



St. Luke's C of E (A) Primary School

Handwriting Policy 2025 – 2028

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1. Introduction and Intent

At St Luke's, we believe that handwriting is far more than a presentation skill. It is a vital part of transcription and an essential foundation for children's wider writing development. Handwriting gives our pupils the freedom to express their ideas with clarity, confidence and increasing sophistication. When transcription becomes automatic, pupils are better able to concentrate on crafting sentences, selecting vocabulary and shaping ideas with purpose — a principle strongly emphasised in the Writing Framework (2025).

Our approach is grounded in the belief that every child can become a fluent, legible and confident writer when they are taught well, taught consistently and given the time and guidance to practise. From the very start of Reception, pupils encounter a highly structured, research-informed handwriting curriculum that places equal weight on physical development, letter formation, fluency and stamina. As they progress through the school, handwriting becomes a tool that enables them not only to communicate effectively, but also to take pride in the presentation of their work across all subjects.

Our handwriting curriculum is also an embodiment of our FLOURISH values. Children learn that handwriting is an act of Hard Work and Resilience, requiring practice, redrafting and determination. It reflects Integrity and Selflessness as pupils learn to write clearly so that others can read their work with ease. It nurtures Originality, enabling pupils to develop a distinctive but consistent personal style, and builds Understanding, as staff support each individual child to develop at their own pace, without lowering expectations. Handwriting at St Luke's is a shared endeavour rooted in encouragement, modelling and pride.

2. Our Approach to Handwriting

2.1 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The EYFS lays the essential foundations for writing. In Reception, we use Twinkl Print, beginning with the development of core physical skills: posture, grip, hand strength, fine-motor precision and an understanding of directional language such as “up”, “down”, “over” and “round”. These early skills are crucial, as children cannot form letters securely without them.

Handwriting is introduced from the first weeks of the year through short, regular sessions that run alongside phonics. Letter formation is taught systematically and explicitly, ensuring that pupils know where each letter begins, how it is shaped and how it sits on the line. At this stage, we focus on accuracy rather than speed, and pupils are never expected to write at length. Instead, we prioritise high-quality practice and oral composition, enabling children to rehearse sentences out loud before attempting to record them.

Children have ample opportunity to “write” within their play. Adults model writing authentically — creating signs, labels, lists and stories — and encourage children to join in. This helps pupils to see themselves as writers from the outset, even as they are building the essential motor and transcription skills that underpin more sophisticated writing later on.

In the EYFS, handwriting is taught as a discrete strand of learning, rather than something absorbed incidentally through early writing or mark-making opportunities. From the first weeks of the year, pupils receive regular, dedicated handwriting instruction, delivered a minimum of three times each week, in addition to the transcription practice naturally embedded within early writing activities. These sessions focus on the development of essential physical and motor skills, followed by the systematic teaching of Twinkl Print letter formation.

This discrete teaching ensures that children encounter accurate modelling, clear explanations, and guided practice at a pace appropriate to their developmental stage. While children explore writing in their play, it is the consistency and quality of these explicit handwriting lessons that secure the foundational skills of grip, posture, movement patterns and accurate formation. These early habits are critical, and our commitment to frequent, structured EYFS instruction ensures that pupils establish them securely before moving into Key Stage 1.

2.2 Key Stage 1

Handwriting continues to be taught with clear, deliberate focus in Key Stage 1. Alongside opportunities to apply handwriting within English and wider curriculum work, pupils receive three discrete handwriting lessons each week. This regular, direct instruction is essential in Year 1, as children consolidate Twinkl Print, and begin to develop consistent letter size, spacing and orientation.

In Year 1, pupils continue to use Twinkl Print while developing greater control over letter size, spacing, orientation and consistency. Daily handwriting appears within phonics, spelling and English lessons, allowing children to apply their skills regularly and in meaningful contexts. Dictation is used to strengthen transcription and reduce cognitive load, enabling pupils to focus on handwriting fluency rather than thinking of their own content.

In Year 2, pupils transition carefully from Print to Twinkl Cursive. This transition is deliberate and supported, beginning with the introduction of entry and exit strokes and progressing gradually towards diagonal and horizontal joins. As joins develop, pupils learn to maintain consistency of size, shape and spacing, ensuring that fluency never compromises legibility. By the end of Year 2, most children are confidently joining within words and beginning to make natural choices about how best to write efficiently.

This approach aligns closely with the Writing Framework's emphasis on developing automatic, fluent transcription so that pupils can devote more cognitive capacity to composition.

Year 1 – Mastering Twinkl Print

Pupils continue with Twinkl Print, developing:

- Correct letter size, orientation and spacing
- Capital letters and digits (0–9)
- Formation using the four letter families
- Stamina for writing short sentences
- Daily opportunities for handwriting within phonics and English

- Dictation of words and simple sentences
- Teacher modelling, correction and green-pen guidance

Year 2 – Transition to Twinkl Cursive

In Year 2 pupils:

- Move from Print → Twinkl Cursive
- Learn end flicks and the principles of joining
- Begin diagonal and horizontal joins in a sequenced order
- Practise joins within high-frequency and CEWs
- Apply joining within short dictated sentences
- Develop consistent size and ascender/descender control

This transition is carefully modelled to avoid cognitive overload and fully supports the principles of the Writing Framework (2025) regarding secure transcription.

2.3 Lower Key Stage 2

Across Lower Key Stage 2, handwriting continues to be taught with regularity and purpose. Pupils participate in a minimum of three handwriting sessions each week, in addition to the expectations for high-quality presentation across all subjects. These sessions are designed to refine pupils' joined script, build stamina, and strengthen the fluency required for increasingly lengthy and independent writing.

Year 3 remains the pivotal year in which pupils secure a fully joined Twinkl Cursive style. Frequent, structured instruction enables children to internalise the rhythm and movement of joined handwriting so that it becomes natural and efficient. This pattern of regular practice continues in Year 4, where the focus shifts towards increasing speed, developing consistency, and adapting handwriting appropriately for task and audience, while maintaining legibility and pride.

Year 3 – Expected Full Joining

By the end of Year 3, pupils are expected to demonstrate:

- A consistent, joined Twinkl Cursive style
- Accurate spacing between and within words
- Smooth, fluent movement with ascenders/descenders not touching
- Increased speed (approx. 10 words per minute by EOY)
- Regular handwriting sessions in addition to English lessons
- Dictation, copying from short extracts and explicit fluency practice form part of weekly teaching.

Year 4 – Embedding Fluency

Pupils in Year 4:

- Increase accuracy, speed and stamina
- Consolidate joins and size consistency
- Use pen when handwriting is consistently legible
- Practise extended sentences and model-text extracts

2.4 Upper Key Stage 2

Upper Key Stage 2 builds on this fluency. Pupils learn to write at greater speed, sustaining legibility even in longer pieces of writing across the curriculum. They become increasingly adept at selecting the most efficient letter forms and joins for purpose and audience. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve a mature, fluid and adaptable style that prepares them well for the demands of Key Stage 3.

Year 5 & 6

Pupils develop:

- Mature, fluent, joined handwriting
- Speed (approx. 14 words per minute by EOY6)
- Adaptability for purpose (notes vs. published writing)
- Efficient letter formation choices for speed
- Presentation appropriate for audience and task

UKS2 handwriting continues to support spelling, sentence-level mastery and composition.

3. Expectations for Staff

Consistency across the school is crucial. All adults model clear, legible and joined handwriting when writing on boards, in pupils' books or when annotating work. Staff handwriting reflects the Twinkl Cursive script, reinforcing the expectations we teach. Teachers use correct technical language — such as ascender, descender, diagonal join and spacing — to ensure that pupils hear and understand this vocabulary from an early age. Adults also play a crucial role in providing timely, precise feedback. When correcting or modelling handwriting, staff demonstrate improvements using green pen, allowing pupils to see clearly how their writing can be refined.

4. Supporting Left-Handed Pupils

Left-handed pupils are supported through specific, evidence-informed strategies. Teachers model writing with their left hand when demonstrating letter formation, and seating arrangements ensure that left-handed children sit to the left of right-handed peers. Pupils are encouraged to tilt their paper slightly clockwise, maintain a straight wrist, and hold their pencil a short distance from the tip to avoid smudging. These simple adjustments help ensure that left-handed writers develop the same confidence, fluency and pride as their peers.

5. Inclusion, Intervention and Universal Provision

At St Luke's, handwriting support is embedded within a strong model of universal provision. Teachers provide immediate, responsive guidance during lessons, offering targeted modelling, pre-teaching or corrective feedback to ensure that children keep pace with expectations. This may involve enlarged letter models, visual cues, additional line guides, adapted paper, tracing opportunities or adjustments to seating and positioning to support posture and alignment.

For pupils who require more focused support, teachers provide time-limited, purposeful interventions, usually delivered in short sessions that complement class teaching rather than replace access to the wider curriculum. These interventions focus on the specific elements of

handwriting that a pupil finds challenging—whether fine-motor control, letter orientation, spacing, stamina or the sequencing of joins.

Handwriting should never become a barrier to learning, and most support is given within lessons so that children do not miss broader curriculum content. Interventions focus on identifying specific barriers — whether motor-skill related, linked to letter formation, or due to gaps in transcription knowledge — and addressing these through targeted practice. Some pupils benefit from pencil grips, enlarged models, handwriting guidelines or additional motor-skill opportunities.

For pupils with SEND, adaptations are made thoughtfully and in line with individual needs, ensuring that all children can flourish while maintaining high expectations. Our approach reflects the Writing Framework's emphasis on ensuring that every pupil receives high-quality teaching of writing, with additional support only where necessary.

6. Assessment, Monitoring and Picture-Building

Handwriting is monitored continually through pupils' books, lesson observations and oral feedback. Teachers evaluate both the quality and the fluency of handwriting and make adjustments to teaching accordingly. In Years 3–6, occasional speed checks help us monitor stamina and efficiency.

We combine annual expectations with termly milestones (December, April and July) to support whole-school picture-building, enabling leaders to evaluate how transcription is progressing across the school and how successfully this is supporting writing more broadly.

Annual Expectations Summary

- End of EYFS: secure tripod grip; most letters correctly formed in Twinkl Print.
- End of Year 1: consistent print; correct size and spacing; accurate capitals and digits.
- End of Year 2: confident transition to Twinkl Cursive; early joining; clear spacing.
- End of Year 3: fully joined cursive; developing fluency (around 10 wpm).
- End of Years 4–5: increasingly fluent, legible and consistent writing across subjects.
- End of Year 6: fluent, efficient, joined handwriting (around 14 wpm), adaptable for purpose.

Milestone Expectations (Dec / Apr / Jul)

- EYFS moves from movement patterns → clear formation.
- Year 1 moves from secure letter families → consistent print.
- Year 2 moves from print with flicks → confident joining.
- Year 3 moves from partial joining → fully joined fluent script.
- Years 4–6 demonstrate refinement in speed, fluency and presentation over time.

These expectations help teachers, subject leaders and senior leaders build a coherent picture of progress and ensure that handwriting continues to support the wider development of writing across the school.

7. Handwriting Within the Writing Framework (2025)

This policy is strongly underpinned by the Writing Framework. Our practice reflects key principles:

- Handwriting and spelling must be taught explicitly, regularly and cumulatively.
- Fluent transcription frees pupils' working memory for richer composition.
- Oral composition is essential in the early stages of writing.
- Dictation helps pupils practise transcription in manageable steps.
- Motivation grows when children experience success, clarity and purpose in writing.
- Effective handwriting teaching must begin in Reception and continue throughout primary school.

Our handwriting approach is therefore an integral part of our whole-school writing strategy, supporting pupils not only to write more effectively but also to enjoy writing more deeply.

8. Impact

By the end of their time at St Luke's, pupils leave with a secure, fluent and legible handwriting style that enables them to write confidently and efficiently across the curriculum. They understand that high-quality handwriting is both a courtesy to the reader and an expression of personal pride. They demonstrate our FLOURISH values through their perseverance, presentation and commitment to excellence.

Most importantly, they are prepared for the writing demands of Key Stage 3 and beyond, able to express their thoughts, ideas and beliefs with clarity, accuracy and independence.