

DODFORD FIRST SCHOOL



Every Day, a Learning Journey

Handwriting Policy

DEFINITION:

Handwriting is an important aspect of the writing mode of language.

RATIONALE

Fluent, clear handwriting is a result of well established movement habits. The process of writing should become an automatic skill so that the child's attention can be focused on the process of creative written expression.

It is our policy that handwriting is introduced as a means of written communication. Children are encouraged to develop a legible, free-flowing script of which they are suitably proud.

AIMS

- ✓ To provide the children with a fluent, neat and legible handwriting style of which they can be proud.
- ✓ To develop the children's confidence in themselves as writers.
- ✓ For the children to derive pleasure from developing an aesthetically pleasing writing style.
- ✓ To provide all children regardless of their academic ability, with success in their handwriting.
- ✓ To use handwriting as an aid to spelling.
- ✓ To minimise typographical errors e.g. reversals.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To know how to hold a pencil/pen correctly.
2. To know that they should write from left to right and top to bottom of a page.
3. To know how to form letters correctly.
4. To know how to regulate size and shape of letters.
5. To know how to regulate spacing of letters and words.
6. To know how to form lower case, upper case and capital letters.
7. To know how to join letters and learn how to use the four main handwriting joins.
8. To be given the opportunity to develop a legible handwriting style with increasing fluency.
9. To be able to use different forms of handwriting for different purposes e.g. print for labelling maps or a faster script for note-making.

We endeavour to fulfil our aims by following the statutory requirements set out within The Early Years and Foundation Guidance and National Curriculum 2014 for English.

TEACHING APPROACHES

The school has developed a 'whole school approach' so that teaching is consistent. Teachers' own handwriting when marking work or writing notices should conform to the whole school policy and provide a good role model.

It is important that posture, grip, writing position and correct letter formation are encouraged from the beginning:

- Posture

Feet should be firmly placed on the floor. Children should be encouraged to sit up straight, with body slightly inclined towards the table.

- Position of Pencil

The pencil should be held between thumb and forefinger, resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger. The writing tip should be approximately 2 cms from the handhold. The hand should be held below the writing line in order that everything is visible. Children should be reminded that the paper can be moved slightly upwards to retain a comfortable position.



- Letter Formation

The style we use – see appendix one. Children are introduced to these formations in Reception. Capital letters are not joined to other letters.

The Rules of Cursive Style help with:

- ✓ less confusion for the child as every letter starts on the line with an entry stroke and leads on with an exit stroke.
- ✓ the flow of cursive writing as letters naturally flow into each other, it is impossible to write separate letters without joining.
- ✓ spacing between words as the child develops whole word awareness.
- ✓ a child's visual memory.

The use of rubbers is discouraged. Mistakes in written work are indicated by marking through with one neat horizontal line.

HANDWRITING AND READING

In school children are exposed to both cursive and print styles as well as commercial print. They develop an awareness for reading in print and writing in cursive side by side in their learning, such as prompts around the rooms/school – teachers lettering, labels on displays/ teaching aids e.g. alphabet on tables and through teachers modelling of writing.

HANDWRITING AND SPELLING

A close link between both of these is apparent. For example in Key Stage 1 teachers link the teaching of phonics and handwriting joins e.g. for introducing digraphs and trigraphs.

MATERIALS AND TOOLS

A variety of materials and tools are used to develop pre- handwriting skills e.g. plasticine, playdough, clay, pegs and peg boards, pipe-cleaners etc.

Children within the early years and Key Stage 1 use broad and fine felt pens for pattern making activities.

Children in Years 1-2 will use pencil for all letter formation activities e.g. triangular and ordinary pencils

In Years 3-4 children will work towards obtaining a pen license before they may use handwriting pens.

Slopping surfaces/pencil grips may be used to support children with difficulties.

PROGRESSION

Reception

- Develop gross motor skills e.g. Children in Reception follow 'Write Dance' Scheme. (This is a progressive music and movement programme for the development of pre-writing skills in children. Write Dance is a method that integrates the whole body in the development of co-ordination of hands and fingers.)
- Teachers encourage correct grip, posture and positioning of paper.
- Children will explore pattern making as an introduction to joined handwriting e.g. forming a controlled line of zigzags, waves, jellies, castles, ringlets; and be encouraged to mark and pattern make across the curriculum.
- Participate in activities that develop fine motor skills e.g. cutting, pegboards, threading, weaving, modelling
- Form lower case letters correctly in a script that will be easy to join later.

Year 1

- Develop a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and posture.
- Practise handwriting in conjunction with spelling. (Letters and Sounds)
- Begin to write on widely spaced lined paper.

Year 2

- Use and practise the four basic handwriting patterns:
 - Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders ai, ar,un
 - Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ou, vi,wi
 - Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ab, ul,it
 - Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ol, wh,ot
- Use the four basic joins with confidence in their writing.
- Continue to practise handwriting in conjunction with spelling.

Year 3

- Practise correct formation of all four joins and use these for independent writing.
- Ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and the spacing between letters and words.
- Build up a handwriting speed, fluency and legibility through practice.
- Use smaller spaced lined paper.

Year 4

- Use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required.
- Build up speed and ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and spacing between letters and words.

The Pen License: Children who display an acceptable, legible joined script (having achieved NC Secure 3 Standard) will have the opportunity to earn a Pen License. These children will have the opportunity to use pen for written work. The pens used will be black Berol handwriting pens.

ORGANISATION

We teach handwriting as a specific skill rather than an independent task which can lead to poor formation. Children will be taught handwriting outside the daily English lesson on a regular basis, little and often used as the best approach. Year's 1 –4 will participate in regular handwriting lessons and letter formation will be reinforced during daily word-work sessions or within the English lesson. Lessons will be fun, varied and multi-sensory e.g. sky writing, use of whiteboards or books. Reception children will participate in regular Write Dance Sessions.

ASSESSMENT

Continuous informal assessment is made by the teacher during each handwriting session.

Formal assessments are made when assessing children's independent writing on a half-termly basis.

INCLUSION

At our school we teach handwriting to all children, whatever their ability. Through our handwriting teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress and the vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and a specific individual program is drawn up in consultation with the SEN co-ordinator.

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision – see below.

LEFT HANDED CHILDREN

Each left handed child is identified and closely monitored by the class teacher to ensure success. The following guidelines are useful to help left-handed children.

Guidelines for Writing Left Handed

Ensure that:

- ✓ The writing surface and chair are suitable for the child's own height.
- ✓ The child sits towards the left of their partner leaving plenty of space for writing on the left side of his/her mid-line (this allows maximum space for arm movement)
- ✓ The writing paper is to the left of the child's body midline.
- ✓ The paper is tilted up to 32 degrees in a clockwise direction.
- ✓ A writing tool which moves smoothly across the paper is used.
- ✓ The paper should be supported with the right hand.
- ✓ The writing forearm should be parallel with the paper edge as the child writes.
- ✓ To avoid smudging encourage the child to position their fingers about 1.5 cms away from the end of their writing implement.
- ✓ The pencil should sit in the 'v' between thumb and forefinger, sitting parallel to the thumb.
- ✓ The wrist should be straight.

HOME SCHOOL LINKS

Parents are introduced to the schools handwriting style through initial Reception intake meetings and parents evenings e.g. to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to their children by using only capital letters at the beginning of names, drawing patterns, working big etc. at an early stage.

A copy of the schools cursive handwriting script is printed in pupils Home Learning Diaries.

The impact of this policy on standards in handwriting will be assessed through whole school writing moderation carried out annual.

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other English policies.

REVIEW

POLICY AGREED BY STAFF AND GOVERNORS: September 2018

POLICY REVIEWED: April 2020

Appendix 1

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