



## Discovery Primary School

### Handwriting Policy

At Discovery Primary School, all children are introduced to Cursive Handwriting from the start. We believe this raises standards in the Early Years which impacts throughout the whole school, developing confidence, accuracy and fluency and improved presentation.

The Cursive Style helps:

- To minimise confusion for the child as every letter starts on the line with an entry stroke and leads out with an exit stroke.
- With the flow of Cursive Writing as letter naturally flow into each other, it is impossible to write separate letters without joining
- Form spacing between words as the child develops whole word awareness
- Develop a child's visual memory

#### **Aims**

- To provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in handwriting
- To produce clear, concise, legible handwriting
- To present work to a variety of audiences neatly
- To develop accuracy and fluency
- To help children recognise that handwriting is a form of communication and as such should be considered important in order for it to be effective
- To promote confidence and self-esteem
- To encourage children to take pride in their work
- To build in cross-curricular links to broaden experience
- To help children recognise that handwriting as a life-long skill and will be a fundamental element of all forms of written communication throughout their lives
- To display neatly presented work around the school as a model of excellence for others to aspire to

#### **Development of learning and teaching handwriting in Foundation Stage**

On entry, Reception children are involved in a variety of activities to develop essential pre-writing skills in line with the Early learning Goals of the Foundation Stage. Children are given many experiences to develop their fine and gross motor skills before learning the cursive script. Some of the activities are outlined below:

#### **GROSS MOTOR CONTROL**

Rolling hoops and running with a hoop, ribbon movement, chalking, painting on a large scale, Interactive Whiteboard, ball skills, exploring space and direction using the whole body.

## FINE MOTOR CONTROL

Tracing, colouring within guidelines and pictures, pattern work, using glue spreaders in small pots, painting with the tips of the fingers, cotton buds, play dough, threading, weaving, pegboards and scissor skills.

These activities will continue throughout the year to enable children to develop and secure these important skills.

Before starting the cursive script, children will spend time drawing patterns; zigzags, waves, circles, straight lines etc. to aid their writing ability. Children are introduced to actual letter formation in conjunction with the introduction of phonic skills. Children are taught phonics through the visual stimulus of Jolly Phonics supplemented with the letters and sounds publication. Alongside the teaching of the sound, the children will be practising the correct letter formation, without lead on or exit strokes, ensuring correct starting points and orientation of letters.

Children can begin to practise their names in cursive script once they have mastered how to spell their name and can form the letters properly. They can do this by tracing over in the first instance and then underneath and then using motor memory before Phonics has begun, however the class teacher will need to spend time with the children modelling the 'flicks' and showing the difference between print.

If there are children in Foundation Stage who have correct letter formation and good fine motor skills then they will be introduced to the cursive script with the lead and exit strokes. If a child finds letter formation challenging, they will continue to develop their gross and fine motor skills within the foundation stage provision. The child's stage of development in both physical development and literacy are taken into account before a child begins the cursive script. All teachers, teaching assistants and trainee teachers should be familiar with the contents of this policy thereby ensuring that the handwriting modelled to the children is in line with the style adopted throughout the school.

When children are engaged in writing activities teachers and teaching assistants should constantly observe the children and offer ongoing support and identify, intervene and address any misconceptions.

### **Writing Workshop for Parents**

During the Autumn Term, parents are invited to attend a writing workshop which enables us to outline our rationale and engage their support in encouraging their child to practise the Cursive Style at opportune moments at home. They are each given a copy of the Cursive Style alphabet.

### **The Learning Environment**

In the Foundation Stage classrooms there is a clearly identified writing area which is equipped with all necessary resources needed to enhance children's independence in writing. Print is visible within all areas and children's mark making is celebrated at every developmental stage. Activities and resources are available for all stages of writing.

## **Handwriting and Reading**

In school, children are exposed to both cursive and print styles as well as commercial print. They develop awareness for reading in print and writing in cursive side by side in their learning, such as prompts around classrooms/school – teachers lettering, labels on displays/ teaching aids, e.g. alphabet on tables and through teachers modelling of writing.

## **Left Handed Children**

Each left handed child is identified and closely monitored by the class teacher to ensure success. The following guidelines are useful to help left-handed children.

Guidelines for writing left-handed:

- The writing surface and chair are suitable for the child's own height
- The child sits towards the left of their partner leaving plenty of space for writing on the left side of his/her – mid line (this allows maximum space for arm movement). The writing paper is to be left of the child's body midline.
- The paper is supported with the right hand
- The writing tool is held sufficiently far from its point to ensure that the child can see what he/she is writing.

## **Children with difficulties**

Sometimes some children may experience difficulties this can be due to a coordination problem. Activities to develop 'gross motor skills' can be promoted as these will assist fine motor skills, as will plenty of pre-writing activities to loosen up the wrist and upper arm. Some children will require additional support consisting of short bursts of handwriting practice, one-to-one with a Teaching Assistant, as often as possible (daily preferably). Use of a small whiteboard and pen is often the most successful aid as they are less restrictive and enable the child to feel less inhibited.

## **Special Educational Needs**

All children, regardless of their educational needs, will complete some form of writing practice when this is accessible for them. It is the decision of the class teacher as to whether specific children need differentiated handwriting exercises. If this is to be the case the class teacher will decide which handwriting activities to give the children. For children who have very poor pencil control and find handwriting exceptionally challenging and disheartening then advice can be sought from the SENCo and the Occupational therapist, where appropriate.

## **Conclusion**

We at Discovery Primary School are committed in ensuring that all children develop a neat and legible handwriting script. By doing this the presentation of the work completed through school will be to a high standard.

## Appendix

### Handwriting Guidelines

The new curriculum states:

‘Handwriting requires frequent, discrete, direct teaching’

- 2 handwriting lessons need to be taught every week in KS1 and KS2.
- In KS1 children will be taught single letters before moving on to groups of letters and then short words. Teachers can use animal handwriting posters as a guide which show the different letter families; tall letters, short letters, letters with tails etc. The Nelson handwriting books can also be used as a structure to teach from.
- Year 2 children will begin to write sentences.
- KS2 children will also be taught using the Nelson handwriting books as a guide or, this session can also be used to practice writing tricky/ topic words and spellings.
- Resources that can be used to teach handwriting are:  
Nelson handwriting books  
Handwriting family posters  
The ‘Magic Pencil’ powerpoint  
<http://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/continuous-cursive-letters-beginners.html>
- [www.teachhandwriting.co.uk](http://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk) has an extensive range of video clips and examples of handwriting. It includes videos on how to hold a pencil properly, how to sit properly and exercises that can be carried out at the beginning of a handwriting lesson. It includes useful information and guidance for both teachers and parents to support with teaching and guiding handwriting. There are short animations to play on the IWB which model how to form the letters on the line. These clips include a 3 line template and a background of the sky and grass to show where children need to begin and end and the difference between tall letters, short letters and letters that go under the line. There is also guidance on how to form numbers and mathematical symbols as well as patterns which very young children make at the beginning of writing.
- Handwriting lessons should be no less than 20 minutes long. In KS1 handwriting lessons could be up to 30 minutes long allowing the children plenty of time to practice large and small letters without a line before doing more controlled letters on a line.

- The beginning of a handwriting lesson should be used to carry out exercises and show examples using the various resources. Modelling by the teacher should always be carried out on a ruled line. This can be done on the flip chart, IWB or under the visualiser.
- Children might be given the opportunity to practice on mini WB's, sugar paper etc. before writing on the line, this is a good opportunity to identify any misconceptions and correct/ model for individuals.
- In year 1, children will carry out their handwriting in a book with plain paper and large ruled lined paper. They will be given the opportunity to practice first on the plain page. They will practice writing the letters large and then small in an image linking to the letter/s being taught e.g. 'a' could be an image of an apple. After children have been given the opportunity to practice they will then form their letters on the line. Children that need extra support and guidance will have letters to trace over.
- In years 2-6 the children will carry out their handwriting in special handwriting books which consist of 3 lines. This enables the children to place their writing accurately on the line.

## Handwriting Awards

### KS2

Pen licenses will be given to children during Friday assemblies (as and when appropriate)

A photo must be added to the pen license along with name, signature and date and then the licence will be laminated.

The children will then be allowed to do their written work in the berol handwriting pen or manuscript handwriting pen found in the stationary cupboard.

The pen licence can be taken away at any point if the teacher feels that the standard of handwriting has dropped.

- Pen licences will be laminated and displayed in the classroom in order for the class teacher to keep a record of who has got a licence and when it was awarded etc. These will then be passed up to the next teacher as the children move up the school.

### KS1 and Year 3/ 4

Handwriting certificates will be given to the children during Friday assemblies.

In KS1 a child will be chosen every week.

Year 3 and 4 pupils will be awarded as and when appropriate (their pencils will be different to KS1)

The child's name and the date need to be added to the certificate and certificates will be laminated.

The children will also be given a special pencil (KS1-with smiley faces on, year 3 and 4 with penguins on- both types of pencils can be ordered from Primary Teaching services).

Policy ratified March 2016

Policy reviewed Spring 2016

Pen Licence and Handwriting Certificate Templates

**Pen Licence**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The licence holder has demonstrated outstanding achievements in handwriting and now officially has a licence to write with a pen.  
CONGRATULATIONS!

photo here

Authorised by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of issue: \_\_\_\_\_



*Super Handwriting Award*

*Well done \_\_\_\_\_  
for beautiful handwriting.*

*Keep it up!*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



We have been  
awarded with a  
pen licence for  
having beautiful  
handwriting...

