



**St Vincent's Catholic
Primary School**

To love, serve and learn as Jesus shows us

Handwriting Curriculum Document

Intent

Our intention is to deliver a high-quality, systematic, and progressive handwriting curriculum that equips every pupil with the essential skills to develop fluent, legible, and confident handwriting. We recognise that handwriting is a fundamental skill that influences the quality of work across the entire curriculum. Our aim is for handwriting to become an automatic and fluent process that supports, rather than hinders, creativity and higher-level thinking, enabling pupils to focus on the content and composition of their work rather than the mechanics of writing.

Through coherent and continuous learning, underpinned by systematic teaching and supported by the Letter-Join scheme, pupils are guided to develop fluency, stamina, and control so that they can write accurately and at length, producing a neat, legible, and speedy joined style by the end of Key Stage 2. Regular and purposeful practice ensures that pupils develop automaticity in their handwriting, producing letters and words effortlessly and maintaining accuracy, consistency, and legibility through attention to correct posture and pencil grip. As they progress, pupils learn to adapt their handwriting for different purposes, confidently choosing between cursive, print, or capital letters depending on the task, whether note-taking, completing forms, or presenting final written drafts. Handwriting is reinforced across all curriculum areas, supporting learning in spelling, punctuation and grammar, and modern foreign languages, thereby strengthening wider literacy skills.

Inclusive practice ensures that all pupils, including those with additional needs, are supported to achieve their full potential through adaptive strategies and resources where appropriate. Ultimately, our intention is for every pupil to take pride in the presentation of their work, to write with confidence and independence, and to communicate effectively through a fluent, legible, and expressive handwriting style.

How is handwriting is taught at St. Vincent's

Principles of our Handwriting Teaching

1. Focus on foundational skills first

- Correct posture, pencil grip (tripod hold), and paper orientation.
- Gross motor control: air writing, large pattern movements.
- Fine motor control: mark-making, tracing, tablet/whiteboard practice.

2. Prioritise letter formation and legibility

- Children must learn accurate letter shapes, size, and orientation before fluency or joining.
- Automaticity is the goal: handwriting should become effortless, freeing cognitive resources for composition.

3. Lead-in strokes / entry strokes

- Letter-join / cursive schemes: Introduce entry strokes later, once individual letters are secure, to support joined handwriting.

4. Progressive teaching

- Begin with lowercase letters in Reception, move to capital letters and digits in Year 1.
- Introduce simple joins after letters are secure, building towards fully joined cursive handwriting.
- Later years focus on fluency, speed, and adaptability for different purposes and subjects.

Teaching sequence

Foundational skills:

Hand and finger strength
Correct posture, pencil grip (tripod hold), and paper orientation.
Tracing, over teacher's writing (highlighter), under teacher's writing (copying)

Letter families:

Curly Caterpillar Letters: c, a, o, d, g, q, e, s, Ladder Letters: l, i, t, u,
One-Armed Robot Letters: r, b, n, h, m, k, p
Zigzag Monster Letters: v, w, x, z
More complex letters from the 4 families: f, j, y
Capital Letters A-Z Capital letters do not join to lower case letters

Letter joins:

First join: Diagonal join.

Diagonal join from and to letters without ascenders or descenders.
Diagonal join to letters with ascenders and descenders.
Diagonal join from letters with ascenders.
Diagonal join from letters with descenders. (e.g. ai, it, le, qu)

Second join: Horizontal join.

(e.g. oo, ra, vi, wn)

Third join: Ascenders/descenders to ascenders/descenders.

Diagonal join from letters with ascenders/descenders to letters with ascenders/descenders.

Fourth join: Horizontal join from letters with ascenders/descenders to letters with ascenders/descenders.

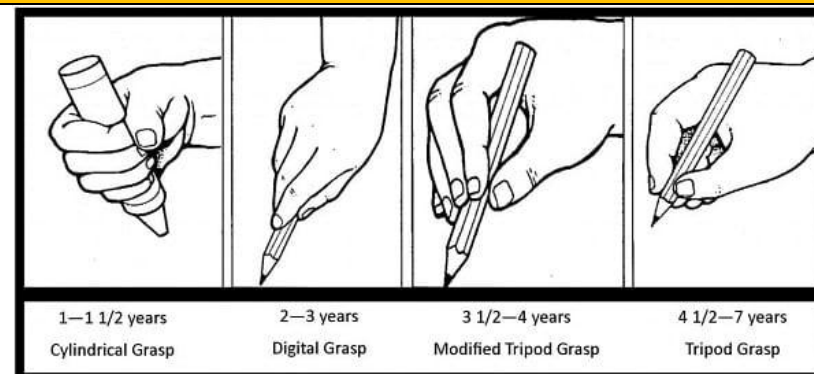
(e.g. lb, pl, ob, rt)

Implementation

Handwriting instruction should be regular, explicit, and progressive: Short sessions in early years, longer/fewer sessions as children develop stamina. Review earlier skills periodically (formation, joins, spacing) to maintain standards. Provide differentiated support for children with fine motor delays, left-handedness, or other needs. Apply handwriting teaching across all subjects to reinforce fluency and presentation.

Handwriting Overview

EYFS	Posture, Pencil grip, Paper orientation Gross and fine motor control Correct lowercase letter formation (legibility over speed) By the end of Reception: Most children should form all lowercase letters correctly and write simple words independently.
Year 1	Reinforce correct posture, grip, and formation Introduce capital letters, digits (0-9), letter families and lead-in strokes Practise writing whole words and short phrases with consistent size and spacing. By the end of Year 1: Pupils should form all lower- and uppercase letters correctly.
Year 2	Improve letter size, spacing, and line alignment. Diagonal and horizontal joins, including those to and from ascenders/descenders. Build fluency through longer words and sentences across subjects. By the end of Year 2: Pupils should develop a consistent joined style, writing with increasing speed and legibility.
Year 3	Refine joined handwriting as the default style across the curriculum. Focus on consistent letter size, spacing, and presentation. Strengthen fluency through meaningful writing tasks and dictation. By the end of Year 3: Pupils should write fluently and legibly at length, with handwriting no longer interrupting composition.
Year 4	Consolidate fluency, consistency, and speed; handwriting should feel automatic. Encourage adaptation of handwriting for different tasks (notes, drafts, final copies). Maintain neat presentation across all subjects. By the end of Year 4: Pupils should have a confident, fluent joined script, sustaining quality over longer pieces.
Year 5	Emphasise speed, stamina, and adaptability rather than formation. Ensure handwriting remains legible and neat in extended writing across all subjects. Promote automaticity so handwriting supports thinking and composition. By the end of Year 5: Pupils should write quickly and neatly, using handwriting as a tool for clear written communication.
Year 6	Prioritise presentation, fluency, and purposeful handwriting. Pupils should choose the most appropriate style (cursive, print, capitals) for the task and write legibly at speed. Expect independent, high-standard presentation across all subjects. By the end of Year 6: Pupils should produce fluent, adaptable, and legible handwriting, suitable for all purposes and sustained writing tasks.

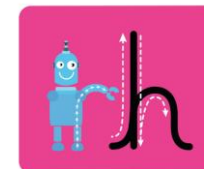


Curly Caterpillar Letters



a d c o f e s g q

One-armed Robot Letters



b h k m n p r

accident

accidentally

actual

Hey diddle, diddle, the median's the middle,
You add, then divide for the mean.
The mode is the one you see the most
And the range is the difference between.

Year	Autumn	Spring	Summer
EYFS	Printing: CC Letters: c, a, o, d, g, q, e, s L Letters: l, i, t, u, Learn to write first name in print	Printing OR Letters: r, b, n, h, m, k, p ZM Letters: v, w, x, z More complex letters: f, j, y Digits 0-9 Write first name independently in print with capital letter for first letter of name.	Printing Consolidation of letter formation of lower-case letters CC Letters: c, a, o, d, g, q, e, s L Letters: l, i, t, u OR Letters: r, b, n, h, m, k, p ZM Letters: v, w, x, z All capital letters - larger than printed lower-case letters. Use and apply in writing activities.
Year 1	Printing: Consolidation of letter formation of lower-case letters in a smaller size: CC Letters: c, a, o, d, g, q, e, s L Letters: l, i, t, u	Pre-cursive: CC Letters: c, a, o, d, g, q, e, s L Letters: l, i, t, u All capital letters.	Pre-cursive: OR Letters: r, b, n, h, m, k, p ZM Letters: v, w, x, z More complex letters: f, j, y All capital letters.
Year 2	Cursive: First join - diagonal join to letters without ascenders or descenders: ai, am, an, ao, ar, au, ca, ci, co, cu, sa, se, si, sm, sn, so, ss, st, su, sw, ia, im, in, io, ir, iu	Cursive: First join - diagonal join to letters without ascenders, and then with ascenders and descenders: ma, mi, mm, mo, mu na, nc, ne, ni, nn, no, nu, ua, ui, um, un, uo, ag, aj, ab, ah, ak, al, at, ch, ck, cl, ct	Cursive: First join - diagonal join to letters with ascenders and descenders: sb, sh, sk, sl, st, sp, el, eb, eh, ek, el, et, ih, ik, ill, it, ig, ip, mp, np, nd, ug, up, ub, uh, uk, ul, ut
Year 3	Cursive: First join - diagonal join from letters with ascenders: da, di, do, du, dy First join - diagonal join from letters with ascenders: ha, he, hi, ho, hu, ka, ke, ki, ko, ku First join - diagonal join from letters with ascenders: la, le, li, lm, lo, lp, lu, bu, ba, be, bi, bo, br, bs	Cursive: First join - diagonal join to the letter 'c': ac, ec, ic, lc, uc First join - diagonal join to the letter 's': as, cs, ds, es, hs, is, ks, ls, ms, ns, ts, us First join - diagonal join to the letter 'e': ae, ce, de, ee, he, ie, ke, le, me, ne, ue,	Cursive: First join - diagonal join from letters with descenders: qu, pu, pa, pe, pi, pl, po, pr, ps Second join - horizontal join: oa, oc, od, oe, og, oi, oj, om, on, oo, or, os, ou, ov, ow, ox, oy, oz
Year 4	Second join – horizontal join: ra, rg, ri, rm, rn, ro, rp, rr, rs, ru, va, vi, vo, vs, vu, wa, wi, wn, wo, ws, wu, wy Second join – horizontal join to the letter 'e': oe, re, ve, we	Third join – diagonal join from a letter with an ascender/descender to a letter with an ascender/descender: lb, kl, ll, ph, pl, pt, bl, th, tt Third join – horizontal join from to a letter with an ascender: ob, oh, ok, ol, ot, rt	Fourth join – join to letters with hooks, lines and loops: ga, ge, gi, gl, go, gr, gs, gu, wh, ya, ye, yi, yo, yu Practise writing words with capital letters.

		Fourth join – join to letters with hooks, lines and loops: ja, je, ji, jo, ju, fa, fe, fi, fo, fr, ft, fu	Practise combining all 4 joins when writing sentences. . Final consolidation of all joins.
UKS2	Pupils will focus on maintaining a consistent and fluent style. Pupils will practice maintaining legibility when writing at speed. Pupils will continue to improve handwriting through writing more sustained passages of writing, both copied and from their imagination.		