

# Our Lady of Lourdes N.S.

## Handwriting Policy

### Introduction

This handwriting policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the teaching of handwriting in Our Lady of Lourdes N.S. When communicating ideas in writing it is important that children use a handwriting style which is neat and legible. Children's self-esteem is also heightened when they are able to take pride in their handwriting. This policy was drawn up in consultation with Staff, Parents and the Board of Management in September 2014 and revised in September 2021.

### Rationale

Teaching handwriting aims to ensure that:

- children have a positive attitude to print handwriting
- children understand the need to develop a good handwriting style
- children hold writing implements correctly
- children achieve a script which can be read easily
- children will be given opportunities to present written work for display and they will be encouraged to see the need for developing a neat, legible style

### Aims

- To help develop a positive attitude to print handwriting
- To develop and improve fine motor skills in the early years.
- To help in the improvement of spelling.
- To assist the children in holding writing implements correctly
- To help the children achieve a script which can be read easily
- To encourage the children to have pride in the presentation of their work
- To ensure uniformity and consistency in letter formation from class to class.
- To facilitate the neat presentation of all written work.

## **Methodology**

In our school in September 2020 we decided to proceed with only print handwriting.

We have introduced a personalised handwriting copy designed by our teachers. This new copy aims to reinforce the Jolly phonics programme we use as it follows the sequence of sounds learned. This personalised copy will be used from Junior Infants to 2nd class. Children in Junior infants will also have a lot of support to develop their fine motor and sensorimotor skills.

From 3rd-6th classes all children will have a handwriting copy. Class teachers in 3rd and 4th will explicitly teach correct letter formation and presentation. Children will copy from poems, extracts from fiction/non fiction and write correctly in their copy once per week. Teachers in 5th and 6th class will encourage children to maintain good handwriting practice and must have good presentation skills.

Handwriting exercises will be carried out once per week in their copy.

Note: Any child who wishes to do cursive handwriting in school and for those who have learned outside of school will be encouraged to continue to do so.

The following Handwriting Rules will apply:

- The children will use pencils up until 5th class.
- Children in 3rd class will start to use a red pen for lining and dating copies
- A pen licence will be given to children where appropriate to children in 4th -5<sup>th</sup> Classes.
- By the end of 5<sup>th</sup> Class all children should be writing in pen
- There will be uniform correction of errors (-) and children will not be allowed to use tippex
- The ruling of copies will be uniform (please see Appendix 1)
- Samples of excellent and improving handwriting will be displayed in the classrooms .

## **Special Educational Needs**

Children with special needs in handwriting will be helped by appropriate teacher intervention. This may be through the use of slopes, pencil grips or ICT. The particular needs of left-handed children will also be taken into consideration.

## **Writing Instruments**

The writing instruments that the children use will depend on their readiness.

- In Junior Infants the children will write with triangular shaped pencils.
- Senior Infants continue using triangular shaped pencils.
- In 1st Class the children will transition from a HB triangular pencil to a normal HB pencil.
- In 2nd/3rd/4th Class the children continue using the HB pencil.
- The use of red pen is also introduced in Third Class – this is used for ruling the copies, titles, dates and underlining. Pencils are used for all other work. The use of red pen is continued in Fourth Class – this is used for ruling the copies, titles, dates, and underlining. Pencils are used for all other work.
- In 4th Class children work towards earning a pen licence which is achieved by a continued high standard of handwriting. Once they achieve their pen licence they are allowed to use a pen for writing exercises. Children are encouraged to put a line through a mistake rather than using Tippex.
- The use of pen is continued in 5th and 6th Class, as long as the children have earned and kept their pen licenses. Once again children are encouraged to put a line through a mistake rather than using Tippex.

## **Parental Involvement**

A sample of handwriting appropriate for 3rd-6th will be given to parents and also available to view on the school website. This will be the standard required for homework.

## **Success Criteria**

The practical indicators of the success of the policy include:

- consistent teacher observation of pupils' handwriting in copybooks at school and also in homework

- children will be entered in regular school handwriting competitions
- continuous displays of the children's writing in the classrooms and school
- positive feedback from staff, students, parents and inspectorate
- that the handwriting policy is in line with the school self improvement plan for SSE.

**Roles and responsibility of the policy**

The Board of Management, Principal, Language and Literacy co-ordinator and SSE committee have been responsible for supporting, developing, implementing and evaluating this policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of Board of Management

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