

Handwriting at St Nicholas CE Infants' School

Parent Information Sheet



Our Vision

At St Nicholas, we believe handwriting is more than forming letters. It is a gateway to confident self-expression. Guided by our vision of *Becoming the Best We Can Be*, we help children grow as joyful, purposeful writers.

Why Handwriting Matters

Handwriting helps children:

- Build confidence and pride in their work
- Develop fluency so they can focus on ideas, not just spelling
- Strengthen fine motor skills and posture
- Express themselves clearly and beautifully

We follow national guidance (Development Matters, National Curriculum, and the DfE Writing Framework) to ensure every child receives high-quality, consistent handwriting teaching from Nursery to Year 2.

How We Teach Handwriting

Daily Practice

Once ready to begin the physical process of writing, children enjoy short, focused handwriting sessions every day. These build muscle memory, stamina, and presentation skills.

Clear Progression

- **Nursery:** Focus on physical readiness including core strength, shoulder stability and fine motor play (e.g. playdough, threading, climbing).
- **Reception:** Continue developing physical readiness. Begin forming letters using shape families (e.g. curly caterpillars, one-armed robots) with multi-sensory activities like air-writing and textured surfaces.
- **Year 1:** Strengthen control, spacing, and fluency. Children learn capital letters, digits, and sentence structure.
- **Year 2:** Introduce joined handwriting once children show readiness, focusing on flow and legibility across subjects.

Posture & Paper Positioning

We teach children to:

- Sit upright with feet flat and bottom back
- Tilt their paper slightly (different angles for left- and right-handers)
- Use a tripod grip and steady the paper with their non-writing hand

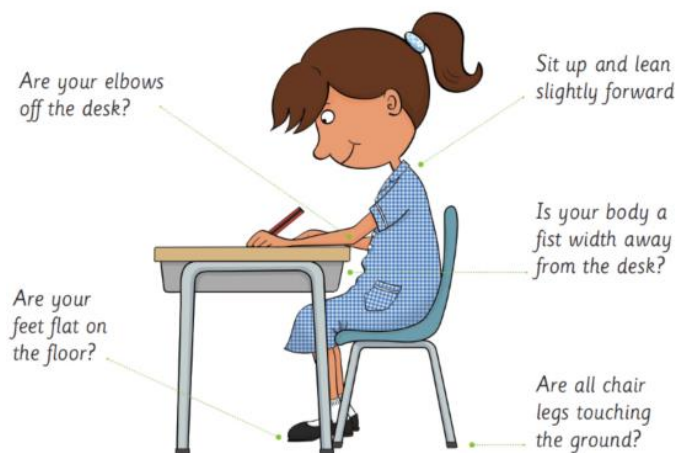
How You Can Help at Home

- Use fun fine motor activities like Lego, scissors, or tweezers
- Praise early mark making and don't worry if it looks like 'scribble' to begin with
- Encourage good posture when writing or drawing
- As children begin to form letters, celebrate neatness and effort, not just speed
- Avoid early joining. Fluent print comes first!

Together, we are helping children take pride in their writing and grow into confident communicators.

What does good writing posture look like?

Are you ready for handwriting? Relax!



Right Handers

Left Handers

Is there a circle gap between your thumb and finger?

Is your paper tilted at a slight angle?



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Letter families, grouped by movement patterns to support fluency and control

Family Name	Letters	Movement Pattern
Curly Caterpillars	<i>c, a, d, e, g, o, q, s</i>	Begin with an anti-clockwise curl
One-Armed Robots	<i>r, b, h, k, m, n, p</i>	Vertical line followed by one arm
Ladder Letters (long-legged giraffe)	<i>f, i, j, l, t, u, y</i>	Straight down strokes with small additions
Zigzag Monsters	<i>v, w, x, z</i>	Angular strokes often involving reversals

Letter shapes taught at St Nicholas

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Thank you for your support!

For more tips or questions, please speak to your child's teacher.