

Oakwood Infant and Nursery School

Handwriting

At Oakwood Infant and Nursery school we aim that all children:

- Develop a good handwriting style.
- They can produce and maintain a good speed.
- Have a fluid hand movement that is comfortable.
- Letters are of a consistent and appropriate size, positioned correctly.
- Handwriting is legible (so others can read it easily).

Pre handwriting skills:

Learning pre-handwriting patterns is the important first step in handwriting.

Pre-handwriting patterns help a child to learn the shapes and directional pushes and pulls of the writing tools required to form letters. All letters are a combination of these shapes and lines.

Young children's first experience on the handwriting route involves mark making and simple drawings, whether it is with finger paints, writing in sand or with pencils and crayons. In nursery our children start to move from a simple grasping (primitive) grip to one that secures the writing tool between the fingers and the thumb. In this stage, children will try different holds, which is part of their normal grip development for handwriting and drawing.

As young children's body's (gross motor skills), hand strength and dexterity (fine motor skills) are developing they are provided with a range of pencil, crayon and paint brush thickness'.

Nursery and reception classes provide vertical drawing and painting surfaces to help young children to develop the wrist strength and flexibility they will need later on to hold a pencil correctly for handwriting.

We use plain rather than lined paper as many children find it less restrictive. Young children due to the stage of their physical development use large movements to draw (from the shoulder rather than the wrist) which often creates larger shapes and lines. As their gross and fine motor skills develop so does their pencil grip and ability to draw and write at a small scale, moving more from the elbow and wrist.

Within the nursery and early weeks of reception, many opportunities are provided for children to develop their fine motor dexterity and gross motor strength. These include activities such as drawing pictures and patterns in sand, paint and with other writing tools and materials.

Once the pre-handwriting patterns have been mastered a child will have the skill base necessary, and be more confident, to form letters, numbers, symbols and later on the join strokes required for a joined fluid and speedy handwriting style.

It is at this stage we begin to introduce single letter and number formation.

Forming letters:

Initially we support children learning to form letters through a range of media and game type activities e.g. drawing letters with paints or in sand. At this stage the important thing we do is model and explain how to make the letter shapes with the correct start point, directional flow of the tool, or hand, and finish point.

Letters are taught in groups which share the same characteristics:

Around letters

c, a, o, d, g, q

Down letters

l, t, b, p, k, h, i, j, m, n, r, u, y

Curly letters

e, f, s

Zigzag letters

v, w, z, x

We then teach children the different positions of letters:

- Small letters- “boat” letters
- Hanging letters- “water” letters
- Tall letters- “sun” letters

Children have daily practice using a dedicated handwriting book. The pages are lined to help the children understand how the letters sit in relation to each other.

Sun line

Boat line

Water line

Boat letters

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

Water letters

g, j, p, q, y



























Sun letters

b, d, h, k, l, f, t

Lesson structure:

- Warm-up actions based on Active Hands, where children warm up shoulders, arms, wrists and fingers.
- BBC- bottoms at the back of the chair
- TNT- tummies near tables
- Four chair legs and two feet flat on the floor
- Book at a slight angle to aid position
- Correct finger grip (tripod)

Rhymes for letter formation - taken from Read Write Inc.

<p>a</p>  <p>Around the apple and down the leaf.</p>	<p>b</p>  <p>Down the laces to the heel and around the toe.</p>	<p>c</p>  <p>Curly around the caterpillar.</p>	<p>d</p>  <p>Around the dinosaurs bottom, up his tall neck & down to his toes.</p>	<p>e</p>  <p>Lift off the top and scoop out the egg.</p>	<p>f</p>  <p>Down the stem and draw the leaves.</p>
<p>g</p>  <p>Around the girls face, down her hair and give her a curl.</p>	<p>h</p>  <p>Down the head, to his hooves and over his back.</p>	<p>i</p>  <p>Down the body and dot for the head.</p>	<p>j</p>  <p>Down his body, curl, dot for his head.</p>	<p>k</p>  <p>Down the kangaroo's body tail and leg.</p>	<p>l</p>  <p>Down the long leg.</p>
<p>m</p>  <p>Down Maisie, mountain, mountain.</p>	<p>n</p>  <p>Down Nobby and over his net.</p>	<p>o</p>  <p>All around the orange.</p>	<p>p</p>  <p>Down the pirates plait and around his face.</p>	<p>qu</p>  <p>Round her head, up past her earring, down her hair, and flick.</p>	<p>r</p>  <p>Down the robots back and curl over his arm.</p>
<p>s</p>  <p>Slither down the snake.</p>	<p>t</p>  <p>Down the tower, across the tower.</p>	<p>u</p>  <p>Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle.</p>	<p>v</p>  <p>Down a wing, up a wing.</p>	<p>w</p>  <p>Down, up, down, up.</p>	<p>x</p>  <p>Down the arm and leg, repeat the other side.</p>
<p>y</p>  <p>Down a horn, up a horn and under head.</p>	<p>z</p>  <p>Zig-zag-zig.</p>				

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