

Church Walk C.E. Primary School Handwriting Policy

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Church Walk CE. Primary school adopted the Collins Happy Handwriting scheme in January 2026. There will be a phased introduction of the scheme throughout the Spring and Summer terms.

Introduction

“Handwriting is a tool that has to work. It must be comfortable, fast and legible.”

(Angela Webb, Chair, National Handwriting Association)

Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. If they have difficulty, this will inhibit the quality and quantity of their work. It is important that the child’s handwriting becomes a skill that requires little conscious effort, so that creative and physical energy can be focused on the content of writing, rather than upon the act.

We teach handwriting using the Collins Happy Handwriting Course which teaches letters with exit strokes from the start, leading to efficient joined handwriting, but does not join the ‘break’ letters, which reduce writing efficiency. The key advantages of this approach are:

- a simple, modern cursive font with exit strokes from the very start, to prepare for fluent joined handwriting
- a view of handwriting as ‘language by hand’ and recognition that efficient, automatic

letter generation contributes to the quality of what students write

- teaching the correct letter movement for each letter right from the start develops a 'hand habit' for joined handwriting
- the planned, cumulative programme of skills teaching involves regular review and assessment, so that teaching can be adjusted to meet student needs
- teaching letter names and alphabetical order enables our students to discuss lower case and capital letters, as well as spelling
- handwriting teaching includes a focus on developing fluency, speed and legibility
- as students develop as writers they learn to make choices about aspects of handwriting, tools, style and proofreading.

Disabilities & Equalities Statement

All children are given full access to the National Curriculum. Staff will endeavour to ensure that all children reach their potential, irrespective of race, gender, age, home-background or ability.

Aims

We aim for children to:

- Experience continuity, coherence and progression in the handwriting teaching across the school
- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in an efficient handwriting style: Happy Handwriting style
- Develop flow and speed to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes
 - Automatically use clearly formed and joined handwriting in all of their writing
 - Choose when to emphasise different aspects of handwriting such as neatness and speed relative to the writing task
 - Use their skills with confidence, in real life situations

Teaching and Learning

In order to achieve these aims, the following principles are followed:

- Patterns relating to letter formations are first introduced using a variety of tools and multi-sensory methods. This develops free flowing hand movements and muscle strength.
- Letters also introduced in varied, multi-sensory sessions: writing letters in the air, on legs or hands; orally describing letter shapes.
- Manual dexterity is developed using a variety of writing materials including whiteboards, chalk, paints, felt pens, crayons, plasticine, cornflour mix, shaving foam etc.
- Handwriting is taught as a specific skill at least twice a week in all year groups, with additional, individual or group practice where necessary.
- Correct letter movements are taught from the beginning and handwriting is linked with phonics or spelling when appropriate.
- Teachers model the Collins Handwriting script on IWB, whiteboards, flip charts etc.
- The Collins joined handwriting font and printing font are used for worksheets and texts to increase experience of the style, where appropriate.
- Upper KS2 children, especially those joining the school, will not be expected to adopt the school joined style if they already have a fluent, legible handwriting style.

Progression

Church Walk C.E Primary School prioritises the introduction of the correct movements to form lower case letters (letter formation), followed by their capital formations (Appendix 1). The letters are introduced in order of letter movement families, based on the formation of the letters (Appendix 2), so that students at Church Walk C.E. Primary School learn correct letter movements of the letters they have encountered in their phonics programme.

Church Walk C.E. Primary School uses the Happy Handwriting Course throughout the school.

There is a letter formation movement in Happy Handwriting for each letter. The dot is the starting point and each arrow represents a directional stroke. These are set out in Appendix 1. There is a memory phrase to reinforce this movement, set out in Appendix 2. The relative height of letters is the next priority after correct movement.

Happy Handwriting sets ambitious writing goals and introduces the five main joins between letters towards the end of Year 1, for those students who have mastered letter movements.

We aim for most students to begin letter joins in Year 2. The main handwriting joins are set out in Appendix 3. In KS2 Church Walk C.E Primary School teaches students to use handwriting joins automatically and to space and place punctuation and capital letters properly. Handwriting lessons use a spelling and proofreading focus to study aspects of handwriting which can be used flexibly across the curriculum. As students go through KS2 they develop their evaluation of their own writing.

Church Walk C.E Primary School uses single lines (and other media) for handwriting in Reception, with opportunities to practice letters on plain paper and other surfaces, followed by the use of single lines to orientate letters and then four line guidelines as set out in the Church Walk C.E. Primary School presentation guidance (Appendix 5).

Provision for left-handed students

Left-handed students will be encouraged to adopt a comfortable writing position. Staff are aware that the formation, seating and paper positions may be slightly different for some left-handed children and support students accordingly.

Resources and writing materials

Children are given experience of a variety of writing tools. Children will be encouraged to use Manuscript handwriting pens from Year 5 onwards. Students should normally write in black ink.

They will practise their handwriting in either Happy Handwriting workbooks or a handwriting book chosen for this specific purpose. Guidelines should be used when writing on plain paper.

Involvement of parents and Carers

We welcome the involvement of parents and carers and aim to ensure they can see the handwriting policy on the website and at school meetings. Staff will include copies of the letter formations for each year group at the beginning of the academic year.

Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities

The SENCO can advise on resources for those who have difficulty with fine motor skills –pencil grips, fine motor control programmes and referrals where necessary.

Presentation

Pupils will learn that different levels of presentation are appropriate for different pieces of work and different circumstances. However, pupils are expected to:

- Look after exercise books and not draw or scribble in or on them
- Increasingly plan their work to make it look attractive and well presented
- School will provide appropriate writing or drawing media
- Use rulers to draw straight lines
- Set out, number and annotate work appropriately
- At appropriate times, pupils may be encouraged to experiment with alternative means of presenting their work for specific reasons.
- Cross through mistakes or editing alterations with a single line if using a pen.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Head teacher within the processes of school self-evaluation. The Governing Body will monitor the implementation of the policy.

We know Church Walk C.E Primary School's Handwriting and Presentation Policy is effective if:

- A scrutiny of work confirms the appropriate development in handwriting skills
- Specific difficulties are addressed in the marking of handwriting tasks
- Specific provision is made for the needs of all learners
- A scrutiny of work confirms that the handwriting is being taught progressively and in accordance with school policy.