



**ST BERNARD'S PREPARATORY
SCHOOL**

HANDWRITING POLICY

ADVENT 2018

St. Bernard's Preparatory School

HANDWRITING POLICY

Mission Statement

With God as our shelter and Christ as our guide, the mission of St Bernard's Preparatory School is to educate towards love and service to God, each other and the wider community. Through our broad balanced curriculum we will develop an understanding of each faith and the values we share. We will treat each person with respect, knowing we are special and unique.

St Bernard's is part of the St Benedict's family of schools. All schools in the group share a similar Catholic and Benedictine/Bernardine ethos.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 English is a core subject in the national curriculum. All learning takes place through the use of language which gives English a special place within the National Curriculum. It is during a child's primary education that the foundations of all aspects of English are laid. This makes spoken and written English the most important aspect of the curriculum of any primary school.

English is the medium through which all learning takes place, inside and outside the classroom. In the literate society in which we live, an ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in the written word, and to read a wide range of different types of text, is essential if children are to achieve their potential through their school days and on into adult life.

Our school views the teaching and acquisition of handwriting skills to be of great importance and will be given a high priority.

1.2 The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching and support staff.

2. THE NATURE OF HANDWRITING

2.1 Handwriting is a fine motor skill and most children should be able to achieve a neat, legible, and joined style. The assessment of the content of a child's writing is often influenced by the standard of handwriting and presentation, therefore our school places great emphasis on the teaching of the continuous cursive style in the Lower School, and as the pupil moves into the Upper School, italic handwriting, so that children will not be at a disadvantage when their writing is assessed at Key Stage 1 and 2.

2.2 A child's ability to write comfortably and legibly affects performance in many other areas of the curriculum and can have an effect on an individual's self-esteem.

- 2.3 There are a number of changes to the curriculum. Attached are the requirements for handwriting teaching in Y1-6 in England quoted directly from the document: *Statutory guidance National curriculum in England: English programmes of study*, published on 11 September 2013. This will be implemented from September 2014.

(Schools are not required by law to teach the content indicated as being 'non-statutory'.)

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

Quotes concerning handwriting taken from the text:

- Pupils who do not learn to read and write fluently and confidently are, in every sense, disenfranchised ('Purpose of Study')
- Writing also depends on fluent, legible and eventually, speedy handwriting. (Programmes of study and attainment targets)

3 IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 The teaching of handwriting skills will take place from the Early Years upwards by the class teachers with specialist support in Year 5 once a week.
- 3.2 Children will be taught in their normal class group.
- 3.3 All teachers will be responsible for the continued teaching, monitoring and development of good handwriting styles. Staff will aim to use the agreed writing style in their board work and displays where possible.
- 3.4 The development of gross and fine motor skills in the under 5's will be encouraged in Art, Technology, P.E., Music and Movement. They will develop pre-writing skills through emphasis on pattern work using a range of tools and working within different media. Writing will also be encouraged in the context of structured play.
- 3.5 Children from Early Years will be taught to hold a triangular pencil correctly and will be encouraged to adopt the correct posture and position for the book/paper on the tabletop.
- 3.6 Children will be provided with a series of handwriting rules which when learned and applied will help develop a comfortable, flowing, neat, joined and legible style of handwriting.
- It is important that young children are taught to form their letters correctly. From Early Years onwards children will be taught to form letters with an entry stroke and an exit stroke. As they progress through Early Years this should gradually and naturally develop their joined style, where in Prep and Upper Prep the joining will become more established.
- In the Upper Transition class, italic handwriting will be introduced during the Pentecost term of an academic year. There will be some adaptations to certain cursive letters, for example f, g, j, y, z, to facilitate the italic style. The writing tool selected for use with this style is a red Lamy Safari fountain pen equipped with an italic nib.
- 3.7 Children in both the lower and upper school will use the recommended writing tools – see attached list.
- Children should be encouraged to write in pencil from an early age. Children in the Upper School must be aware that the use of biro is unacceptable. It is recommended that first draft work is written in pencil. If the fountain pen is not available, work should be completed in pencil then re-written in fountain pen.
- 3.8 All children's handwriting skills will be valued and built upon. It is recognised that handwriting is a means of communication and it will be considered as a free expression

of individuality, and, while the application of rules must be applied, they can be seen as a foundation for a sensible style.

- 3.9 The particular needs of left-handed children will always be taken into consideration. It is recommended that they do not sit with their left arm next to another pupil, and should sit at an outside desk. They will be shown how to position their paper so that they can ensure movement across the page, correct posture, and fountain pen/pencil grip.

Children with special needs will be helped with appropriate teacher intervention. The type of fountain pen and nib will require consideration to meet the needs of both special needs and left-handed pupils.

Children who are new to Prep School during Year 6 will not be expected to use the italic pen until their handwriting is deemed to be of a suitable standard. i.e. a neat, joined, consistent and legible style.

It is important children recognise that the use of the word processor should only be used for specified project work at the discretion of the teacher only. Class work and homework should be handwritten in order that the consistent joined style is not replaced by a simplistic printed style. It is important that children are encouraged to adopt this approach in their note taking as well.

4 ASSESSMENT

4.1 All teaching staff will need to make Teacher Assessment against the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and Level Descriptors as explained in 2:3, to ensure that progress is regularly recorded.

Legal status:

This policy was compiled using the following references:

- Statutory Orders for English
- Handwriting for Infants and Beginners by Paula Morse.
- Specialist Worksheets developed to support cursive/italic handwriting.

Applies to:

Whole School excluding Early Years Foundation Stage;

Related policies:

Curriculum, Assessment, recording and Reporting, Teaching and Learning

Availability:

This policy is made available to parents on our website www.stbernardsprep.org or a copy may be obtained from the school office on request.

Monitoring and Review:

This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headmaster. The Trustees will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than three years from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed by _____

Headmaster _____

Date _____

Chair of Governors _____

Date _____

Appendix 1: HANDWRITING SUGGESTIONS

From Early Years upwards – pattern and letter practice is required for flow and to lead into joining. Check and assess pupils’ posture and pencil hold – this does need to be continually monitored as the child progresses through Prep School (New pupils may need additional support) – see below:-

1. Practise the starting points on the writing line for entry strokes leading into the correct joins for lower case letters.
2. Practise entry strokes leading into the correct joins for tall letters.
3. Diagonal entry and exit strokes to prepare for correct lower case letter formation.
4. Horizontal entry and exit strokes to prepare for correct joins to lower case and tall letters.
5. Capital letter formation, emphasizing that there are no joins to be made, but, the next letter must have its’ entry stroke close to that capital letter, and not have large spaces between them.
6. Ensure consistency within the general size and proportion of lower and upper case letters. Recommend that the capital and tall letters are formed using the whole writing line depth, and the lower case letter is half that height.
7. Ensure consistency in the spacing between letters and words. It is important to be able to see that the diagonal and horizontal joins are being made within the words.
8. Encourage the use of neat, joined legible handwriting for the presentation of written work across the curriculum, and this will need to be extended into note taking. Pupils should not be allowed to ‘default’ into an untidy printed handwriting style; they need to be made aware that joining letters is a faster process than printing their letters.
9. Build up handwriting speed, fluency and legibility through continued practice.
10. If pupils are given extra handwriting work to improve their standards, then it is recommended that they practise on a regular daily/weekly basis rather than completing all the work set over a short period.

The specialist handwriting teacher will liaise with the Year 5 class teachers and introduce the use of the Red Lamy Safari fountain pen fitted with an italic nib in the Pentecost term of an academic year during Handwriting lessons initially. Continual monitoring of pen hold and posture is required.

Appendix 2: St Bernard's Preparatory School Writing equipment

	<u>Language</u>	<u>Maths</u>
<u>Remove</u>	Lamy Italic Fountain Pen	Fountain Pen
<u>Upper Transition</u>	Lamy Standard Fountain Pen(if awarded) Lamy Nexx Fountain Pen Lamy Italic Fountain Pen (Pentecost term onwards)	Fountain Pen
<u>Transition</u>	Lamy Standard Fountain Pen (if awarded) Pencil	Pencil
<u>Lower Transition</u>	Lamy Standard Fountain Pen (if awarded) Pencil	Pencil
<u>Upper Prep</u>	Pencil	Pencil
<u>Prep</u>	Pencil	Pencil
<u>Early Years</u>	Triangular Pencil	Pencil