

Saint Fiachra's Senior School

HANDWRITING POLICY

Introduction

This review of the Handwriting Policy was carried out in June 2018.

Aims

- To establish consistency in children's writing throughout the school.
- To cultivate habits of neatness in penmanship activities which will influence the presentation of all work across the curriculum.
- To continue the development of the fine motor control necessary for good penmanship.
- To develop speed, accuracy and writing fluency.
- To ensure legibility and neat presentation of all written work.
- To ensure continuity of the cursive writing style introduced in St. Fiachra's J.N.S.

Handwriting Programme

In St. Fiachra's Senior School, the children continue to develop cursive writing skills using the Write On programme. In third class the children use Write On Cursive Writing Introductory Workbook 1. In fourth class the children use Write On Cursive Writing Book 2. Headline copies may be utilised at the teacher's discretion.

Assessment of Handwriting

- There is continuous teacher observation of pupils' handwriting in written work.
- There is an emphasis on continual improvement.
- Samples of handwriting are kept in pupil progress portfolios.

Instructional Sequence

- At the beginning of the year, the teacher assesses the starting point of each child. A dated sample of handwriting is kept in the pupil progress portfolio.
- Correct posture and pencil grip are modelled and explicitly taught.
- Modelling of letter formation is paramount.
- Correct terminology (e.g. lowercase, uppercase) is utilised throughout the school.
- Cursive script for all higher and lower case letters is attained by the end of third class.
- In fifth class, when a teacher deems that a pupil has developed a fluent, legible style of handwriting, he/she will be awarded a pen licence.

Posture

Correct posture is essential for good handwriting and should be modelled and emphasised in each class.

- Lean forward but do not lean on the desk.
- Head should not be too near paper.
- Do not lean heavily on the paper.
- Right-handed pupils use their left hand to hold copy in correct position.
- Left-handed pupils use their right hand to hold copy in correct position.

Accommodations

For pupils with specific needs extra support will be given and specialised learning aids will be used as appropriate.

Supporting the Left-Handed pupil

Left-handed pupils should be monitored to ensure that they are not experiencing any specific difficulties. The following are some examples of accommodations that can be employed to support left-handed pupils:

- Allowing left-handed pupils to sit on the left hand side of the table.
- Teacher demonstrating letter formation with their left hand.
- Encouraging pupils to use a pencil grip.
- Ensuring that sufficient space is available for left-handed pupils.
- Positioning the paper to the left of centre and tilting slightly to the right to give more freedom of movement.
- Advising pupils on choice of pens in 5th and 6th class to avoid smudging.

This policy is due for renewal in 2021.

