



St Julian's
Church School

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Handwriting Procedures

Reviewed September 2026

To be read in conjunction with the relevant [MNSP Policies](#).

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

Handwriting is a fundamental skill that provides pupils with the tools to express themselves. At St Julian's Church School we strive to give children the confidence to communicate their thoughts and feelings in written tasks and aim to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative thinking.

"Handwriting is a very complex skill to master, one that involves linguistic, cognitive, perceptual and motor components, all of which have to be coordinated into an integrated fashion." (National Handwriting Association.) Clear and considered progression of the Handwriting curriculum at St Julian's is therefore crucial.

We are a happy, inclusive school where everyone is valued and supported. When planning and teaching Handwriting, staff will make reasonable adjustments to promote equality of opportunity. Additional support and resources will be available for those who need further practise with fine motor skills and pencil grip. There will be the opportunity for pupils to use pencil grips and have access to softer pencil leads if needed.

The aim for all children at St Julian's Church School is to develop a good handwriting style, which means:

- They can produce and maintain a good writing speed.
- Have fluid hand movements that are comfortable to maintain.
- Letters are of a consistent and appropriate size, positioned correctly.
- Handwriting is legible.

Please see [here](#) for the examples of how we form each letter with continuous cursive letters.

National Curriculum for Handwriting:

EYFS	Teachers use our phonics cards that teach letter formation with a picture and rhyme. These are used consistently across the school for any children who are still learning letter formations. Alongside teaching letter formation, children are taught pre-writing skills (zigzag, loops, patterns etc). Children’s wrist strength is developed by lying on their stomachs and writing on paper. Writing slopes may be introduced if seen as appropriate by the teacher. By the end of EYFS children should: • have correct pencil grip (See Appendix 1) • have a solid understanding of correct letter formation (not cursive letter formation) • use correct letter formation when writing and write letters on a line
Year 1	Pupils should be taught to: • sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly • form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place using ascenders and descenders • form capital letters correctly • form digits 0-9 correctly • understand which letters belong to which handwriting ‘families’ (ie letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these. Staff to use consistent language when teaching these formations. One-armed robot, curly caterpillar, ladder letters, zigzag. • Use finger spaces between words • use school-based phonic cards for children that teach letter formation and sounds
Year 2	Pupils should be taught to: • form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another • use diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined • use continuous cursive handwriting, at the discretion of the teacher • 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
Years 3 & 4	Pupils should be taught to: • be consistent in joining letter blends from different handwriting families in continuous cursive • use school-based phonic cards to support children, if required • increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch]
Years 5 & 6	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 - be given opportunities to write in pen before being awarded their pen license in Year 5/6
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Once a child is ready to start a more focused formal approach to learning how to form single letters or numbers, it is important to also introduce the other Key Ability skills required for handwriting:

- sitting correctly at a desk - it is important to ensure that their sitting position and table height are correct for them. **See Appendix 2**
- pencil grip - that it is appropriate for the child's developmental stage and age. **See Appendix 1.**
- paper position - for younger children this may still be on a vertical surface allowing them to make big movements in-line with their pencil grip stage.

A child is ready to join letters when:

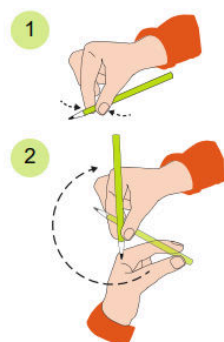
- They have learnt to form all the lower-case letters correctly.
- Letters are of a consistent and suitable size (for younger children these may be large in size but consistent).
- Letters are positioned appropriately on the writing line as well as in relation to one another.

Appendices

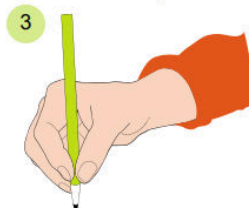
Appendix 1:

THE TRIPOD PENCIL GRIP

Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib.



- 1) Grip the pencil with your index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.
- 2) With your free hand, spin the pencil from underneath.
- 3) Use your middle finger to support the underside of the pencil.



Appendix 2:

All pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

Teachers will ensure that children are seated in a way that allows them to write comfortably, this includes careful seating of children who are left handed.

SITTING POSITION

