



<i>Author</i>	<i>Version</i>	<i>Reviewer</i>	<i>Ratified by</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Review Date</i>
		<i>JJ and LF</i>	<i>Council and Staff</i>	<i>Jul 2014</i>	<i>2017</i>

Handwriting Policy

Levels of Responsibility

The School Council is responsible for:

- Developing and adopting the policy
- Ultimately responsible to the School community for ensuring that all measures have been adopted by the Principal and staff, that the policy is in place.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring parents/guardian are advised of policy
- Ensuring that staff fully understand policy
- Promoting a positive attitude towards a healthy diet and lifestyle

The Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the same standard and style of handwriting is adhered to across the school
- Maintaining reports and records with reference to handwriting techniques

The Parents are responsible for:

- Supporting the child/ren in their handwriting practice.

Implementation

A. Type of Handwriting

1. The handwriting taught at MRMS is the Montessori Cursive.
2. All resources used are the Montessori Cursive Alphabet.

B. Pencil Grip, Paper Orientation and Posture

1. In preparation for writing the Junior Primary are to be taught to use the correct tripod pencil grip. This is to be reinforced throughout all of our classes.
2. It is up to each teacher's discretion to utilise tools and strategies to support each individual child's needs.

3. Children are taught to orient their paper so that it is parallel to their writing arm (ie. for left handers as well).
4. Correct posture to be reinforced is feet flat on the ground, bottom forward on the chair and back straight.

C. Paper

Junior Primary

1. The children begin in the sensorial and use multisensory Montessori materials.
2. JP children beginning to write use blackboards and chalk and then plain paper.
3. Once they have been shown line placement they are introduced to plain paper with a line.
4. When children are being taught letter formation and size they are introduced to 24mm dotted thirds paper.

Middle Primary

5. In MP the children used dotted thirds paper for all writing.
6. Children are to be taught to write on the 'solid' line, this to be reinforced throughout.
7. Children transitioning from JP have the choice to choose 24mm or 18mm dotted thirds paper.
8. Children move from 18 mm dotted thirds, to 14 mm dotted thirds to 9mm plain lined paper as they are deemed ready.

Upper Primary

1. Handwriting is taught at the point of need for individual children.
2. Dotted thirds may be used for individual instruction in the teaching of line placement and letter formation.
3. All writing work is done on 8mm lined paper.

Appendix

- See the explanation for Cursive Handwriting that is used in parent information below.

References

Seton, Elizabeth, 2012, "Teaching Cursive Handwriting First Leads to Fluency in Reading and Writing". (in parent library)

Lawrence, Lynn, *Montessori Read and Write*. (in parent library)

The following parent information was sent out prior to the changeover to Cursive handwriting. In addition there is to be a parent information night.



Cursive Handwriting

Cursive handwriting has several unique characteristics that differentiate it from print and lead the child to greater fluency in writing and reading.

There are many benefits to be gained from cursive writing, not least of which that the movements of cursive writing are more natural and easy to form. The hardest movements for the hand to make are a perfect circle and a perfectly vertical line as in printed script. Maria Montessori chose cursive because the gentle cursive lines are an extension of the natural movement of the child's hand and cursive writing sequence for words can be internalized in muscle memory.

All single lower case letters begin on the baseline and move upwards from left to right. All lower case words move in a continuous left to right direction, starting on the baseline, continuing in a rhythmic pattern, and ending in a position that leads to the next word. This continuous stroke single line per word characteristic of cursive handwriting assists children to separate words and blend sounds within words. The stereognostic sensation of physically starting a sound of a word and not lifting the pencil until the word is finished helps children to understand how the sounds blend to make words.

Children who learn to read print first may encounter some difficulties with letter recognition, whereas children who are introduced to cursive script show lesser instances of letter reversals. For example with printed script it is easy to mix up b, d, p and q.

The most compelling reason for using cursive script is that the children who learn to read cursive words first make a quick transition to reading print with fluency. In fact, they often show an innate curiosity about all forms of lettering and an enjoyment in puzzling out unusual alphabetical signs at this important stage of their early learning.

