



DGPS Handwriting Policy 23-24

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Motto

Learning Together, Growing Together

Vision & Values

At Dove Green, we are creating a world class British school that promotes a respectful, happy, caring and inclusive community. We strive to prepare all students to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens, ready to meet the challenges of the future. In partnership with families and the wider community, our goal is to create purposeful, enriched opportunities for students that inspire them to become leaders of their own learning and develop the knowledge, critical thinking skills, and character necessary to succeed in an ever-changing world. We are dedicated to providing stimulating learning experiences through an evolving, challenging curriculum, fully reflecting the culture of the UAE and the wider world.

DGPS Way

At Dove Green Private School, we are:

Determined learners

Global thinkers

Positive achievers

Striving for success

'Handwriting is a tool that has to work. It must be comfortable, fast and legible.'
- Angela Webb, Chair, National Handwriting Association

Introduction

Even in this technological, computer-literate age, good handwriting remains fundamental to our students' educational achievement. Therefore, it is essential we equip students with the skills they require to develop fast, fluent, and legible writing.

At Dove Green Private School, we strive to ensure every child can develop a fluent, legible style of handwriting using the Twinkl programme of study. This is an FS and Primary stage programme, designed to help all students develop a confident, legible, and personal handwriting style, while meeting curriculum expectations. The Twinkl handwriting programme includes resources for pattern practice and motor skills development, as well as engaging, practical activities to bring handwriting to life.

Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1

In FS and KS1, handwriting is taught in explicit, regular sessions, focussing on letter formation and consistent size and shape of letters. The next step is then pre-cursive letters from the Twinkl programme of study, working through each of the letter families. Following this, children are taught cursive writing with an aim to leave Year 2 with clearly joined handwriting. Handwriting sessions are differentiated based on the needs of the child.

Key Stage 2

Students in KS2 who are not able to correctly form or join letters will be given targeted handwriting intervention. Handwriting is applied in all writing and modelling, as well as in displays, where appropriate, and is a consistent marking focus.

Key Stage 3

Students in KS3 are encouraged to develop their extended writing skills, focusing on legible responses in preparation for taking formal written exams and notes.

FS and Primary teachers will provide opportunities for students to develop, practise and perfect skills, while providing targeted support to children who experience any difficulty. Handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of sequential growth. It can be counterproductive if we ask the children to form/join letters before they are developmentally ready, therefore it is important we are aware of these developmental stages:

1. Readiness for handwriting - hand eye coordination, gross and fine motor skills
2. Pencil grip
3. Development leading to pattern and letter formation
4. Beginning to join
5. Securing the joins
6. Practising speed and fluency
7. Presentational skills

Aims

During explicit teaching of handwriting, our students will:

- Experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across FS, Key stage 1 and 2
- Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line
- Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation to communicate meaning clearly
- Take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach
- Write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- Use their skills with confidence in real life situations.
- Develop a fluent, joined handwriting style by Year Two.

Developing Readiness for Independent Handwriting

Before pupils are ready to engage in independent handwriting, they must have had some of the following opportunities to ensure confidence and having the necessary abilities to take part. These usually occur within the Foundation stage.

Gross motor skills	Fine motor skills	Hand-eye coordination	Pencil grip
Ribbon sticks Dancing- shoulder/arm movements Throwing and catching large and small balls Climbing frame	Dough gym Small construction Toys- pliers, screwdrivers, hammers etc. Sieving, pouring- sand/water Squashy balls Finger rhymes Tearing, cutting, folding paper Screwing on bottle tops Finger puppets	Sand, water and paint play Using tools i.e. scissors, rolling pins, tweezers etc. Threading and lacing Using tongs Jigsaws and simple puzzles Fishing: magnets and paper clips Peg board patterns Posting letters	Tweezers for picking up small objects Threading beads Sprinkling coloured sand, glitter, salt. Pencil grips and triangular pencils (but their use must be monitored as they can be misapplied) Handwriting activity practise sheets.

Model Used

If a child is unable to form letters independently and needs foundations embedded, it is at the discretion of the class teacher to provide activities whereby the child can kinaesthetically practice letter formation i.e. shaving foam, paint on the desk; actively using their finger to draw their letters. This must be supervised to ensure health and safety in the classroom. When a child begins to write independently, they will be taught the Twinkl **precursive** letter formations.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Once these letters are embedded and have become autonomous, the children will then go on to learn their pre cursive letters.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Once these letters are embedded and have become autonomous, the children will then go on to learn their cursive letters.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Capital letters will be formed in the following way.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Handwriting objectives support documents

Teaching handwriting in the Foundation Stage will follow the objectives for writing in the:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)
- Development Matters
- Read, Write, Inc. phonics scheme
- Twinkl Handwriting scheme.

Teaching handwriting in Key Stage 1 and 2 will follow the:

- National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study (2014)
- Twinkl Handwriting scheme.

Teaching and Learning

When, who and how often?

Handwriting practise should be 'little and often' to practise a particular set of letters or joins. Children need to be supervised when they are practising handwriting until letter formation is secure. Teachers will model joined cursive handwriting when displaying work, both handwritten and using the computer font, when modelling specific handwriting sessions and when marking work completed by the pupils. This will allow for a consistent, whole school approach to ensuring high standards of presentation throughout.

At Dove Green Private School, we teach handwriting as a specific skill using the Twinkl programme of study materials, which will actively enable them to form their letters and cursive joins correctly. Students from Year 1-6*, will have daily opportunities between the times of 7:40am and 8:00am to practise their handwriting. Teachers will teach explicit handwriting for at least 30minutes per week. Where timetables allow, this will be adhered to across the Primary stage.

**From Year 4 onwards, if a child's cursive handwriting is consolidated and proficient, it is at the discretion of the teacher to provide said student(s) with additional, alternative activities of which they will complete using their cursive handwriting i.e. SPaG tasks.*

Basic structure of a handwriting session (Primary)

- Relaxation
- Posture check: feet flat on the floor, back touching the chair
- Share objectives
- Teacher model
- Guided practice
- Independent practice

Sessions should be engaging, varied, and multi-sensory i.e., write letters in the air, on backs or on hands, backs then palms; orally describe letter shapes and joins with children. Books can be used if available, or prepared sheets with correct line guidance. Whiteboards, ideally lined ones, and pens are useful as they allow for swift, unnoticed corrections while practising.

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding (FS1-Y6)

FS1

In **FS1**, children are encouraged to:

- Develop gross motor control
- Develop fine motor control
- Use a range of mark making tools i.e., pencils, crayons; with confidence and enjoyment
- Develop a recognition of pattern
- Develop a language to talk about shapes and movements
- Practise the main handwriting movements involved in the three basic letter shapes; l, c, r
- Develop letter-like shapes on their planning cards e.g., 's' for sand
- Write their first name, using a Capital letter for the beginning and correct letter formation

FS2

In **FS2**, children continue to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding from **FS1** in addition to:

- Learning letter formation alongside phonics using the Read, Write Inc. scheme
- Learn letter formation using 'shape families':
- **long ladder** letters l i j t u
- **one-armed robot** letters r b h k m n
- **curly caterpillar** letters c a d e g o q f s
- **zigzag** letters z, v, w, x,

Once basic letter formation is mastered, children are provided with wide lined paper

Year 1 Objectives

Students should be taught to:

- sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the correct place
- form capital letters
- form digits 0-9
- understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practice these

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Students should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for child's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the student to hold it easily and correctly so bad habits are avoided. Left-handed students should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.

Year 2 Objectives

Students should be taught to:

- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation, and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Students should revise and practice correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Year 3 and 4 Objectives

Students should be taught to:

- use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined.
- increase the legibility, consistency, and quality of their handwriting, (e.g., by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch).

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Students should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which students are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

Year 5 and 6 Objectives

Students should be taught to:

- write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
 - choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether to join specific letters
 - choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Students should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an un-joined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.

Inclusion

Most students can write legibly and fluently. However, some students who are on the Students of Determination register, may need more support and appropriate provision will be made for this in Individual Education Plans [I.E.P.s]. Teachers of SEND children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with the SENco to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc. Outside agencies can be contacted where appropriate.

In some cases, children who are on the Students of Determination register, may be exempt from using joined, cursive writing, due to their difficulty with fine motor skills, and this will be at the discretion of both the class teacher and the SENco, as well as being discussed with the parent/carer.

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of *left-handed students* and make appropriate provision:

- paper should be positioned to the left for right-handed students and to the right for left-handed students and slanted to suit the individual in either case
- pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt students' line of vision
- students should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side
- left-handed students should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space
- extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before students write left-to-right automatically.

Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed students to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

The Learning Environment

FS and Year 1 classes

Writing stations with suitable resources are available for children to access within their learning environment. **Letters that are not joined from the Twinkl programme of study, should be displayed in all classrooms.** Sound mats available on all tables modelling the Read Write inc. Formation.

Year 2-6 classes

Writing areas are equipped with a range of writing implements i.e., line guides, word lists and dictionaries. All children have access to a Handwriting workbook. **A model of the agreed, joined handwriting style from Twinkl programme of study, should be displayed in all classrooms.**

The role of Parents and Carers

The Foundation Stage teachers and LSAs play an important role in communicating this at an early stage, to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to their children by using only capital letters for the beginning of their names.

All members of staff are provided with appropriate handwriting models and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example.

Contribution of handwriting to other aspects of the curriculum

Teachers discuss handwriting and presentation in all subjects and aim to model good handwriting themselves. Teachers are **explicit** about different types of handwriting for example, personal note-taking or best handwriting for presentation, but remember not all the children will be able to achieve this in Key Stage one. Teachers give handwriting a high priority in classroom displays.

The use of rubbers is discouraged. Mistakes are indicated by marking through with one neat horizontal line.

Teachers aim to make handwriting lessons relevant to the curriculum, by providing a purpose to the work where possible, encouraging the children to view handwriting as part of an overall presentation policy.

Computing & Technology Use

The growth in the use of word processing has increased students' awareness of the importance of presentation and the variety of handwriting styles/fonts available. Students are encouraged to evaluate a range of fonts and to select whatever is appropriate to suit a particular purpose.

Interactive Whiteboard

Accurate handwriting using this technology takes practice, and teacher/LSA handwriting must be as neat and legible as it would be on a regular whiteboard.

Here are some tips:

- Make sure you can calibrate the board and change the thickness of the pen or stylus.
- Be aware different 'ink' colour legibility. E.g., 'red' can be hard to read from a distance.
- Press firmly and hold the pen or stylus at a 90° angle.
- Stand to one side of the board when writing so all children can see.
- Explore the templates or gallery in your IWB software — they will include lined and squared paper that will help guide your handwriting and offer a better model.

Assessment and Recording

Teachers assess handwriting on a regular basis to note progress against the learning objectives in the **Primary curriculum** and to determine future targets for improvement. A handwriting

assessment of students who arrive later than FS2 is made within two weeks. Teachers aim to ensure that when marking written work, comments about neatness are kept in proportion in relation to those about content and/or meaning.

SLT, Heads of Year, the English Team, and Class Teachers, should regularly monitor children's writing and presentation in books during team meetings. The following should be considered:

- Is the writing generally legible?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words, and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the writing standards achieved by most students in line with age related expectations?

Equal Opportunities

At Dove Green Private School, we ensure that each individual child receives an equal learning experience regardless of ability, culture, and/or gender.

Signed:



Print Name: Christopher Seeley

Date: September 2023

Designation: Principal DGPS

Next Review: September 2024