

English Newsletter 2026/2027



A warm welcome to another year of exciting learning for your children. I wanted to update you and send some reminders about our English curriculum.

This year, our first event will be 'World Poetry Day' on Thursday 1st October, where children will learn and perform a poem on the theme of Space to the whole school. This links nicely into our 'Year of STEM' (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths).

World Book Week

As per our tradition, this year World Book Week will be held on the week beginning Monday 1st March, with World Book Day on Thursday 4th March. On this day children will be able to dress up (if they feel comfortable to) linked with our chosen book this year 'The most magnificent Thing' Ashley Spires. More information will follow nearer the time. Here is a link to watch the book on Youtube in a video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gy3JCNBgb94>

It links perfectly with our 'Year of STEM' and was chosen by Mrs Speakman, our Science Lead, I would like to thank her for this choice 😊



School Improvement Focus for English

This year we will be continuing to focus on the recommendations from the Department For Education's Writing Framework.

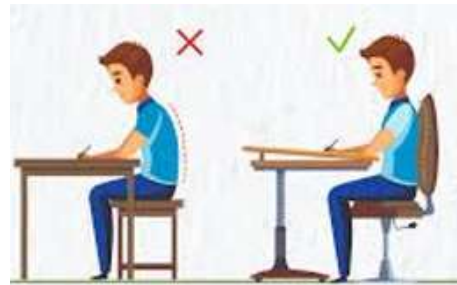
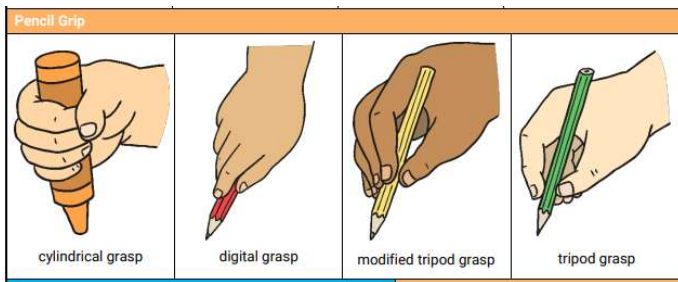
Handwriting

We will continue to embed our scheme 'Letter Join' across school. Your children will be having two handwriting sessions over the week, with an emphasis on posture and accurate pencil grip. You may hear your children talking about having their 'tummies near the table' and 'bottom back in chair'. All children will have a sharp pencil and adults will be picking up on the correct formation of letters in each class.

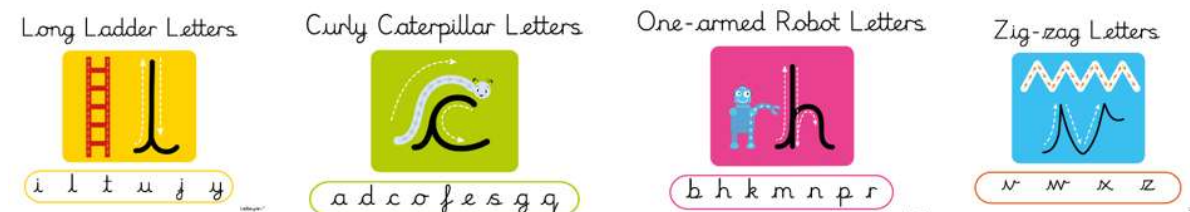
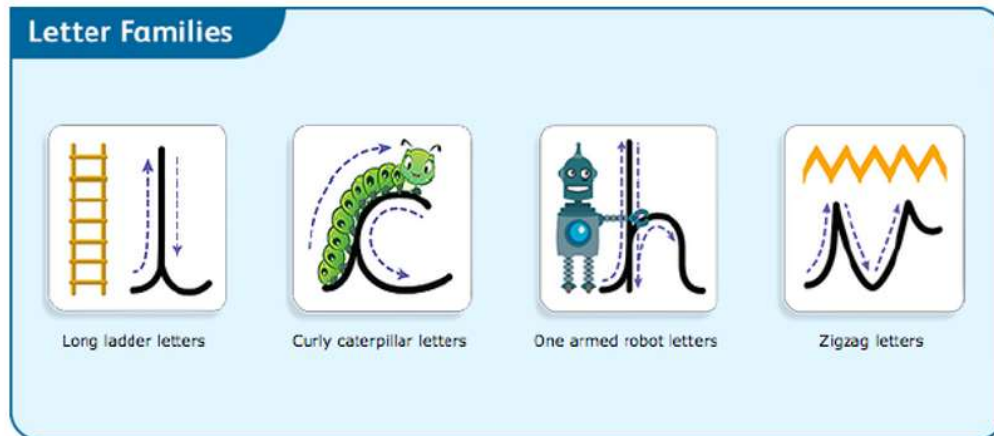
The English Ambassadors will be announcing the winners of the Handwriting Competition held at the end of last year and will be giving vouchers out for those winners soon- keep your ears open for who the amazing hand writers are 😊.

On the next page are lots of visual resources to help you with handwriting at home.

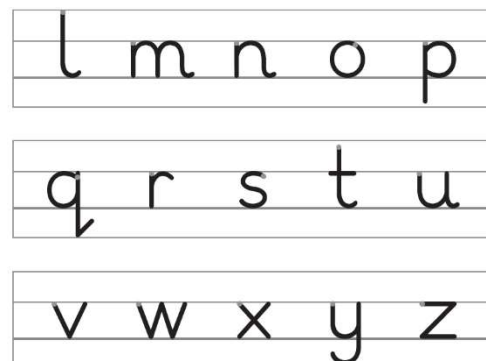
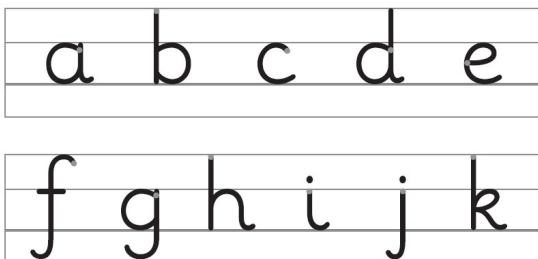
Here is a guide to your child's pencil grip progression and correct writing posture:



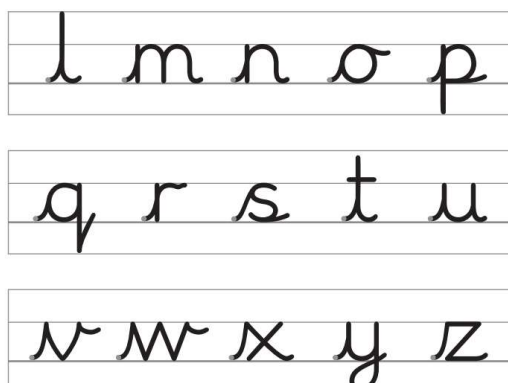
These are the letter family names as shown below. In EYFS and Year 1, children will print letters and in Year 2 they will start to join.



EYFS and Year 1 Letter Formation



Cursive Letter formation – joined handwriting : (Year 2 upwards)



Here is a guide of how you can log on at home to practice.

Letter-join Pupil log-in

PC DESKTOP AND LAPTOP LOG-IN

Log in at www.letterjoin.co.uk and use the Desktop log-in option with these details:

Username: **kh11953**

Password: **home**

PC Browsers:

Letter-join will work on the following browsers on PCs/Macs:

- Google Chrome
- Safari

Do not use Internet Explorer.

IPAD AND TABLET LOG-IN

Go to www.letterjoin.co.uk and use the Tablet log-in option with these details:

Username: **kh11953**

Swipe code
(starting at top left):



Tablet/iPad Browsers:

Letter-join will run on the following tablets:

- iPads running iOS7 and above through the Safari browser.
- Windows 8 tablets (8 inch and bigger) using the built-in browser.
- Android tablets (8 inch and bigger) using Google Chrome.

You may have been informed that your child is in a handwriting intervention or you may wish to practise handwriting at home to help support and improve your child's handwriting. Please ask for some paper if needed and see above for guidance on how each letter is formed.



Spelling

Following the Writing Framework guidance to focus on Transcription (Handwriting and Spelling) to improve Writing standards, and after staff training, we have purchased a new spelling scheme 'Ready, Steady Spell'. This scheme ensures that all of the requirements of the National Curriculum, the Writing Framework and educational research is catered for and children will develop their skills to become better spellers systematically.

Y2 will have 5 lessons per week and Y3-6 will have 3 lessons per week. Reception and Year One will continue to do their Phonics sessions daily using the rigorous and systematic phonics scheme 'Floppy Phonics'.

'Ready, Steady, Spell' equips children with strategies to use to aid their spelling which they can adapt and change for different words and spelling patterns.

All children will receive their spellings at the end of the week's lessons and will have a week to learn them; therefore they will have been taught the skills and strategies to support them to learn their spellings before receiving them. We will also be assessing them on previous year words to ensure consolidation of these. Listen out for your children talking about spelling strategies like 'Syll-a-beat' where they clap the syllables of the word and 'Wrong say, right spell' where they emphasise a part of the word to help them spell it.



Reading

Reading, as ever, remains of high importance at St. Mary's and your children are enjoying reading with an adult, whether that be daily, three times a week or once a week; alongside reading lessons. Teachers will be rewarding children with a special sticker in KS1 and certificates in KS2 for taking part and following our 'Reading Challenge' of reading 4x per week. I thank you for your support with this in advance. Just a reminder, KS2 children are able to write in their own diaries, as long as parents/carers give it a quick signature.



Volunteer Readers

We have a wonderful group of adults who come into school to hear your children read every week. They receive training and support and gain much joy from seeing the progress your child is making in reading and hearing them chat about the story. If you would like to join this amazing group, please let the office know.

Our School Library

We are always looking for new books and donations for our school library especially age appropriate Non-Fiction books. If you have any at home that would be suitable for school, please come and bring them to the office and we will gratefully accept them. Also, if you know of any companies that make donations to charities our school library would be a grateful recipient. Thank you

I hope you found this letter informative; I look forward to seeing you around school.

Thankyou

Mrs Harvey (English Lead) and the English Ambassadors.