

**Dropmore Infant School**  
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**Chair of Governors:** Mr Tim Wicks

**Policy No:** 054

**Policy Title:** Handwriting Policy

**Issue No:** 003

**Effective Date:** February 2024

**Next Review Date:** February 2026

**Approved by Chair of Governors:** *Tim Wicks* .....

**Date:** 20/03/24 .....

1. Handwriting Intent
  2. Handwriting Implementation
  3. Handwriting Impact
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## 1 Intent

We intend for our pupils to develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style using continuous cursive letters that leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing. Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility.

Legible writing that can be produced comfortably, at speed and with little conscious effort allows a child to attend to the higher-level aspects of writing composition and content. The development of this fluid style when mastered allows children to apply their energy into the content of their writing as opposed to the formation of the letters themselves. Handwriting skills are taught regularly and systematically throughout the school.

At Dropmore Infant School our aims in teaching handwriting are:

- To enable children to write in a consistent, well presented and legible format.
- To have a consistent, progressive approach across the three-year groups when teaching handwriting.
- To ensure that when our children leave in Year 2 they can write well formed letters with secured joins
- To adopt a consistent approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.

## 2 Implementation

We use Letter-join ([www.letterjoin.co.uk](http://www.letterjoin.co.uk)) which covers all the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum, as the basis of our handwriting scheme. In Reception children learn to write in print, in Year 1 they write with a lead out, in Year 2 they learn to write with a lead in and joined. Please see Appendix 1 for examples of our handwriting progression. Our teachers are encouraged to use the appropriate handwriting for their year group.

We use the terms 'Sky, Grass and Ground' to help the children understand where to place their letters once they are using lines (see appendix 4).

RECEPTION:

### Letter-join Print Plus

A new font, Letter-join Print Plus, includes simple exit strokes for letters that end 'on the line'.

the dog ran

YEAR 1:

### Letter-join Air No-lead

Letter-join Air No-lead does not include a lead-in line and the letters are not joined.

the dog ran

YEAR 2:

### Letter-join No-lead

Letter-join No-lead does not include the lead-in line at the start of each letter but has a lead-out line that joins to the following letter.

the dog ran

*Reception – (Letter-join Print Plus)*

The skills to support handwriting are taught in Reception, particularly so in the beginning months:

- Movements to enhance gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern making, dancing.
- Exercises to develop fine motor skills such as dough disco, making marks on paper, whiteboards, blackboards, sand trays, iPads and tablets.

Handwriting:

- At this stage, there are no entrance strokes or joining of letters, as the teaching is focused on letter formation.
- During Autumn Term letters are taught in line with the phonics sounds taught that day.
- The children learn a rhyme, matched to their phonics scheme, to help remember how to form their letters (see Appendix 2).
- Once the children have learnt all the alphabet sounds. Handwriting is then taught daily with letters grouped into 'letter families' and are taught in order, starting with the first letter of the family. When pupils are able to form that letter correctly they are then introduced to the next letter of the family. Letter family names will be used when teaching the formation - curly caterpillar letters, long ladders, one armed robot and zigzag monsters letters (see appendix 8)

There are many opportunities in the continuous provision to support fine motor, gross motor and handwriting skills. Handwriting interventions are also in place for children who need extra support with their letter formation.

*Year 1 – Letter join air (no lead)*

- In the beginning weeks of Year 1, much time is invested in ensuring correct letter formation so children reduce cognitive load when writing and spend more of their time working on writing content and composition.
- After this, handwriting is taught four times a week in discrete 10-15 minute lessons.
- Children work through a booklet matched to the Letterjoin Year 1 plans
- Children are also given opportunities to develop their handwriting in morning work and are reminded in all their lessons regarding using the correct handwriting style.
- Interventions are organised for children who need extra support in their gross, fine and handwriting formation.

*Year 2 – Letter join (no lead)*

- In Year 2 handwriting is taught four times a week in discrete 10-15 minute lessons
- Children work through a booklet matched to the Letterjoin Year 2 plans.
- Children are also given opportunities to develop their handwriting in morning work and are reminded in all their lessons regarding using the correct handwriting style.
- Once they are ready, children move to joined up letters.
- They receive a pen license when they are joining their letters correctly.
- Interventions are organised for children who need extra support in their gross, fine and handwriting formation.

**Marking and Assessment**

- We believe that in the moment, live marking is best for handwriting lessons.
- We may point out letters for children to consider practising again, or write a letter for them to copy over, or practise writing again.
- Teachers circle letters the children have written well and get chdn to self-assess by circling what they feel their best one was. They may also ask them to peer assess using the same approach.
- Teachers may comment verbally or in marking on handwriting in all books either to set a target or compliment.
- Summative assessments are carried out on writing each term which include handwriting

### Children with special educational needs

Occasionally, a decision will be made to personalise expectations for a pupil who has such specific needs that these expectations could be a barrier to their progress (e.g. a child with physical disability). Difficulties are addressed through appropriate interventions or specific equipment e.g. pencil grips

### Displays

Our handwriting and phonics displays across the school are printed in the correct format for the classroom they are in.

### Correct sitting position and pencil grip

Posture and pencil grip are important in developing good handwriting. Pupils will be taught and frequently reminded to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

### Tools for writing

Children will start handwriting using a soft, large pencil with a triangular grip. When fine motor skills have been established (usually Year 1) they may use a narrower pencil with a grip. Towards the end of Year 1 and in Year 2, children will be allowed to use a handwriting pen.

Pencil grips will be provided for children who needs them. They will be assessed termly on their pencil grip.

## 3 Impact

- The English Coordinator/s monitors the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching handwriting through observations and book looks.
- The English co-ordinator/s is/are also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of handwriting.
- Presentation of work, including handwriting, is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team on a regular basis through work scrutiny and lesson observations.
- Feedback will be shared with the class teacher and discussed at leadership meetings when appropriate. This will ensure that the policy leads to good practice
- The English Governor monitors handwriting during learning walks and visits with the English lead/s.

## 4 Handwriting National Curriculum Standards

Handwriting National Curriculum Requirements The following states the end of Key Stage National Curriculum expectations that our pupils will be working towards:

### *End of Early Years Foundation Stage*

- Writing  
Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed  
Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.
- Fine motor  
Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases

### *End of Key Stage 1 –*

#### Working at:

- Pupils use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in some of their writing;
- Pupils write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters;
- Pupils use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Greater Depth:

- Pupils use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in most of their writing

### **5 Equality Impact Assessment:**

Children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills, including left-handed children, and children with special educational needs, will be given additional support to help achieve their optimum handwriting level. We also use rhymes to help remember letter formation (see Appendix 2). Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure our children achieve their optimum handwriting level, irrespective of special educational or medical needs or protected characteristics.

**Appendix 1 – DIS letters cursive letter formation**

**Appendix 2 – DIS Reception Letter formation rhymes**

**Appendix 3 – DIS Number formation, number rhymes and other mathematical symbols**

**Appendix 4 – DIS Sky, grass and ground**

**Appendix 5 – Sitting position**

**Appendix 6 – Tripod pencil grip**

**Appendix 7 – Left handed children**

**Appendix 8 – Letter Families**

**APPENDIX 1  
DROPMORE INFANT SCHOOL CURSIVE ALPHABET**

Reception – Print Plus

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

Year 1 & Year 2 - Cursive



























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

Capital Letters

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

## APPENDIX 2

### DROPMORE INFANT SCHOOL RECEPTION LETTER FORMATION RHYMES

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					

- a - Wipe round the apple, go back up to wipe off the dirt.  
 b - Down the boy, up and around the ball.  
 c - Stroke the cat from head to tail.  
 d - Comb around his face, up to his head and down to his collar.  
 e - Start under his chin and wipe around his ears and down his trunk.  
 f - Up, down and splash, across.  
 g - Wipe round her face and brush her hair.  
 h - Down his head, up and over his back and front legs.  
 i - Blow down the instrument. Take a breath.  
 j - Brush the dirt off and a bit goes in the air.  
 k - The king stands up straight. He picks up the ball and kicks it.  
 l - Go down the lane and around the corner.  
 m - Push down, then smooth over the first arch and over the second arch.  
 n - Down the needle then over the thread.  
 o - Peel the orange all the way round.  
 p - Brush her hair then wipe her face.  
 q - Wash her face and brush her hair with a flick.  
 r - Rain comes down, rainbow comes up and over.  
 s - Slither down the spaghetti.  
 t - Smooth the tie and put the pin in.  
 u - Down the burrow, up the other side and back down.  
 v - Down the valley and up the other side.  
 w - Clean down and up and down and up.  
 x - Bang one stick down and the other stick down.  
 y - Walk down and up the yacht then down and round the anchor.  
 z - zig, cross, zag

**APPENDIX 3  
DROPMORE INFANT SCHOOL NUMBER FORMATION, NUMBER RHYMES AND OTHER  
MATHEMATICAL SYMBOLS**

0 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9

+ - × ÷ =

( ) # % &

@ / £ \$ €

0 – around to the left to find my hero, then to the top, now I’ve made zero

1 – a downward strike, my that’s fun. Now I’ve made the number one

2 – half a heart says “I love you”. Add a line. Now I’ve made two

3 – Around the tree, around the tree, now I’ve made the number three

4 – Down, across and down once more, now I’ve made the number four

5 – Straight line down, then go around. Hat on top and fives a clown

6 – Bend down low to pick up sticks. Now I’ve made the number six

7 – Across the sky and down from heaven. Now I’ve made the number 7

8 – Make an ‘s’ and close the gate. Now I’ve made the number 8.

9 - Make a circle, draw line. Now I’ve made the number 9.

10 – A downward stroke, that’s my one. Add a zero, that’s ten done!

**APPENDIX 4  
DROPMORE INFANT SCHOOL – SKY, GRASS AND GROUND**

Example using Year 1 letter font

Sky

b d f h k l t

Grass

a c e i m n o r s u v w x z

Ground

f g j p q y



### APPENDIX 5 SITTING POSITION

**SITTING POSITION**

The table reaches to below elbow height

Sit with a straight back, not leaning over the page

Keep both feet flat on the floor

Sit right back in the seat

Pull the chair close in to the table

Paper position for right-handed children

### APPENDIX 6 TRIPOD PENCIL GRIP

Both right and left handed children are encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pencil nib.

**1**

- 1) Grip the pencil with your index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.
- 2) With your free hand, spin the pencil from underneath.
- 3) Use your middle finger to support the underside of the pencil.

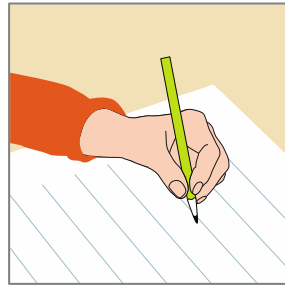
**2**

**3**

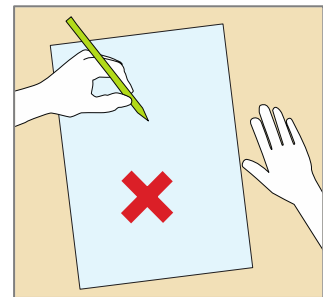
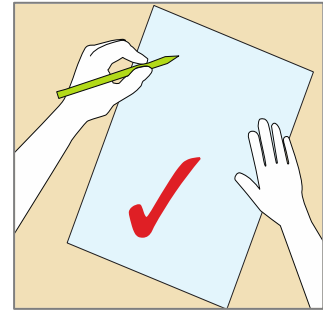
## APPENDIX 7 LEFT HANDED CHILDREN

### LEFT HANDED CHILDREN

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow right-handed teachers as they demonstrate letter formation (and vice versa) and may need demonstrations on an individual or group basis.



- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.

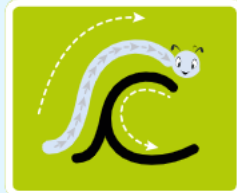


Paper position for left-handed children

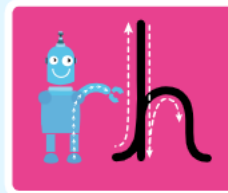
## APPENDIX 8 LETTER FAMILIES



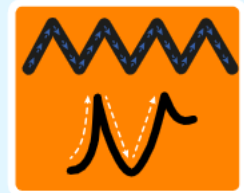
Long Ladder Letters



Curly Caterpillar Letters



One-armed Robot Letters



Zig-zag Letters

Long ladder letters – *il t u j y / i l t u j y / i l t u j y*

Curly caterpillar letters – *a d c o f e s g q / a d c o f e s g q / a d c o f e s g q*

One-armed robot letters – *b h k m n p r / b h k m n p r / b h k m n p r*

Zig Zag letters – *v w x z / v w x z / v w x z*