



Downs Infant School Handwriting Policy



Our aim is for children to develop legible, fluent and efficient handwriting.

In handwriting, as in other skills, children will develop at different rates; for that reason, it is important that there is a consistent style of handwriting throughout the school, and that all staff consider themselves to be teachers of handwriting, with a clear understanding of the progression of skills, and of how to remedy errors. Early intervention is essential at every stage, to prevent the acquisition of bad habits which are difficult to correct.

To reach the expected standard for writing at the end of Key Stage One, pupils do not need to demonstrate joined up handwriting. They must however form lower case, capitals and digits with correct formation and using the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another. To be awarded 'working at greater depth' at the end of Key Stage 1, "pupils must demonstrate joined up handwriting, using the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in most of their writing" (Standards and testing agency 2016)

Handwriting across the school:

'Magic Movers' is introduced in Reception from week 3 Autumn term where children have specific gross and fine motor activities four times a week. The learning environment will contain many opportunities to practise fine and gross motor skills daily.

'Physical Friday' is aimed to improve gross motor skills which in turn will lead to more accurate fine motor skills and thus translating into high quality handwriting.

Children will learn a pre cursive handwriting style beginning in Reception. During their time in Year Two, children will be introduced to various joins to begin to develop a continuous cursive style. They are encouraged to maintain a correct posture and pencil grip.

Handwriting is taught discretely 3 times a week from January in the Foundation Stage and throughout Key Stage One.

Children are given a choice as to which pen they write with and are encouraged to think about which might help them to produce their best writing – this philosophy begins in Reception and should be continued and embedded in Key Stage One.

Whiteboards are used for handwriting in Reception and the autumn term of Year One when all letter and number formation is taught and revised. Handwriting books are used from Spring 1 in Year One onwards. The lines match those in English books so that skills are transferable. Self-assessment, peer-assessment and discussion with teacher is ongoing.

Specific Progression:

Children are taught correct letter and number formation in a pre-cursive style.

Children are free to select a writing implement of their choice in child initiated learning. Children are taught the correct way to sit, a tripod pencil grip and to write in a straight line from left to right is taught. They are also taught how to write 'on the line' and to develop consistency in the size of their letters and digits.

Letter order of introduction: (to be introduced using the Downs Infants handwriting patter.)

Long ladder family (l i t u y j)

Curly caterpillars family (c a d g q o s f e)

One armed robot family (r n m h b k p)

Zig zag monster family (z v w x)

Year One, will revise and continue to use direct teaching of individual letters and digits. Correct formation is a non-negotiable.

In Year Two, children practise forming letters and numbers and are introduced to basic joins.

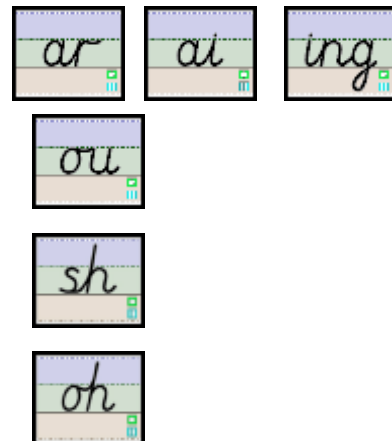
Handwriting cards will be available in all rooms. These are double sided showing handwriting letter families on one side, and lower case letters with their corresponding capitals on the other.

SEN/Inclusion

These expectations apply to the vast majority of children in our school. Occasionally a decision will be made to personalise expectations for a child who has such specific needs that these expectations could be a barrier to their progress (e.g. a child with physical difficulties writing or difficulties with visual perception.). Difficulties are addressed through appropriate interventions or specific equipment. Where appropriate, children will continue to learn the pre cursive formation.

The four basic handwriting joins:

1. diagonal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ai, ar, un
2. horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ou, vi, wi
3. diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. - ab, ul, it
4. horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. - ol, wh, ot



Marking

Teachers will give verbal feedback during handwriting lessons and mistakes will be corrected for children to rehearse correctly and in the moment. Children are encouraged and supported to transfer their handwriting skills into all cross curricular writing.

This link is used in handwriting to clearly show correct formation including start and finish points:

https://linkpenfonts.co.uk/index.php?main_page=page&id=25

Ideas for hand gym:

<https://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/handwriting-warm-up-exercises.html>