

Handwriting at St Mary's

What does the National Curriculum say?

The National Curriculum specifies that children should be taught to correctly form letters of the correct size and orientation. This requires effort and attention, as well as suitable motor skills.

There is evidence that **repeated practice in handwriting** is necessary to go beyond accuracy to fluency in letter formation. There is no need to start the formal teaching of handwriting before Reception, but children at the end of the EYFS should be able to 'hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing - using the tripod grip in almost all cases'.

The national curriculum requires children to learn **unjoined handwriting before they 'start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters'**.

Delaying teaching joined handwriting gives children time to focus on other aspects of the writing process, such as composition, spelling and forming letters correctly.

What does handwriting look like at St Mary's?

Letter formation and joins (when appropriate) are explicitly taught to the children during handwriting lessons which take place three times a week. Lessons are carefully structured. They include warmup activities, teacher modelling of letter formation and joins and use of appropriate teaching language. The children practise their handwriting in their Handwriting Books which have specific lines in to support them. 'Letter families' are displayed in each class on the Writing Working Walls and are referred to in handwriting lessons.

In the Foundation Stage, the children are taught the correct formation of each letter during the phonics sessions.

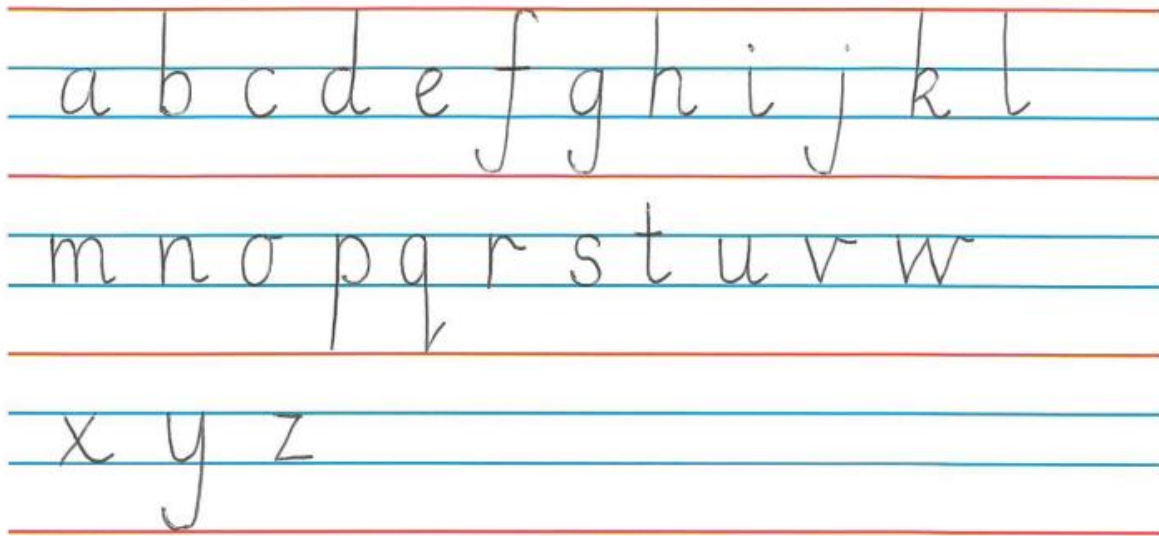
In Year 1, children are taught to form lower case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place. The children are taught how to form capital letters as well as the digits 0-9. The children will begin to understand which letters belong to which 'handwriting families' (letters that are formed in similar ways).

In Year 2, children are taught how to form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another. When the children are confident with forming letters, they will start to use some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters. The children are encouraged to use spacing between the words that reflects the size of the letters.

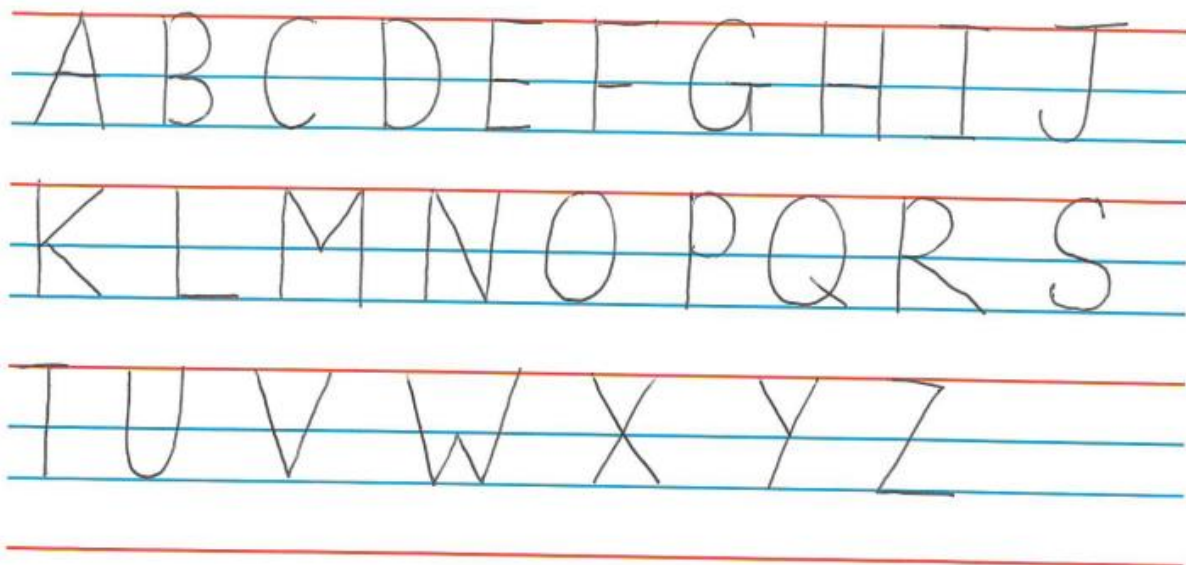
In Years 3 and 4, the teaching of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters continues. The children will increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting.

In Years 5 and 6, the children are taught to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed. Children are encouraged to develop their own handwriting styles in line with the school handwriting scheme.

Lower Case Letters



Upper Case Letters



Digits

1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 10

Letter Families

The Straight-Line Family

i l t j

The Coathanger Family

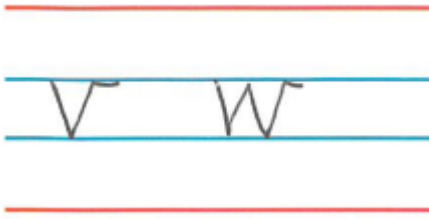
c o a d g q e

The Bridge Family

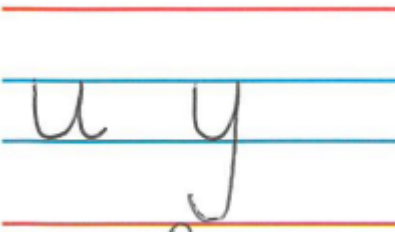
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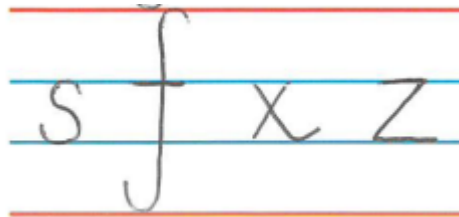
The Zig Zag Family



The Smile Family



The Misfits!



Letters not joined are b, s, j, y, g, q, p

If you have any questions about specific letters joins, please contact your class teacher.