

Handwriting at Lord Deramore's

Teaching handwriting effectively impacts the wider curriculum and the development of the whole child offering, among others, the following benefits:

- When children can write autonomously they can concentrate on **what** to write rather than **how** to write so their ideas and writing content will improve.
- Handwriting can have a significant impact on children's self-esteem and help them to develop a strong sense of pride which cannot be measured by attainment level or standardised testing.

Where children have good handwriting, and are proud of how their work looks, they become far more meticulous about spelling, punctuation, grammar and their use of language.

We do not follow a bought 'scheme'; rather we use a consistent approach to teaching handwriting throughout the school based on the Martin Harvey method of teaching handwriting. The approach progresses through the school with an emphasis being placed on consistency.

Fostering the right learning environment

In handwriting lessons, we aim to develop confidence and a positive attitude to handwriting by stating at the beginning of handwriting lessons that the children should be aiming to impress and be proud of their writing. We aim to develop good habits by ensuring that children in Year 2 and above:

- Use two hands to write (one to hold the page and one to hold the pencil/pen).
- Have six feet on the floor (four chair legs and their own two feet).
- Act on BBC - Bottom, Back in Chair.
- Act on TNT - Tummy Near Table.
- Have their paper straight or at a slight angle.
- Are seated carefully so that left-handed and right-handed writers are not bumping elbows.

Handwriting in Early Years

Children in EY need to be given ample time to develop their gross and fine motor skills to ensure they have the necessary strength and control to be able to hold a writing tool and form letters. All children will have access to the following:

- Pen Jitsu (movements for handwriting taught discretely), leading to correct letter formation
- Simplified versions of Little Wandle formation phrases, taught at the same time as learning the GPCs in phonics.

Handwriting in Year 1

Children in Y1 continue to need to be given ample time to develop their gross and fine motor skills. All children will have access to the following:

- whole class sessions daily
- sky/grass/earth line guides to show correct placement
- Letter formation will be linked to the grapheme-phoneme correspondences taught during phonics lessons.

During Year 1 washing line joins only will be taught once letter formation is secure. Pupils will be taught to differentiate size of capitals and lower case letters.

Handwriting expectations in Phases 2 and 3 (Years 2 and above)	
Year 2 (Phase 2)	Form lower case letters of correct size relative to one another. Start to use some joining, introduced in the order set out in this policy. Understand which letters, when adjacent, are best left unjoined. Write capital letters of correct orientation and size relative to lower case letters. Write digits of the correct size and orientation.
Year 3 (Phase 2) and Year 4 (Phase 3)	Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent, are best left unjoined. Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting by ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant • that lines of writing are spaces sufficiently so that ascenders • and descenders of letters do not touch.
Year 5 (Phase 3) and Year 6 (Phase 3)	Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • choosing which shape of letter to use when given choices • deciding whether or not to join specific letters • choosing the writing implement that is best suited for the task.

Through Phases 2 and 3 there will be a minimum of three discrete handwriting sessions per week for the first half term of the academic year. Sessions may be less frequent in Year 6 if handwriting is consistent. During this half term, teachers will assess how secure children are in understanding the expectations of handwriting and whether they are consistently applying this within their work. The frequency of discrete sessions may then decrease but

with continued attention to handwriting whenever children write. The minimum number of discrete sessions will be two per week.

Across Phases 2 and 3, all discrete handwriting lessons should follow the same approach. Each session should begin with a warm up activity which should be no more than 2 minutes. Following this, the relevant session should be chosen based on prior learning. The teacher should explicitly model how to form the letter or join. Letter formation and joins should always be modelled using pencil/pen and paper to allow for precision teaching, so staff should use the visualiser appropriately to make this clear for the whole class. Following teacher modelling, children should independently attempt the letter or join. Teachers should use professional judgement over how many letters children should form as the emphasis should always return to quality over quantity. During children's independent attempt, staff should aim to visit all children to support where needed or provide further reinforcement. Time should be allowed for misconceptions to be addressed where children practise on their palm or in the air to secure formation.

Where pupils have specific, on-going handwriting needs, the class teacher will liaise with the SENDCO and, when appropriate, outside agencies. When needed, class teachers will complete fine motor skills assessments and implement appropriate interventions based on the outcome including Theraputty.

Handwriting Lessons	
Phase 1	<p>Early Years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • daily practise of new grapheme within phonics lesson • daily Pen Jitsu to teach movements for handwriting, progressing to teaching of letter formation. <p>Year 1 daily handwriting lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • warm up (2 mins) • teacher models focus letter formation in air and children practice movements • teacher models focus letter formation on whiteboard and children practise on individual whiteboards • staff visit each child to ensure correct grip and letter formation • small group practise handwriting at table using pencil and paper with direct adult support (not within handwriting session).
Phase 2 (daily)	<p>Handwriting lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • warm up (2 mins) • teacher explicitly models focus letter formation or joining
Phase 3 (minimum of 3)	<p>(chosen based on prior learning) using pen or pencil and paper under visualiser</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children practise independently

sessions per week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff visit each child to support correct formation and address any misconceptions.
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Left-handed children

Writing from left to right is more difficult for left-handed children. They should, therefore, be given more attention in the classroom to ensure that they do not learn bad habits of position, posture and pen hold which will hinder the development of a fast, fluent and legible hand.

To support children who are left-handed, the following strategies are employed by teachers:

- Model letter formation in the air specifically for left-handed children, using the left hand.
- Make sure that left-handed children sit on the left of right-handed children.
- For early writers, put a mark at the left of the page to indicate where writing begins.
- Left-handed children usually need to have the paper slightly to the left of the centre of their body and should be encourage to tilt their work clockwise so they can see what they have written.
- Experiment with seat height; some left-handed children may need a higher seat to see their work clearly and to prevent the elbow locking into their side as they work across the paper.
- To avoid smudging their work, left-handed children should be encouraged to position their fingers about 1.5cm away from the end of their writing tool. The pencil should sit in the 'V' between thumb and forefinger, sitting parallel to the thumb. The wrist should be straight.

Assessing and celebrating work

In a handwriting lesson, children should be given opportunities to reflect on their own work. Handwriting should be regularly praised by staff alongside misconceptions being addressed. Pupils can assess their own work using various strategies including:

- Putting a dot under the letter they feel most resembles the modelled example and being able to articulate why they think this.
- Identifying the best example and then striving to do one more which is even better.