

ST MARY MAGDALENE C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL



Handwriting Policy

Curriculum Design

Our curriculum is carefully designed to meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. As a Christian school, we believe that Christ has called us in every aspect of our working together to live out our 'Loving Three' values: love, wisdom and joy. Opportunities to develop in these four areas are seized throughout our curriculum and are demonstrated through pupil work and classroom experience.

Our school vision and how we aim to achieve it

Through high quality experiences and an excellent curriculum we strive for our school family to learn to love ourselves, each other, the world around us and God.

At St Mary Magdalene, each person will be seen and valued as uniquely created in God's image, being supported by all to reveal and develop their unique God given gifts. We strive daily to better understand what it is to love our neighbour, living together in an inclusive harmonious community. Through our love of learning we seek to deepen everyone's enjoyment of the beauty of God's creation and our responsibility to care for it. All are invited to experience the love of God, that is offered to each and every one of us.

The teaching of Jesus in the parable of the Good Samaritan Luke 10:25 underpins our whole school vision.

I. Introduction

- 1.1. This document sets out the school's approach to handwriting and presentation where we adopt the Kinetic Letters programme for handwriting.. It sits within the context of the school's vision and the other policies of the school; it applies to the whole school community – governors, staff, pupils and parents/guardians/carers.
- 1.2. The School follows the national framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage ("EYFS"), Key Stage 1 ("KS1") and Key Stage 2 ("KS2") and the handwriting requirements of that framework (see Appendix 4) apply in full to the School.

1.3. The outcomes that we will strive to ensure all our pupils achieve are:

- Having fluent, legible and speedy handwriting that can be performed automatically, so that the attention of the brain is on the content of the writing.
- Having the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation.
- Having competence in transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition.
- Writing clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- Having a comfortable and efficient pencil hold and working position.

1.4. Handwriting is of fundamental importance to educating our pupils because pupils who do not learn to read and write fluently and confidently are, in every sense, disenfranchised. The mastery of automaticity in handwriting is therefore one of the key priorities of the School.

2. General Principles

2.1. Handwriting comprises physical and cognitive skills that need to be learnt and become part of the automatic cognitive skill set of the pupil. To achieve this, the School has chosen the Kinetic Letters handwriting programme, to train teachers and teach pupils.

2.2. The programme has four Threads.

- Making bodies stronger
- Holding the pencil (for speed, comfort and legibility)
- Learning the letters
- Flow and fluency

2.3. The key principles of the programme are:

- Building physical strength underpins handwriting and concentration. This knowledge informs the working positions that children use for writing and the strengthening targets they work on.
- Pupils are not expected to do anything before they are developmentally ready for it.
- The different components of writing are mastered individually before being used in combination.
- Letters are learnt as movements, not as visual shapes, and movement remains central to developing automaticity in letter formation, flow and fluency.

- Posture is important in developing the correct position for handwriting and so children are taught how to organise their working position and paper position to enable comfortable and fluent writing from the start.
- Correct pencil hold is taught from the start (ie as soon as a tripod grip is developmentally appropriate), and the strength is developed to maintain this, enabling comfort, speed and writing stamina.

2.4. Reading and writing are reciprocal processes; strengthening handwriting skills will support reading and writing development as a whole.

3. Year groups

3.1. The Kinetic Letters programme is commenced in Nursery and is used throughout the School. By the end of KS1, the vast majority of pupils should be working at the expected standard. Children begin Joining in Yr2 or Yr3.

3.2. By the end of KS2, the vast majority of pupils should be working at, or a greater depth, than the Expected Standard, the exceptions being those pupils who started their primary education elsewhere, and pupils with specific needs. Pupils should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task (e.g. quick notes or a final handwritten version).

3.3. Handwriting practice takes place in sessions that are outside English lessons, since handwriting underpins the majority of curriculum areas and is integral to self-esteem and engagement with learning. Handwriting is taught in discrete sessions, separate from Phonics.

3.4. Pupils across school do daily handwriting sessions of at least 20 minutes. Thereafter time allocation to maintain handwriting development and increase speed and flow, will be regular but at the discretion of the class teacher so long as appropriate progression continues to be made. Handwriting practice takes place on the 6-lined (or 3-lined or 9-lined if appropriate) Kinetic Letters white boards, supported by visits to Sand Trays, with a transition to books and the checking of weekly targets in other curriculum (subject) books.

3.5. The majority of the time, sessions are taught to the whole class with differentiation enabled Kinetic Letters strategies and resources. Reinforcement may take place in small groups and/or individually.

3.6. Strategies to build physical strength for handwriting are integrated into general school life and provision for EYFS.

3.7. The Digital Teaching Turtle (DTT), is used as a front of classroom teaching aide to animate letters and animate the strategies for Pencil Hold and Writing Positions.

4. Assessment

4.1. The Teacher Assessment Framework in the National Curriculum will apply to each pupil when their progress is being assessed at the end of KS1 and KS2 (see Appendix 2). Prior to these two measurement points, teachers will use the Kinetic Letters assessment guides on a daily basis (Appendix 3). Marking of work by teachers will be positive and self-correction by pupils will be encouraged.

4.2. Formative and summative assessment is built into the structure of the S.T.A.R.T. handwriting session and teachers and pupils use the Kinetic Letters strategy of **Assess, Detect, Correct** (ADC) for all Threads of Kinetic Letters. This is both during specific handwriting sessions, and when monitoring the transfer of the physical and cognitive handwriting skills into daily classwork.

4.3. Writing in pen- staff will determine if children are ready to write in pen based on the presentation and year group expectations outlined below (see appendix 4 and 5). Decisions will be made against the four threads of the Kinetic Letters Programme:

- Making bodies stronger: Demonstrating core body strength to support writing.
- Holding the pencil: Ensuring a comfortable grip for writing.
- Learning the letters: Demonstrating correct letter formation through movement.
- Flow and fluency: Developing quick and automatic writing skills.

Children need to demonstrate consistency in all four threads to write in a handwriting pen alongside confidence in writing where minimal errors are made in presentation. Children should be at the expected standard within the Year 3 and 4 objectives as outlined below and be demonstrating confidence in the Year 5 and 6 objectives to:

- 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 suited for a task.

The use of a handwriting pen as a tool for writing will be introduced in stages:

- 1- Children will use a handwriting pen in their English books.
- 2- If children show consistency in expectations for handwriting and use of pen in their English books, they will progress to writing in pen in their independent silver write books.
- 3- Writing consistently in pen across all curriculum areas, taking pride in all work.

Other Kinetic Letters assessment opportunities are listed and linked to the National Curriculum on Appendix 3 of this document.

5. Special Educational Needs and Disability (“SEND”)

- 5.1. The School’s SEND policy applies. However, it should be noted that the Kinetic Letters programme is applicable to pupils with dyslexic and dyspraxia (developmental co-ordination disorder).

6. Home involvement

- 6.1. It is important that parents/guardians/carers are involved in supporting the learning of handwriting. Parents are be given details of the handwriting programme and encouraged to practise any relevant Kinetic Letters resources that are provided by school.

7. Presentation

- 7.1. The School will use the Kinetic Letters font for all class and display work produced in the School, ensuring consistent presentation that reinforces handwriting teaching. The general protocols for pupils’ work is set out in Appendix 5.
- 7.2. Class teachers are responsible for displays on the walls of their classrooms.

8. Policy adoption

- 8.1. This policy was adopted on.....January 2026..... by the School Governors and will be reviewed annually.

Appendix I

KL fonts

Lower case Regular: abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
Lower case Joined: abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
Upper case: ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
Numbers: 1234567890

Letter groups (in teaching order)

Jumper Family: hnmrbp
Abracadabra Family coadgsq
Special Squirter e
Window Cleaner Family: ltiu
Fisher Family: jgfy
Slider Family: vwzk
Pushing numbers: 2357
Pulling numbers: 068914

Quick Tree icon: Shipt + Tilde (i)= (i)

Appendix 2: Expected Standards progression

The table below, from the teacher assessment framework, has the expected standards for pupils at the end of KS1 and KS2.

The expected standard	Key Stage 1			Key Stage 2		
	Working towards	Working at	Working at greater depth	Working towards	Working at	Working at greater depth
Forming lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place	All	All	All	All	All	All
Forming lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another	Some*	All	All	All	All	All
Forming capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters	Some* capitals All numbers	All	All	All	All	All
Using spacing between words	All	All	All	All	All	All
Using spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.		All	All	All	All	All
Use of question marks and exclamation marks			All	All	All	All
Using the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters			Some*	Some*	All	All
Producing legible joined handwriting				All	All	All
Maintaining legibility, fluency and speed in handwriting through choosing whether or not to join specific letters.					All	All

*Some ' indicates that the knowledge or skill is starting to be acquired and is demonstrated correctly on occasion but not yet consistent or frequent.'

Source National curriculum assessments – KS1 & 2: Interim teacher assessment frameworks at the end of KS1 & 2 Updated September 2021

Appendix 3: Assessments for monitoring progress

Kinetic Letters assessment strategies

<p>Expected standards in handwriting and National Curriculum Statutory Requirements 2017-2018</p>	<p>Corresponding Kinetic Letters Strand- (colour coded)</p>	<p>Push up targets. Meerkat- BOGOFs</p>	<p>Pupils' writing questionnaire</p>	<p>Starter Marker Writing sample</p>	<p>3 Colour check</p>	<p>Fluency targets</p>	<p>Pencil hold diagnostic sheet</p>	<p>Assess, Detect, Correct (ADC)</p>	<p>Monkey Smile Pencil targets</p>	<p>Turtle tick targets Formation/spacing</p>	<p>Practice Patch</p>	<p>Letter Family challenges</p>	<p>3 More, better than before</p>
<p>Sit correctly at a table</p>	<p>Writing position Pelvic Girdle strength</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>			<p>✓</p>		
<p>Hold a pencil comfortably and correctly</p>	<p>Shoulder Girdle strength 3 Friends Pencil Hold</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>
<p>Form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place</p>	<p>Letter Formation/orientation The Tree symbol</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another</p>			<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters</p>	<p>Writing characteristics: Heights of letters Grounding</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>
<p>Understand which letters belong to which families and to practise these</p>	<p>Letter Families Family Features</p>			<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Use spacing between words. Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.</p>	<p>Writing Characteristics: Spacing within/between words</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>Letter Formation: letter finish Break letters (Breakers)</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>
<p>Increase legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting e.g. 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>	<p>Flow and speed More sky above the Tree</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>				<p>✓</p>			<p>✓</p>		<p>✓</p>

Appendix 3 (continued)

Kinetic Letters assessment opportunities

Push ups: Pupils record weekly progress e.g. on post-its. **Meerkat BOGOFs:** e.g. measure using counting/reciting tables/alphabet/register etc.

Pupil's Writing Questionnaire: Use if pupils begin the programme in KS2, to establish starting points (TB 6.18 and Resources pack).

Starter Marker Writing Sample: Use every half term. Pupils write for 5 mins on a simple subject e.g. "what I can see from where am sitting".

1. Whilst pupils write, the teacher photographs writing position/pencil hold. This provides a record of progress and helps set strength targets.
2. A word count can measure speed and Automaticity.
3. Pupils/teachers can carry out all/part of a 3 colour check (see below).

3 Colour check: To assess Formation: Start/Finish and orientation of a continuous Letter Trail = pencil circle of incorrect letters.

To assess Writing Characteristics: Spacing= yellow pen line, Grounding=green pen line. Heights=brown pen line. (TB 5.11).

Assess, Detect, Correct (ADC): Use throughout the day -for Writing position: (TB 2.14)

-for Pencil Hold: (TB 4.20-29).

-for Letter Formation:(TB 3.28/32/36/39/42/46)

Start/Finish (and continuous Trail)

Orientation

-for Writing Characteristics:

Spacing- within words/ between words/across the line

Grounding- on line/below line.

Heights- lower-case/upper-case/numbers.

Fluency targets: a checklist of features of fluent unjoined writing. Use to inform teaching and as a check of readiness for joining (TB 5.10).

Pencil Hold Diagnostic Sheet: record progress towards maintaining the 3 Friends Pencil Hold. Complete periodically until all pupils can maintain the 3 Friends pencil Hold and to inform strength provision. (TB 2.12 and Resources pack).

Monkey Smile targets: record Pencil Hold maintenance. Pupils self-mark, adding a smile to the stamp of the monkey on whiteboards and Paper (TB 3.21 & 4.12).

Turtle Tick targets: record achievement of the formation/spacing target. Pupils self-mark, ticking the turtle's tummy on their whiteboard (TB 3.21).

Practice Patch: a weekly transfer by pupils of mastered targets to books, at the end of START. It also measures Automaticity in the writing that follows (TB 3.23).

3 More, better than before: a peer-marking activity (TB 6.17).

1. Pupils work on own whiteboards and write the target letter/pair/word, by teach of the Trees-down the board.
2. They each 'choose with their eyes' which they are most proud of, but do not disclose this to their partner.
3. Pupils swap boards and guess/mark with a dot, the letter/pair/word they think their partner chose.
4. Pupils swap boards back and discuss each other's judgements. (e.g. 'you didn't flick' or 'it's not a Brave Monkey letter' etc.)
5. They both try '3 more, better than before', on the last three lines of the board, to correct what they learnt from the feedback above.
6. Pupils share/discuss the improvements each made and 'take a photo with their eyes' their best line, before rubbing off boards to play again.

Letter Family Challenges: complete regularly as part of START sessions. Use to work on specific targets (see details for each e.g. Letter starts) and to reinforce the Family Feature within the Letter Families, to gain Flow and Automaticity (TB 3.48 and Portal Teaching Resources)

Appendix 4

Handwriting requirements – national framework – statutory

This page and the following one set out the National curriculum handwriting requirements for early years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

References:

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (2021)

Early years foundation stage profile handbook (2022)

National curriculum - Framework documents (2014) and primary curriculum (2015)

National curriculum assessments - Key stage 1 & 2: Teacher assessment frameworks at the end of KSI & KS2 (2018/19 onwards)

The National framework document for Key stage 1 and Key stage 2 makes the following statements about the outcomes that must be achieved by teachers:

- Ensuring all pupils write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences (English: Aims p13)
- It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition. (English: Writing p15)
- Pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised. (English: Purpose of study p13)
- Pupils should develop the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation. (Language and Literacy: 6.3 Reading and Writing p10)
- Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting. (English: Writing p15)

The Statutory framework for EYFS specifies learning and development requirements.

The areas of learning relevant to handwriting, together with the early learning goals children should reach at the end of the academic year in which they are 5, are in the table below.

Early Years Foundation Stage: Statutory Framework

Activities and experiences in areas of learning	Early Learning Goals (ELGs) 'Expected' level of development
<p>Prime area: Physical development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● gross and fine motor experiences to develop strength, coordination and positional awareness through tummy time crawling and play movement. ● adults can support children to develop core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, coordination and agility. ● fine motor control and precision helps with hand eye coordination, which is later linked to early literacy. <p>Specific area: Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting). 	<p>ELG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gross motor skills Demonstrate strength, balance and co-ordination when playing <p>ELG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fine motor skills Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing-using the tripod grip in almost all cases. <p>ELG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Writing Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Key stage 1

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 skill needed for handwriting, and learn how to organise their ideas in writing.

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 direction, starting and finishing in the right place;
- form capital letters;
- form digits 0-9;
- understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these;
- write from memory simple sentences dictated by the teacher

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) 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 compose individual sentences orally and then write them down, and to form individual letters correctly, so establishing good handwriting habits from the beginning.

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 un-joined;
- 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.

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

Years 3-4

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 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 un-joined;

increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, e.g. 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.

Pupils should be able to write down their ideas with a reasonable degree of accuracy and with good sentence punctuation.

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 their composition and spelling.

Upper key stage 2

Years 5-6

Children should be able to write down their ideas quickly. By the end of Year 6, pupils' writing should be sufficiently fluent and effortless to manage the general demands of the curriculum in Year 7.

Pupils should be taught to:

- 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 suited for a task.

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 a final handwritten version). They should also be taught to use an un-joined 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).

Appendix 5

See table below

School Presentation Protocols					
	EYFS (Rec)	Year 1	Year 2	Years 3 and 4	Years 5 and 6
Writing implements - for Handwriting practice	When developmentally appropriate, whiteboard pens on whiteboards	Whiteboard pens on whiteboards for handwriting practice			
	Thin triangular pencils for writing on paper in classwork for those who require them				
-for Classwork	Pencils		Pencils	Pencils	Pencils
			Blue handwriting pens may be used	Blue handwriting pens for those who can demonstrate .	
Self- correction	Simple, straight line through error with pencil				
	Target checking – Some lines in work may be checked with a Turtle Tick to ensure targets mastered on whiteboards are being transferred into work in books.				
	Practice Patch - Some pages may begin pages in their English books with the Practice Patch. There should then be a space equivalent to an empty line after which the title and written piece can follow. This allows transfer of handwriting practice from whiteboard to paper.				
	Coloured pens may also be used to assess for letter heights (brown), spacing (yellow) and grounding (green).				
Ruler use		All straight lines to be drawn using a ruler and the correct use of the Helping Hand to position and steady it.			
New work	New work to commence on a new page.	New work to be commenced after ruling off previous work, if there is usable space available.	New work to be commenced after ruling off previous work, if there is usable space available.		

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Un-joined / Joined writing	Writing will be un-joined with the exception of those who are able to demonstrate joining.		Joined writing gradually integrated into independent work.
			Joined writing fully integrated.
	All work to be dated and have a WALT (sometimes completed by staff)	All work to be dated and have a WALT (sometimes completed by staff) Maths to use numbered date format dd/mm/yyyy eg 29.01.26	All work to be dated and have a WALT (sometimes completed by staff) Maths to use numbered date format dd/mm/yyyy eg 29.01.26
Writing surface (whiteboard / paper)	KL 6-line whiteboards transitioning to appropriate size (15 mm gap) lined paper, with the additional guide of the Kinetic Letters tree, for the majority of the time.	KL 6-line whiteboards transitioning to appropriate size (15 mm then 12 mm gap) lined paper. Squared exercise books for maths.	KL 9-line whiteboards and narrow lines (8 mm gap) and small squared exercise books.
	3-line whiteboards, wider lined paper and large squared exercise books to be used by some pupils at teacher discretion.		
	Lines on worksheets / sheets of paper to follow the same widths as those used in exercise books.		
	Writing on whiteboards may be photocopied to create a permanent record, or writing in Sand Tays photographed.		

The KL Tree

The Kinetic Letters Tree will be used to guide letter formation, either in its full form with monkey faces, or as the Quick Tree (two-line tree with ground-line and sky-line).

The tree may be drawn on whiteboards and/or added to the left-hand edge of books/paper, used by the teacher before demonstrating letters / words / numbers etc. and by pupils when handwriting.

The Quick Tree is also a shortcut key in the font, so that teachers can type 'By the Tree'.

