

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

Pre Writing

PRE-WRITING SHAPES

Before your child can learn to write, he or she needs to be able to draw these shapes

Vertical line	Horizontal line	Circle	Plus sign	
2 years	2½ years	3 years	3½-4 years	
Square	Diagonal line (top-left to bottom-right)	Diagonal line (top-right to bottom-left)	Oblique cross	Triangle
4 years	4½ years	4½ years	4 years 11 months	5 years 3 months

Children who can draw an oblique cross are able to copy more letters and numbers than children who cannot

Before children can begin to form letters correctly, they need to be able to make the following marks with the correct directionality (see above). These skills are continued to be developed and practised during the Reception year.

In Reception and Year 1 we teach children to form letters using clear, legible print. We do not join letters. We teach the grapheme (letters) in the order that 'Little Wandle' introduces the sounds (Little Wandle Letters and Sounds is our school's chosen phonics and early reading programme used in Reception and Year 1)

Our printed 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 "cursive script" from Year 2. By doing this we aim to help 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 cursive letters look like this:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

We do not teach entrance strokes and we do not join or loop these letters:

b f g j p q s y

How and when is cursive script introduced?

During the autumn term (September-December) children in year 2 will continue to practise printed letters. These will be taught in the order shown in Appendix 1. They will do this as discreet handwriting practise and continue to write in a printed style within their work books.

From the spring term (January onwards), children who are ready, will begin to learn the letter joins (Appendix 2) and start to transfer these joins into their written work across the curriculum, building an increasingly fluent style throughout the remainder of the year.

At the start of KS2, children will be expected to continue to build their fluency and write in a cursive script in all work books. The fluency and neatness of writing will develop throughout the year.

By the time children reach the end of year 4 they should be writing in a neat, correctly sized cursive script. This level of writing is continued until the end of KS2 (year 6).

Some children may require additional support and adaptations to allow them to write legibly and in a style that is comfortable for them. Whilst it is an end of KS2 expectation (set by the DfE), we recognise that not all children will be able to join their handwriting.

Planning for teaching handwriting

Context – Handwriting should be an integral part of phonics, writing and spelling across the curriculum.

Direct teaching – It should be taught through handwriting sessions as well as reinforced throughout the wider curriculum.

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

Teacher routines for handwriting

During phonics sessions, handwriting is taught every day as well as integrated into everyday lessons (following Little Wandle Letters and Sounds).

All children from Year 2-Year 6 will practise handwriting joins in a specific handwriting book throughout the year.

From the spring term in year 2, children who are ready, will transfer these joins into their written work across the curriculum.

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

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

Pen Licences

- From Year 3, children can earn a pen licence,
- To gain a pen licence, children demonstrate consistently, across the curriculum:
 - a neat cursive style, showing consistency in letter size and spacing
- From year 5, all children will be awarded a pen.
- Class teachers will award a pen licence.

ALu – September 2024

Appendix 1

Order that letters will be taught in from year 2

Set 1 (Long letters): *l t i u j y*










Set 2 (curly letters): *c a g q o e f s*


Set 3 (bouncing ball letters): *r n m p h b d*

Set 4 (zig zag letters): *v w x k z*

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 2 years	 2½ years	 3 years	 3½-4 years	
 4 years	 4½ years	 4½ years	 4 years 11 months	 5 years 3 months

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Appendix 2

Order that letter joins are taught

There are four different joins taught in this order:

Set 1. Diagonal join to letters without ascenders e.g. *ai ar un in am ear aw ir hu ti ki du up ag*

Set 2. Horizontal join to letters without ascenders *ou vi wi op ow ov ri ru ve we re fe fu ob ol wh rk rt ot of fl ft*

Set 3. Diagonal join to letters with ascenders *ab ul it ib if ub th ck ch it*

Set 4. Horizontal join to letters with ascenders *ol wh ot ft fl of rt rk wh ol ob*