

# **ST. PATRICK'S CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY**



*Christ with me wherever I go,  
Christ around, above, below.*

## **HANDWRITING POLICY**

## **Mission Statement**

**St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School, together with home, parish and local communities, works to maintain a happy, secure, stimulating and welcoming environment, enhancing children's learning and celebrating the achievement of everyone. We achieve this through living the gospel values based on acceptance, affirmation, love and respect.**

**We seek to recognise, develop and celebrate all that makes us fully human through an ever deepening relationship with God and each other, firmly rooted in the teaching of Jesus Christ and nourished through prayer and worship.**

**We value co-operation, openness and trust, leading to the growth of confidence, appreciation of all our gifts, culminating in a sense of self-worth, responsibility and true belonging.**

**In the spirit of equality, we will strive to help all children achieve their full potential, working towards excellence as an expression of personal dignity and fulfilment.**

St Patrick's Primary School purchased the Nelson Handwriting materials in May 2017.

*Nelson Handwriting provides a clear, practical framework for implementing and developing a whole school handwriting policy. Pupils are actively encouraged to explore different styles of handwriting and develop their own style.*

<http://www.nelsonthornes.com/nelsonfamily/handwriting.html>

## **Aims**

It is the aim of this school that every child should be enabled to develop a fluent legible style of handwriting. Capital and lower case letters should be used appropriately and the letter size should be consistent. We will provide opportunities for children to develop, practise and perfect skills and provide targeted support to any child experiencing difficulty.

## **Implementation**

Handwriting will be a discrete lesson taught regularly. It is vital that teachers model Nelson font to the children, and explicitly teach letter formation and joins in each of these sessions. Children will practise their handwriting in both their separate handwriting books and also with their English books in order to ensure that new 'handwriting skills' are transferred into all forms of writing.

In the Foundation Stage handwriting will be implemented as follows:

- Children will develop hand eye co-ordination, gross and fine motor skills through play and physical activity to support handwriting.
- Children will use a range of tools to develop drawing lines and circles using gross motor skills e.g. swirling ribbons, batting balls, painting.
- Children will use a range of materials to develop fine motor skills e.g. wax crayons, markers, pencils, sponges, chunky brushes, cotton wool balls, shaving foam, finger paints, etc.

- Children will practice manipulative skills e.g. cooking, playing with constructions, threading, playdough, tweezers and playing instruments.
- Children will use variety of tools and paper, indoors and outdoors for **purposeful** writing. e.g. role play, labelling, making cards.
- Children will physically develop the movements of letter shapes using gross motor skills (linked to music and sounds) to gain confidence with the basic movements and flow of writing.
- Children will be introduced to letters in line with their Letters and Sounds sequence supported by the KTC quality approach to phonics literacy. Handwriting will be further embedded by teachers when they are carrying out daily Phonics sessions as well as through shared and modelled guided writing.
- Children will be taught to form letters, using a variety of interactive strategies and materials.
- Children will receive visual prompts as well as modelling to support them to hold their pencil correctly.
- Parents will be given opportunities to support their child to practise their letter formation at home. Teachers will send home materials to enable parents to do this.

### **Across the Primary Age Range**

#### **Teachers and Teaching Assistants should:**

- Have high expectations; valuing work that is the child's best effort and supporting when it clearly is not.
- Identify left handed children and make sure they have sufficient space in which to work.
- Provide appropriate paper and pencils and/or pens (i.e. all pencils must be sharp and of a reasonable length).
- Model how to hold a pencil correctly.
- Reinforce how to form letters, using a variety of strategies and materials.
- Reinforce how to join letters correctly.
- Monitor children's progress through regular assessments and observations of how letters and numbers are formed.
- Implement intervention for those children not forming letters or numbers correctly.
- Encourage children to assume a correct sitting position in order to write - both feet on the floor etc.
- Where necessary, group children and provide differentiated tasks.
- Model good handwriting; on the board, in marking children's work, displays, use **Twinkl cursive handwriting** font on teaching materials where possible etc.
- Allow children with very poor fine motor skills to print and not make joins.

#### **Children should:**

- Take pride in their work (all children).
- Learn to write clearly recognisable letters and form them correctly (EYFS).
- Know which letters join to others and which do not (KS1).
- Be able to join letters appropriately (KS1).
- Enhance speed and fluency in order to develop a legible individual style (KS2).
- Demonstrate correct letter formation and joins learnt in all handwriting across the curriculum (KS1 and KS2).

## Guidance on the teaching and learning of handwriting

Each Handwriting session will have a clear focus and the children will watch the teacher modelling letter formation and/or joins. It may be that it will be more appropriate to group the children in order to differentiate, but the children must see an adult modelling the writing! Work must be initialled, so over the course of the week every child will have had their letter formation observed by an adult.

Although all teacher-modelled handwriting practice is handwritten, KS2 teachers use **Twinkl cursive unlooped** font for all other information which the children are asked to copy directly – such as the Lesson Objective or sentence stems.

FS & Year 1 teachers use **comic sans** font.

Year 2 teachers begin with using **comic sans** font but transfer to **Twinkl cursive unlooped** as pupils begin to learn the joins.

### Some general points

Nelson Handwriting scheme provides photocopiable sheets, but nothing is more effective than a teacher modelling letter formation and joins.

- We do not teach the pupils to join descenders e.g. f g j y but will allow children to do this if they wish in order to help children develop their own individual style.
- When all the skills have been taught use the assessment sheets in Nelson Handwriting scheme to check:

Are all the letters the same size?

Are all the down strokes parallel?

Are the height and length of ascenders and descenders regular?

Is the space between letters even?

Is spacing between words even?

Is the writing a reasonable size?

Could presentation be improved?

Year	Expectations	Writing Instruments	Resources
<b>F1</b>	To develop basic movements for letter formation. To develop fine and gross motor skills.	Wax crayons, markers, pencils, sponges, chunky brushes, cotton wool balls, shaving foam, finger paints, etc.	ALS letter formation sheets.
<b>F2</b>	To develop basic movements for letter formation. To refine writing movements and begin to use the correct pencil grip. To develop fine and gross motor skills.	Wax crayons, markers, pencils, sponges, chunky brushes, paint brushes, ipads, shaving foam, finger paints, etc. Pencils for writing.	ALS letter formation sheets. Nelson workbook A
<b>Year 1</b>	Nelson handwriting to form letters correctly and begin joining patterns. Ensure ascenders and descenders are clear.	Wax crayons, markers, pencils, sponges, paint brushes, chunky brushes, iPads, shaving foam, finger paints, etc. Pencils for writing.	Nelson pupil book 1 Pupil workbooks
<b>Year 2</b>	Nelson handwriting: to begin simple joins.	Pencil	Nelson pupil book 2 Pupil workbooks

	Ensure capital letters are larger.		
<b>Year 3</b>	Nelson handwriting: continue joining handwriting, developing more complicated joins.	Pencil	Nelson pupil book 3 Pupil workbooks
<b>Year 4</b>	Nelson handwriting: continue joining handwriting, developing more complicated joins.	Pencil – with the introduction of a pen when a child shows a consistent use of neat joined presentation.	Nelson pupil book 4 Pupil workbooks
<b>Year 5</b>	Nelson handwriting: continue joining handwriting, developing more complicated joins.	Pen (for the majority)	Nelson pupil book 5 Pupil workbooks
<b>Year 6</b>	Nelson handwriting to consolidate any joins where weakness is identified, layout and different styles of writing for the purpose.	Pen	Nelson pupil book 6 Pupil workbooks

**For fluent writers extend skills by:**

Encouraging children to evaluate their own and others' writing.

Attempt to write faster retaining fluency and legibility – setting time challenges for each other.

**Review**

New policy review planned for September 2026.