



North Dublin Muslim National School

Ratoath Road

Dublin 7

20152L

Handwriting Policy

December 2017

Introduction

This policy was formulated by the teaching staff of the North Dublin Muslim National School through consultation with the Principal and Co-Managers. It outlines the purpose, nature and management of the teaching of handwriting in North Dublin Muslim National School. Pupils should be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. Handwriting should be an automatic process, to allow the pupils to focus on the content of their work, not letter formation. Difficulty with letter formation limits the fluency of their movements and has a negative effect on the quality and quantity of the work produced. Handwriting involves vision, visual memory, posture, body control, hand-eye co-ordination, pencil grip and letter formation. It involves a child using co-ordination to hold a crayon, pencil or pen; keeping the paper still; and putting enough pressure to make a mark.

In developing this policy we are mindful also that pupils are learning to read and write in Arabic which is of a right to left orientation.

Aims

In this policy we aim to

- Help develop a positive attitude to handwriting
- Assist the pupils in holding writing implements correctly
- Develop fine motor skills to assist with the process of handwriting
- Help the pupils achieve a script which can be read easily
- Ensure the pupils develop a fluent, cursive handwriting style

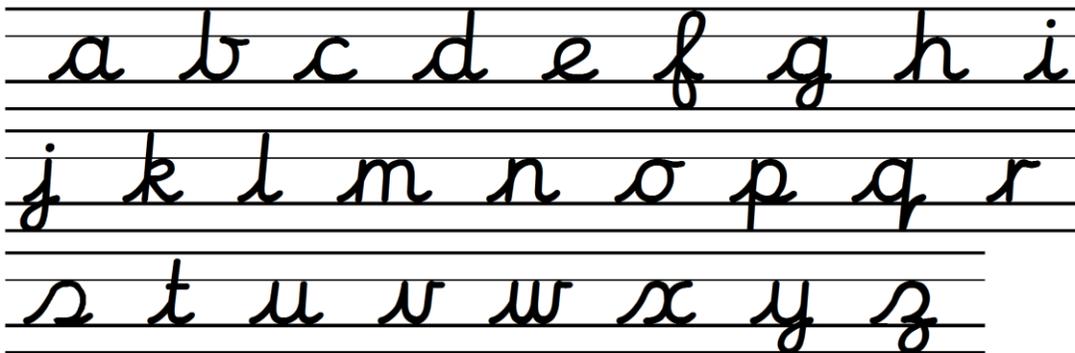
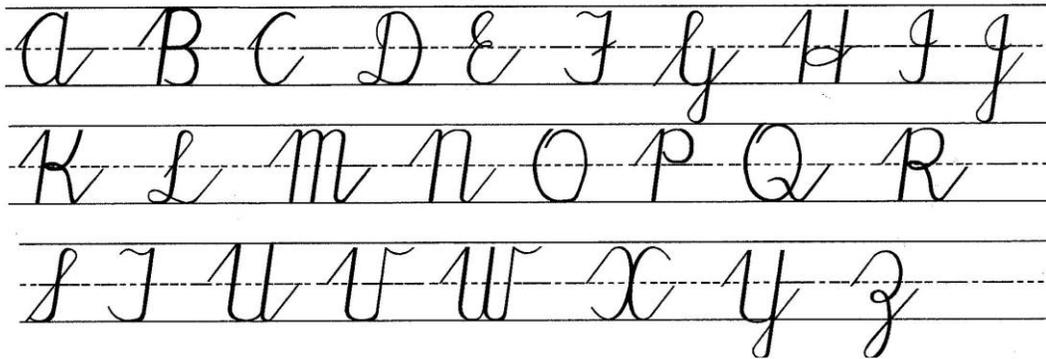
Rationale

In November 2013, the staff of the North Dublin Muslim National School attended in-service training provided by Brendan Culligan. Brendan Culligan lectures in English Methodology in Marino Institute of Education in Dublin. During this in-service the staff reviewed and discussed the handwriting styles in operation in schools. Following consultation between the staff, it was decided that cursive handwriting would be used by all pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. However, pupils will not be expected to join letters until First Class.

The reason why cursive writing is taught at this stage is to assist with fluency of writing, to help prevent letter reversals, to aid pupils with spellings and maintain the same writing style throughout primary school. As fine motor skills need to be developed at an early age, the teachers will incorporate fine motor skill activities into their lessons as deemed appropriate. Areas where children encounter difficulty with handwriting include poor fine motor skills, incorrect pencil grip, uniformity of letter size, interspersing of upper and lower case letters, keeping letters on the line and directionality. Through concentrating on fine motor skills in the infant classes, it is envisaged that this will enhance the child's handwriting.

Letter Formation

The following letter formation has been agreed by all teachers and will be used from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. Class teachers will display this font on handmade displays.



The teachers in the North Dublin Muslim National School are aware that people are expected to be able to print letters, for example when completing official forms and documents. As a result, in Fifth and Sixth Class pupils will be taught to print letters. These lessons will be taught in isolation and pupils will not be allowed to print at any other time.

Letter order

To ensure continuity between phonological awareness and letter formation, pupils will be taught to write the letters in the same order as the Jolly Phonics programme.

s, a, t, i, p, n, c, k, e, h, r, m, d, g, o, u, l, f, b, j, z, w, v, y, x, y.

Handwriting Resources

Pupils in Junior and Senior Infants will use a thick triangular grip pencil for their handwriting. To ensure all pupils use the same style of pencil, the class teacher will purchase all pencils from their annual budget.

Pupils in Third Class will be given an opportunity to earn their pen licence for neat and legible handwriting. Upon achieving this, the pupils will begin to write using a Berol handwriting pen. Class teachers will purchase the pens using their budget.

It is envisaged that by Fifth and Sixth Class, all pupils will be using pen. The only exception to this will be pupils who have only come to this school within the last two years. These pupils will be allowed to use pencil until their cursive writing reaches an acceptable standard. All pupils will use either black or blue pen to write with or red pen to rule their page.

Handwriting Scheme

The school currently uses the 'Just Cursive' handwriting scheme from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. The In-School Management team will review this and other resources on a yearly basis when considering booklists for the following year, and may change the scheme if deemed appropriate.

Assessment

Assessment will be carried out on a regular basis each time the teacher corrects written work. The pupils will be encouraged to:

- Hold a pencil correctly
- Rule a margin
- Form each letter and number correctly
- Ensure the letters are of the correct size and in the correct place in their copies
- Number each sentence or sum when answering questions
- Only write one number in each square in their maths copy
- Write the date on top of each exercise
- Write the title and page number on top of each exercise (2nd – 6th)

In addition

- Pupils with specific needs in handwriting will be helped by appropriate teacher intervention.
- The particular needs of left-handed pupils will be taken into consideration, e.g. seating arrangements in the classroom, position of paper and holding of the pencil.

Handwriting Competitions

Throughout the course of the year, pupils will be given opportunities to participate in a whole school handwriting initiative. A 'Hand writer of the Month' will be selected in each class and given a certificate at our monthly assemblies. Pupils will also be given opportunities to present written work for display and they will be encouraged to see the need for developing a neat and legible style.

Success Criteria

The North Dublin Muslim National School will know the policy has been implanted through the following criteria:

- Teacher's planning based on the content of this policy
- Pupils using cursive handwriting from Junior Infants

We will know the policy has been successful through the following criteria:

- Pupils using the correct letter formation
- Pupils writing in a neat and legible manner
- Work presented to a high standard

Implementation and Review

This policy will be supported and implemented by the Co-Managers, the principal and the teaching staff in the North Dublin Muslim National School. Teachers should show evidence of using this policy in their short and long term planning. This revised policy will be implemented from December 2017.

The Co-Managers, the principal and the teaching staff will be responsible for reviewing the handwriting policy. This policy will be reviewed in 2020.

Ratification and Communication

This handwriting policy was ratified by the Co-Managers in December 2017. A copy of the ratified policy was distributed to all teaching staff in the school. This policy is available in the office or on the school website for inspection. Should parents wish to view the policy in the office they can do so by appointment.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____