‘Learning Together, Growing Together, Succeeding Together.’

Handwriting Policy

January 2024

Micklehurst All Saints CE Primary School Aims:

- To help children develop a sense of respect for themselves and others
- To ensure a secure, caring and supportive environment
- To provide an atmosphere of trust co-operation and understanding between home, school and the community
- For all children to be happy, enquiring and motivated learners
- To inspire a love for learning
- To develop Christian values
- To nurture self-respect and respect for others
- To celebrate achievement

Our Vision Statement

Our roots are firmly anchored in Christian values to enable children to grow and blossom.

'Micklehurst All Saints is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children, and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment'.

Statement of Intent

The staff and governors at Micklehurst All Saints CE Primary School are committed to providing a high quality education for your child. In handwriting, our aim is that each child is able to:

- write in a clear, fluent, legible joined style of handwriting.
- write at ease with a good pace.
- take pride in the presentation of all their written work.

1. Learning and Teaching

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. To ensure continuity across each Key Stage, we use one consistent approach: the First Class Handwriting scheme. The scheme is used as a teacher aid to help model letter formation and cursive script for the children.

Across the Foundation Stage, 'Squiggle While You Wiggle' is used, a movement based programme to encourage and inspire children to write using music and multisensory approaches. The children also participate in 'Dough Disco' designed to develop their letter formation and fine-motor skills.

- In Foundation Stage, the teaching of letter formation begins with patterns that prepare for writing and the development of gross motor skills linked to the Early Learning Goal of Physical Development. Initial letter sounds are introduced through our First Class Phonics scheme and the children are taught about the formation of each new letter within their phonics lesson. Handwriting is also taught throughout the week in small focused groups and in line with the First Class Phonics Handwriting Scheme.
- In Key Stage 1, handwriting is taught discreetly at least three times a week but reinforced during shared, modelled and guided writing sessions.
- In Key Stage 2, the First Class Handwriting Joining Progression is introduced in line with the children's progress. Handwriting may be taught discreetly at least once a week and is reinforced during modelled, shared and guided writing sessions as well as during the teaching of spelling.
- The First Class Handwriting Joining Progression is a unique method of teaching joined handwriting. Unlike other handwriting schemes, it is not year-specific but is a system that allows teachers to progress through a systematic approach to joining, making decisions on what to teach and when. In this way, teachers can revisit aspects of handwriting (e.g. letter formation) as well as focus on correcting joining errors that are being made by the pupils in their class. The Joining Progression is organised as a series of Steps. Each Step has a series of lesson overviews. Lesson overviews are organised as follows:

    1. Letters which need to be formed correctly in order to join accurately.
    2. The new joins that will be taught (demonstrated by teacher).
    3. Previously taught joins that will be used in the exemplar words

4. Exemplar words for dictation
5. Exemplar sentences for dictation

Once the children have developed a legible, joined handwriting style, it is an expectation that this skill will be applied to all writing.

We have a particular focus on Handwriting during Autumn Term 1.

Any children who are having difficulties with their handwriting will be supported in small adult-led intervention groups using materials at a level appropriate to the individual, for example Ready Steady Write or Motor Skills United.

2. Continuity and Progression

Foundation Stage

In Foundation Stage, pupils use a range of pencils and are encouraged to experiment with mark making and these experiments are recognised and praised as an important stage in the child starting to understand that marks on paper convey meaning. Pupils are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements; a multisensory approach is used to help pupils feel the movement in the hand.

Once the children have started to learn the initial letter sounds in First Class Phonics, handwriting skills need to be/are taught explicitly in line with the First Class Handwriting Scheme and the visual materials that accompany this. The emphasis at this stage is with movement rather than neatness. Children are encouraged to hold a pencil and use it effectively to form recognisable letters correctly.

Close attention is given to:

- Letter formation - starting at the right entry point and then moving in the right direction
- Pencil grip
- Correct posture
- The positioning of the paper
- Organisation of the writing space
- Positioning letters on a line

Key Stage 1

Building on the Foundation Stage, pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a legible style. This is achieved in Year 1 by:

- Reinforcing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip (using triangular pencils)

- Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion are taught in conjunction with First Class Phonics and during modelled, shared and guided writing sessions
- Using handwriting lines in English books

In Year 2 pupils:

- Build on the skills taught in Year 1
- Link handwriting more closely to spelling patterns
- Develop a fluent style that is applied in all written work
- Use handwriting lines in English books until competent to write without
- Children who are already demonstrating a fluent style and consistent letter formation will begin to join

Key Stage 2

In Years 3 and 4, handwriting is taught explicitly in at least one weekly 20 minute session. The focus will be:

- Consistency in size, proportion and spacing of letters
- The development of speed, fluency and legibility
- By the end of Year 4, joined handwriting is used at all times unless other specific forms are required e.g. printing on a map, a fast script for notes.

Once the children have developed a clear, consistent joined handwriting style the children can write in pen.

In Years 5 and 6, the focus for handwriting is to:

- Develop an individual style based on the principles of good handwriting taught in previous years
- Increase speed whilst maintaining legibility

3. Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils may need more support. At Micklehurst All Saints, children who are having difficulty forming letters correctly or having problems developing a cursive style, are monitored. Intervention groups are set up, individual targets created and progress is tracked. In addition, children who require further support will continue to use the handwriting lined books as they continue into KS2. For some children handwriting is a barrier to their learning and IT (Clicker) is used to support the writing process.

Other tools may be necessary to support individuals e.g. pencil grips, triangular pencils, sloping boards, wobble cushions etc. Provision is matched to need and inclusive handwriting environments are established in all classes.

To ensure that left-handed children are not disadvantaged when writing, a range of strategies are employed. Left-handed children sit on the left of right-handed children to ensure that their arms do not clash, and they are also encouraged to tilt their work clockwise so they can see what they have written.

4. Monitoring and Assessment

In Foundation Stage, assessment of letter formation is ongoing and any incorrect practice is addressed immediately and worked on in class, with support from home if possible.

In Key Stage 1 and 2, letter formation is assessed termly as part of our ongoing writing assessment.

Overall assessment of handwriting is ongoing through the marking of books and teacher observations where constructive feedback is given. Scrutiny of handwriting quality takes place throughout the year by the English subject leader.