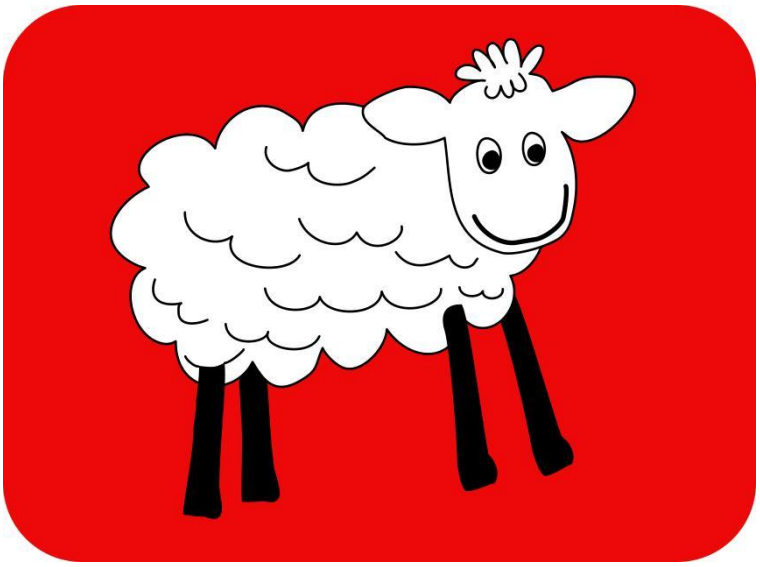


Sheepy Magna

Church of England

Primary School

Handwriting Policy

Literacy Subject Leader – Claire Keys

Committee with responsibility – Quality of Education

Last reviewed: March 2024

Next review: March 2027

Rationale

A flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. We actively teach handwriting as part of the English curriculum and within discrete lessons.

To develop a clear, legible style of writing, children are taught to:

- hold a pencil comfortably; promoting a legible style that encourages writing from left to right, from top to bottom of the page and starting and finishing letters correctly;
- develop a consistent size and shape of letters and a regularity of spacing between letters and words;
- join letters correctly and
- develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident.

Teaching and Learning

Considerations when teaching handwriting:
(a) Pencil grip and tension;
(b) Writing pressure;
(c) Clarity of the stroke;
(d) Orientation of the paper for left/right handed children;
(e) Body posture / seating position.

Children need to be made aware of:
(a) Where the letter starts;
(b) Where the individual letter stands with regard to the baseline;
(c) Ascenders and descenders - lined paper will assist or children will use line guides underneath plain paper;
(d) Spacing and finger space between words;
(e) Consistent writing size;
(f) Capital letters and their appropriate use.

Programme of handwriting:

At Sheepy we follow the ***Achieving Excellence in Handwriting*** programme created by Martin Harvey and Debbie Watson. This is a whole school programme where handwriting is taught from Reception to Year 6. The programme follows a semi-cursive style of handwriting and is delivered via handwriting sessions. Each session will last between 15 and 20 minutes.

Children will use lined handwriting books or sheets within these sessions. The booklets will contain handwriting line guides appropriate to the year group being taught.

All writing in class will be monitored by teachers and children will be encouraged to present their work neatly and use the handwriting style taught.

Using this programme we also reinforce our commitment to character development by reinforcing concepts such as determination, care, pride and self-esteem.

Expectations by Year group:

Foundation Stage - Children will begin the Foundation Stage with a wide variety of writing skills ranging from simply making marks to writing their own name unaided. They will move from gross to finer motor skills using a variety of tactile methods. They will be provided with opportunities to make marks in their own way and to gradually refine these into recognisable patterns and eventually individual letters. Children will be taught correct letter formation towards the end of their first term. The majority of pupils by the end of the Foundation stage will be able to form all letters correctly, with the correct starting position and orientations.

Year 1 - It is expected that by the end of this year, the majority will be writing unaided, using capitals where appropriate and presenting their written work legibly. In Year 1, children practise forming letters and are introduced to joins. An introduction to joined writing can be started when a child has developed a consistent, clear print style, where letters are generally correctly formed.

Year 2 - By Year 2 children should be moving towards a joined handwriting style and be able to write on lined paper or blank paper, backed with guidelines, with a reasonable degree of accuracy. They practise and build on Year 1 joins and are introduced to break letters. They will be introduced to which letters are best joined and which are not.

Year 3 - It is our aim that in Year 3 children are taught the whole range of joins and will be developing a degree of accuracy, fluency and speed in their handwriting by the end of the year.

Year 4 - Formation of capitals, lower case letters and the joins types should now be familiar and secure. The majority of children should be able to use joined-up writing for most of their work. Whilst there is continued emphasis on using the movements of handwriting to support spelling through the revision of common letter patterns, they will also be given opportunities to develop speed and accuracy.
For those children who have developed a fluent joined style then school pens using black ink may be introduced from year 4 at the teacher's discretion.

Years 5 and 6 - By Years 5 and 6, it is expected that most children will be writing fluently and are joining their writing across the curriculum. In these year groups the emphasis is on increasing speed, developing presentation skills and learning how to use different styles for different purposes.

Teaching time by year group

Younger children will have a minimum of four handwriting sessions per week.
(Approximately 15 mins per session) Whilst older children may have fewer sessions (minimum of 1 weekly session) at the teacher's discretion, children who are not at the expected standard will be given extra time and support either individually or in a small group.

Left Handed Children

Teachers should be aware of the specific needs of **left-handed pupils** and make appropriate provision:

- pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space;
- extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.

Teachers should be alert to the fact that it can be difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers may demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

Assessment and Monitoring

A selection of writing books and handwriting booklets will be regularly monitored by the head teacher and /or the Literacy coordinator to monitor the impact and implementation of the policy and the standards of handwriting and progression across the school.