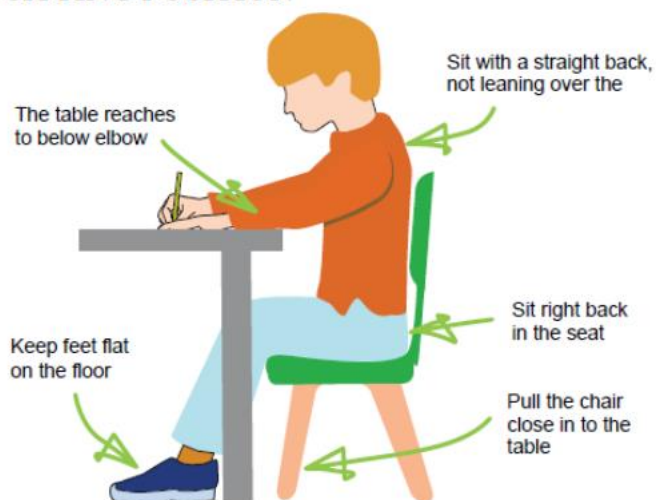
## Typical Development of Pencil Grasp in Children



- and adopt the correct posture when writing

Children should be encouraged to adopt the correct writing position as shown below

### SITTING POSITION



Paper position for right-handed children

Children who are left handed should reposition the paper the other way and sit to the left hand side if seated next to a right handed child – further guidance for supported left-handed children is contained within the appendices.

At Summerseat Methodist Primary, we believe handwriting is a necessary and important skill that is developed throughout the whole curriculum. It is discretely focused on at least daily in FS and KS1 and 3 times weekly in KS2 by either the class teacher or teaching assistant. Included in these sessions is time for the children to apply and practise their learning. Further practise opportunities across the curriculum are utilised. As progress is made, the emphasis then shifts to developing the children's own style and fluency, again through practise and application.

Children are initially introduced to a non-cursive style in the Early Years and this continues until the summer term of Year 1. We use 'Curly Cal and his Handwriting Pals' which is a scheme produced by Supersonic Phonic Friends, our phonic provider.

Cursive formation and letter joins are introduced from the summer term of Year 1 onwards. This reflects the advice in:

- [Reading Framework guidance](#)
- [Bold Beginnings](#)
- [Ofsted research review for English](#)
- [Phonics scheme validation guidance – footnote 3](#)

From summer term in year one, we use the Pen Pals scheme of work (Cambridge).

The children work through 5 developmental stages:

1. Readiness for handwriting; gross and fine motor skills leading to letter formation (EYFS and Year 1)

2. Beginning to join (Key stage 1 from summer Y1- and lower Key Stage 2)
3. Securing the joins (Lower Key Stage 2)
4. Practising speed and fluency (Upper Key Stage 2)
5. Presentation skills (Upper Key Stage 2)

**Stage 1** (expected EYFS/Key Stage 1 to summer Y1 – using Curly Cal and his Handwriting Pals)

The children in the EYFS begin to develop and build on their gross and fine motor skills through a wide variety of activities throughout the curriculum. (*This will include: Write Dance / Doh Disco*) They practise their mark making that then eventually leads to learning the formation of both lower and upper case letters, in line with the scheme. The inclusion of a 'flick' at the end of most letters is also learned, in preparation for joining.

Sessions are short, active and regular (at least daily)

**Stage 2** – Key Stage (Y1 summer & Y2) and lower Key Stage 2 – using PenPals from this stage

Children begin to join their letters introduced as 2 basic joins:

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

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

Again, regular practise is given in short, focused sessions (at least 3 times per week)

**Stage 3** – Lower Key Stage 2

Children continue to practise and secure their joins through regular practise and application across the curriculum

**Stage 4** – Upper Key Stage 2

Children begin to develop their speed and fluency and focus more on their size and layout of their letters

**Stage 5** – Upper Key Stage 2

Children develop their presentation skills, speed and fluency and own style. They decide on where and when different handwriting is needed.

Whilst this is the expectation, teachers adapt their teaching in line with the ability and phase of development of their cohort so a 'stage not age' philosophy is used. Additional sessions/practise are planned for identified children in order for learning to be reinforced and extra practice/application time given. In addition, opportunities for children to develop, practise, re-enforce and apply their skills and strategies are used throughout the curriculum. For example, shared and guided writing as well as phonics sessions, afford many opportunities for talking about and modelling letter formation and joins. Learning to associate the kinaesthetic handwriting movement with the visual letter pattern and the aural phonemes will help children with learning to spell and a spelling/vocabulary link is identified at the start of each unit.

Handwriting sessions are 'active' sessions and incorporate all aspects involved in developing handwriting, for example, posture, pencil grip warm ups, positioning of paper etc. Children practise letter formations and joins in different ways, e.g air writing, tracing etc. to re-enforce learning before actually practising on paper. Handwriting tram lines are initially used to help children regulate the

size and orientation of their letters. However, teachers ensure that children also regularly practise writing on lined paper in order to apply their learning to a real context. The width of the lines used, become narrower as the children become more secure and work through the 5 phases.

A common, shared vocabulary is used throughout the school and with the children to help reinforce learning and skills. This is clearly outlined as part of the scheme.

Rhymes from the SSPF Curly Cal scheme are used initially in EYFS and Y1 as an aid for correct letter formation. Once children are able to form letters correctly in accordance with the SSPF letter formation guides, they will begin to join letters at the end of Y1, following the PenPals scheme.

In line with the Pen Pals Scheme, the use of pen for handwriting begins to be introduced in y4. However, this is at the teacher's discretion and individual children's abilities in handwriting and other aspects of writing e.g. spellings, sentence construction etc. The use of pen will also be determined by the actual purpose of the writing itself e.g. pen to be used for a formal letter or a piece of work for a display. It is important for the children to make these decisions and be aware of appropriate times and situations for the use of pen.

### **Inclusion**

Pencil hold & resources

- The most important thing is comfort and a hold that will be efficient under speed
- The traditional pencil hold allows children to sustain handwriting for long periods, but there are many alternative pencil holds (particularly for left-handers)
- Some children may benefit from triangular pencils or ordinary pencils with plastic pencil grips.

Left handed children

- Left-handed children should not sit to the right of right-handed children as their papers will meet in the middle.

Sloped Surfaces

- Children who experience some motor control difficulties often benefit from writing on a slight slope
- Ring-binders are the easiest and cheapest way to provide a slope

Handwriting is a complex skill that involves many cognitive processes. It requires good letter perception with visual and motor perceptual skills and for children to have reached the necessary developmental milestones.

For those children not yet reaching these important developmental milestones or having other cognitive or processing needs, further intervention is utilised. This includes strategies and activities for developing:

- Fine and gross motor skills
- Improving core body strength and strengthening hand muscles
- Letter formation and correcting reversal
- Fluency and speed
- Appropriate pressure

To achieve a consistent and fluent style for all children, we take the following action:

### **Modelling:**

- Excellent examples of handwriting are displayed in every classroom and around the school.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants model the appropriate orientation, joins and style at every opportunity

### **Celebration of work**

- Handwriting awards are incorporated into our Shine assemblies
- House points and stickers are awarded for achievement in handwriting
- Work of a high quality is displayed

### **Assessment**

A uniformed handwriting style should be consistent throughout the school; this will be evident on display boards and monitored through lesson observations and book scrutiny.

### **Marking and Feedback**

We emphasise constructive feedback. In our feedback policy we have clear systems for feedback of children's work which is adhered to throughout our handwriting sessions. In handwriting sessions and during independent work it is important that incorrect pencil grip and incorrect letter formation are identified and corrected at the point it occurs.

### **Impact**

Handwriting is a skill which affects written communication across the curriculum. Our aim is that children are able to write with ease, speed and legibility. By year 6 children will use cursive handwriting using flowing movements and patterns. This handwriting should be demonstrated in all writing across the curriculum. Writing should be fluid in style to allow children to apply their energy into the content of their writing as opposed to the formation of the letters themselves

*This policy should be read in conjunction with *Curly Cal and his Handwriting Pals non-cursive scheme overview for EYFS and Year 1* and *PenPals scheme guidance from Summer term of Y1 onwards*.*



# Appendices

## Expectations by Year Group

### Year 1

Handwriting	Sits correctly at a table, and holds a pencil comfortably and correctly.
	Begins to form lower case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
	Forms capital letters
	Forms digits 0-9
	Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' and practises these.

### Year 2

Handwriting	Forms lower case letters of the correct size relative to one another
	Beginning to use some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.
	Uses spaces between words that reflects the size of the letters

### Year 3

Handwriting	Develops using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understands which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
	Increases the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting

### Year 4

Handwriting	Develops using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understands which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
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	Increases the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting
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Year 5

Handwriting	Writes legibly, fluently and with increasing speed
	Increases the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting

Year 6

Handwriting	Writes legibly, fluently and with increasing speed
	Chooses which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
	Chooses the writing implement that is best suited for a task
	Develops using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understands which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
	Increases the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting

### **Practical guidance for teaching left handed children**

- Never attempt to change the hand the pupil uses for handwriting without adequate dominance tests.
- Handwriting movements should be modelled with the left hand for left handed pupils.

#### **Paper**

- Left handed pupils should hold their pencil/pen approximately 4cm from the tip to ensure clear visibility of writing.
- Encourage pupils to position their hand below the writing line at all times
- Ensure that if using pencil, it is sharply pointed. When the transition comes to using pen, a rollerball or fibre pen are recommended as they do not blot or smudge.
- Paper needs to be angled correctly; tilting the paper in a clockwise position, at about 20-30 degrees to the right. This helps prevent the adoption of a 'hooked' hand position. The page should be held with the other hand.

#### **Seating**

- The table surface needs to be flat and the chair at the right height for the pupil.
- Left handed pupils should be seated at the left side of the desk and facing the teaching area or whiteboard.

#### **Speed**

- Where appropriate, speed can be improved by timing and dictation.

a b c d e f g h i j

k l m n o p q r s

t u v w x y z

*Upper case letter formation:*

A B C D E F G H I

J K L M N O P Q

R S T U V W X Y Z