



ST James' CE Junior School  
**Care. Share. Respect.**

## **Handwriting Policy** **January 2026-2027**

**We aim for our children to leave in Year 6 with the ability to write using their own style of fast, fluent, legible and sustainable handwriting, as well as other styles of writing for specific purposes. In addition to teaching handwriting during our regular handwriting lessons, we have high expectations that what is taught and practiced in handwriting lessons, will be used in all writing activities. We believe that handwriting is integral to a child's personal development and know that children's engagement and self-esteem can be improved by their satisfaction and pride in good quality presentation.**

### **1. Introduction**

St James' CE Junior School believes in providing equal opportunities for all pupils through the provision of an inspiring education, enabling all children to achieve their dreams.

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies, which are available on the school's website.

The importance of handwriting and its impact on the curriculum:

- It is a significant predictor of positive writing outcomes
- It has been indicated that children who are specifically taught handwriting, their overall writing quality is greater compared to children who do not receive specific instruction.
- It reduces their 'cognitive overload' when writing, as they are not thinking about handwriting; it has become natural.

### **2. The vision for handwriting**

Handwriting is a taught skill that develops at different rates for different children. All of the teachers in the school have high expectations for handwriting across the curriculum.

We currently have a phased implementation of a new scheme starting with Year 3 (Jan 2026)

Our school will use PENPALS for Handwriting starting in Year 3 to ensure that:

- The importance of handwriting is recognised and given appropriate time (daily).
- The progression of handwriting is consistent across the school.
- Handwriting is acknowledged to be a whole body activity and emphasis is placed on correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting.
- Expectations of left-handed children are equal to those of right-handed children, and appropriate advice and resources are available to ensure that they learn to write with a comfortable, straight wrist.
- Handwriting is linked into grammar, punctuation and spelling in order to practice and contextualise all of the transcriptional and stylistic skills for writing.
- learn to self-assess their own writing and develop understanding and responsibility for improving it.



**Ofsted 2022: 'Pupils enjoy attending St James' C of E Junior School. Pupils benefit from a well-thought-out curriculum. They have many opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. They ensure that the curriculum identifies what pupils will learn and be able to do over time. Leaders make sure that staff are well trained so that they deliver the curriculum effectively.'**

•Children learn to write in different styles for different purposes such as print for labelling a diagram, illustrated capitals letters for creating a poster, swift jottings for writing notes, making a 'best copy' for presentation and fast, fluent and legible writing across the curriculum.

Years 4/5/6, will continue to use the Cripps handwriting scheme, until this has been phased out.

### **3. What do we want for pupils within this subject? Our Aims and Objectives**

Progression of skills:

PENPALS enables us to teach and secure the development of handwriting. Some pupils may need to access handwriting at a different level to their peers. Intervention material is available to use.

- First, children experience the foundation of handwriting through multi-sensory activities (EYFS F1 and F2).
- Correct letter formation is taught, practised, applied and consolidated (EYFS F1/Y1).
- Joining is introduced only after correct letter formation is used automatically (Y1/Y2/Y3).**
- Joins are introduced systematically and cumulatively (Y2–Y6).**
- As children practice joining, they pay attention to the size, proportion and spacing of their letters and words (Y3–Y6).**
- Once the joins are secure, a slope is introduced in order to support increased speed and fluency (Y5).**
- Children are introduced to different ways of joining in order that they can develop their own preferred personal style (Y6).**

By using PENPALS, we ensure that our children follow the requirements and recommendations of the National Curriculum. We share the aspirations that children's handwriting should be 'sufficiently fluent and effortless for them to manage the general demands of the curriculum' and that 'problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say'.

#### Handwriting tools

Throughout their time in school, children use a range of tools for different purposes and styles of handwriting including:

- A wide range of tools and media for mark-making
- Fingers when writing on the interactive whiteboard.
- Art supplies including coloured pens and pencils for posters, displays and artwork.
- Sharp pencils and a variety of pens, starting in Year 3.

Handwriting is always introduced and practised using the PENPALS Practice Books model and on lined paper, therefore the children quickly learn about letter orientation including ascenders and descenders. As children's fine motor skills improve and their letter formation or joining becomes increasingly accurate, the width between the lines they write on gradually decreases.

### **4. How will we enable all pupils to learn and grow within this subject? Their Entitlement**

We will ensure all children develop their skills by: -

- providing a high quality of teaching through clearly planned and sequenced lessons.
- utilising all resources including adults to the best effect taking into account pupil preferences.
- following clear methods within their learning which build on previous learning and lead to the next stages in their learning and utilising the school's marking policy.

## **5. How will we ensure all children are fully involved in their learning?**

During lessons the children will be involved in their own learning through:

- Practical, engaging, interesting and appropriately challenging activities
- Applying this to real life situations
- Referring to work in other lessons/ subjects which supports and deepens their learning

## **6. How will we check how well each child is achieving and what progress they are making, and how do we set their next steps in learning? Monitoring and support, data checking, actions from this, relation to SDP action plan, governor involvement. As subject leaders it is our responsibility to ensure our provision is the best it can be for all children. Therefore, we will ensure that:**

- The School Improvement plan will target areas of weakness in the subject across the school including resources, training and INSET/CPD
- Book Audits

## **7. What further support will we provide? Through resources of adults, equipment and educational visits/visitors and where this support can be located. In addition to this core offer of quality learning and teaching, we will ensure:-**

- Provision mapping means adults are deployed effectively
- As English lead is available to support all staff in this subject area

## **8. When, and How, will this policy be reviewed and updated?**

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the school's Long Term Plan unless an earlier review is deemed necessary by the Subject Leader, the Senior Leadership Team or the Governing Body.

It will be reviewed by the Subject Leader in the first instance and then shared with the staff as appropriate. Once agreed with staff then the policy will be taken to the appropriate Governor Committee for comment and adoption on behalf of the school. At this time it will be published on the school website and parents notified.