

# Emmaus Primary School

Church of England and Catholic  
Primary School

*Travelling together with Jesus*

---

---

---



## English Handwriting

### **Intent**

At Emmaus Primary School, we believe that joined, neat, and legible handwriting is an essential skill that must be taught to all children. A consistently high standard of writing is expected across the school to foster a sense of pride and respect in pupils' work. Handwriting should be embedded throughout the curriculum and become an automatic process, enabling children to record their thoughts fluently and legibly. The ability to write with fluency and clarity provides children with an effective means of communication. Cursive handwriting also supports the development and retention of spelling patterns.

### **Our Aims**

- To raise standards in writing across the school.
- To implement a consistent approach to handwriting and presentation from EYFS through KS1 and KS2, aiming for most pupils to achieve fully cursive writing by Year 4.
- To develop a neat, legible handwriting style with correctly formed cursive letters.
- To build fluency and speed in writing, enabling pupils to write confidently and with correct letter orientation in their independent work.

### **Implementation**

#### **Curriculum Planning for Handwriting**

Handwriting is taught regularly through short, focused sessions and may be linked to other areas of learning such as spelling, grammar, and phonics. These sessions are designed to build fluency, accuracy, and confidence in pupils' writing.

### **Impact**

Our aim is to make handwriting an automatic process that supports, rather than hinders, creative and cognitive development. By embedding handwriting across the curriculum, pupils are able to record their ideas fluently and legibly, allowing them to focus on content rather than form.

### **Teaching and Learning Styles**

#### **Foundation Stage**

In the Foundation Stage, the emphasis is placed on movement and fine motor skill development. Early letter formation becomes automatic and has a lasting impact on fluency

and legibility in later years. Pupils are introduced to pre-cursive letter formation, including the exit flick, as soon as they are developmentally ready.

To support motor skill development, the Foundation Stage uses a range of resources, including:

- Squiggle While You Wiggle
- Funky Fingers
- Dough Gym
- Roll 'n' Write
- Sandpaper Letters

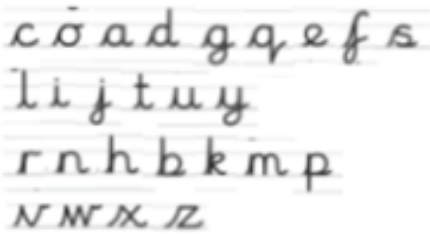
Handwriting is closely linked with phonics instruction, using the 'Jolly Phonics' programme to reinforce letter-sound correspondence and early writing skills.

### **Key Stage 1**

To support handwriting development, close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, paper positioning, and the organisation of the writing space. Teachers are vigilant in preventing poor habits from becoming ingrained and ensure that the specific needs of left-handed pupils—such as additional tracking and tracing at the pre-writing stage—and those with special educational needs are appropriately addressed.

Building on the Foundation Stage, pupils in Year 1 begin to develop a legible handwriting style. They practise entry and exit flicks as part of letter formation instruction. Opportunities to strengthen fine motor skills continue through a range of practical activities and resources.

Letter formation is taught in a structured sequence to ensure consistency and progression.



In Year 2, pupils develop a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and practise handwriting alongside spelling and independent writing. They are taught correct letter formation and appropriate letter sizing. Pupils also begin practising diagonal and horizontal joins as they move toward a fluent cursive style.

### **Key Stage 2**

The target for pupils in Key Stage 2 is to develop a fluent and consistently formed style of full cursive handwriting. Pupils participate in regular handwriting sessions using appropriate resources, with practice carried out in dedicated handwriting books as well as across other writing tasks.

In Year 3, most pupils begin using cursive handwriting as part of their daily writing activities. From Year 4 onwards, pupils who demonstrate a fluent and fully cursive style are issued with a pen, which they use for the majority of their written classwork. Pencils continue to be used for mathematics.



### **Support for Left-Handed Pupils**

Teachers should be aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision to support their handwriting development. Key considerations include:

- Positioning paper to the left for right-handed pupils and to the right for left-handed pupils, slanted to suit individual preferences.
- Ensuring pencils are not held too close to the tip, as this can obstruct the pupil's line of vision.
- Seating pupils so they can comfortably place their paper to their left side.
- Positioning left-handed pupils to the left of right-handed peers to avoid elbow clashes and ensure adequate space.
- Encouraging left-handed pupils to bring their hands down and around to prevent the development of a hooked or claw-like writing style.
- Providing additional practice with left-to-right exercises to help pupils internalise the correct writing direction.

### **Resources**

To support handwriting instruction across the school, the following resources are used:

- [Writing Repeater – ICT Games](#)
- Nelson PenPals handwriting scheme
- Twinkl handwriting resources
- Appendix: National Standard Handwriting Descriptors for Each Year Group

### **Health and Safety**

#### **Posture**

Classroom chairs and desks are matched to pupils' age and height to promote good posture during handwriting activities. Pupils should sit with their backs straight and feet flat on the floor. For optimal writing comfort and control:

- Right-handed pupils should slant their books to the left.
- Left-handed pupils should slant their books to the right.

These adjustments help support ergonomic writing habits and reduce physical strain.

#### **Assessment and Recording**

Teachers continually assess pupils' handwriting to monitor progress against the National Curriculum requirements. Assessment is both formative and summative, allowing teachers to identify strengths, address areas for improvement, and set future targets. Progress is

recorded and tracked systematically to inform planning and ensure pupils are supported in developing fluent, legible handwriting.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring of handwriting standards is carried out by class teachers on an ongoing basis as part of daily practice. The English Coordinator conducts regular book checks to evaluate progress and consistency. During these reviews, the coordinator and senior leaders assess all subjects for neat presentation and the use of cursive script. This process ensures high standards are maintained and promotes consistency in handwriting across the school.

Date: -September 2025

Date of next review: - September 2027

## **Appendix**

National Standard Handwriting Descriptors by Year Group.

### **Year 1**

- Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.
- Begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
- Form capital letters and digits 0–9.
- Understand which letters belong to handwriting ‘families’ (i.e. letters formed in similar ways) and practise these.

### **Year 2**

- Hold a pencil comfortably and correctly.
- Produce legible handwriting with almost all lower-case letters, capital letters, and digits accurately and consistently formed, with correct size, orientation, and relationship to one another.
- Words are almost always appropriately and consistently spaced in relation to letter size.
- Begin to use diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters.

### **Year 3**

- Handwriting is increasingly legible and consistent.
- Diagonal and horizontal strokes are used to join letters, when appropriate.

### **Year 4**

- Use diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters.
- Understand which letters, when adjacent, are best left unjoined.
- Increase the legibility, consistency, and overall quality of handwriting.

### **Year 5**

- Handwriting is usually legible and fluent.
- Pupils make appropriate choices regarding letter shapes and whether or not to join letters.
- Fluency may not always be maintained when writing at efficient speed.

### **Year 6**

- Handwriting is mostly legible and fluent.
- Fluency and legibility are maintained when writing at sustained, efficient speed.