

Deer Park Primary School

Handwriting Policy



"We are all aware that handwriting is the neglected one of the 3 Rs. A major problem faced by handwriting teachers is to convince the children and sometimes their parents that, handwriting is still a necessary skill and not an anachronism. The argument that much schoolwork is now written on computers is often quoted but observation of notebooks and exercise books of most school age children reveal that a great deal is still hand-written. The upper junior and secondary age pupil who is unable to pick up a pen and write quickly and legibly on paper is still at a considerable disadvantage. Time is wasted writing slowly: there is frustration when the text cannot be easily read and a loss of confidence is commonly the result."

Gwen Dorman – Specialist Handwriting Teacher

In Reception and Year 1 we teach children to form letters using clear, legible print. We do join letters.

Our letters look like this:

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

At Deer Park Primary School we teach pupils to use "continuous cursive script" from Year 2. By doing this we aim to for pupils, as they progress through KS2, to be able to focus on the content of their writing and less on the mechanics of forming legible script.

Our letters look like this:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
xyz

Why choose cursive writing?

Once individual letter formation has been mastered continuous cursive script also presents an opportunity for the teacher to link the teaching of handwriting to spelling and phonics, training pupils in the formation of letter strings and encouraging pupils to learn these through short, but regular repetition until they can feel the shape of common strings without removing the pen from the paper.

For example letter strings such as *ely, ick, ight, ckly, ought, able, ing* can be practised enabling the child to simply add suffix letters to confidently make words.

The benefits of teaching cursive script

- It helps children's writing to be clear, fluent, legible and fast
- Having a lead in and out stroke avoids confusion about where to begin letter formation
- The pen/pencil does not often need to be lifted from the page – this reinforces phonic and spelling patterns.

Planning for teaching handwriting

Context – Handwriting should be an integral not isolated part of phonics, writing and spelling.

Direct teaching – It should be taught through a balance of whole class and small group work but it should be **taught!**

Practise – Children need specific opportunities in school and at home to practise and reinforce good handwriting habits.

Application – The skills learned need to be put to use so that children see a point in their hard work.

Teacher routines for handwriting

During phonics sessions, handwriting is taught every day as well as integrated into everyday lessons.

In Year 2 and in Key Stage Two, handwriting should be taught as an integral part of lessons. Children who need additional support with handwriting should receive a timely, focused handwriting intervention to allow them to 'catch up'.

Homework on practise sheets can be set to consolidate new letter strings for pupils who need more practise. With older pupils, therefore, this need not be a whole class homework.

IT IS VITAL THAT PUPILS HAVE LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES TO APPLY NEW SKILLS.

Pupils must see the teacher model writing using the correct formation.

Labels, displays and resources must use the correct handwriting formation and there must be a mixture of typed and handwritten.

These are the agreed fonts that are used in our school. It is almost identical to our agreed cursive style and great for doing classroom labels, whiteboard slides and presentations.

- Reception -Year 1 = Printed – Twinkl printed
- Year 2 – there will be a mixture of printed and cursive as children make the transition
- Year 3 - Year 6 = Cursive - Twinkl Cursive

Cursive Writing Rules! OK!

- ✓ We do not join capital letters
- ✓ We start each letter on the line
- ✓ We do not take our pen from the paper until we get to the end of the word. We go back and cross t's and dot i's

What we are aiming for

- We are aiming for pupils in years 3, 4, 5 and 6 to be able to write sufficiently fluently and legibly to be able to focus on the content and not the mechanics of forming letters and words.
- We are aiming for most children by the time they leave year 2 to have begun to develop a consistently joined handwriting style.

Pen Licences

- From Year 3, children can earn a pen licence,
- To gain a pen licence, children demonstrate consistently in EVERY book either:
 - a neat cursive style, showing consistency in letter size and spacing;
 - a printed style with consistency in spacing and letter size (and be working towards joining);
 - SEND and writing in the very best printed or cursive style for them.
- From year 5, all children will be awarded a pen.
- Only the headteacher or Deputy Headteacher can award a pen licence.
- Pens can be taken away if a pupils' standard of handwriting slips from the 'norm'.

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