

**Mount Pleasant Primary School Handwriting Policy**



## **GUIDELINES**

Mount Pleasant Primary School is committed to students developing a personalised, fluent and legible handwriting style that enables them to communicate effectively when writing for different purposes.

## **BACKGROUND**

Kindergarten to Year 1 students learn a foundation style of handwriting using the Queensland Beginners Font. This style uses a lower case closed “p” and “b” so that there is less confusion in young students during early literacy skill work.

From Year 2 onwards, Victorian Modern Cursive is taught. Students learn how to join letters to form a cursive script.

## **FOR TEACHERS**

Foundation to Year 7 teachers are encouraged to demonstrate, foster and reinforce the skills, understandings and behaviours that assist students in developing fluent, legible handwriting through the presentation of handwriting lessons on a regular basis.

Lessons should be regular and tailored towards the specific learning needs of students.

### **Students need to be taught:**

- appropriate pencil grip;
- correct letter formations;
- starting and finishing points;
- the correct direction to move in;
- the number of strokes involved in producing a letter; and
- size and spacing of letters.

Students can be shown how letter shapes can be joined, once basic letter shapes and letter sequences have become automatic, to the point of legibility and fluency.

Speed loops can be introduced once students can correctly join letters.

Students may be encouraged to personalise Victorian Modern Cursive once they have a well-developed standard form of handwriting (usually during the middle years of schooling).

### **Incoming students**

Students in Year 3 and beyond who move schools, having already established an effective handwriting style, are not required to change that style. This may include students from overseas.

### **Students with difficulties**

Students with disabilities, learning difficulties and motor coordination issues are likely to also have difficulties with handwriting. These students may require teaching and learning adjustments such as:

- alternative input devices (keyboards, switches and voice recognition software); and
- alternative writing tools (pencil grips, writing scaffolds and templates).

## **Phase of schooling considerations**

Students use a range of techniques for producing texts, such as handwriting, keyboarding and word processing. Effective handwriting skills are developed through explicit whole-class, small group and individual teaching and opportunities for students to practice these skills in the context of relevant writing activities.

Understanding the developmental stages of writing assists teachers to monitor students' growth as writers. The following indicators of progress are taken with permission, from *The Teaching of Handwriting* (pages 13-15), Revised Edition, Department of Education, Victoria.

## **Beginning and emergent writers**

Specific indicators of progress in handwriting for beginning and emergent writers are the development of:

- the ability to differentiate between drawing and writing;
- an understanding that writing can represent thoughts, ideas, message and speech;
- adequate fine motor coordination;
- a writing hand preference;
- a precision grip;
- awareness of the terminology and concepts relating to written and printed material – spaces, words, letter, direction;
- a visual memory of letter shapes;
- movements which form the basis of later automatic processes in handwriting; and
- the ability to identify and correctly form lower-case and upper-case letters.

## **Emergent and early writers**

As students develop the ability to recognise and form letters, they need opportunities to consolidate their handwriting skills. Emergent and early writers are working to:

- understand the terminology and concepts relating to written and printed material – spaces, words, letters, chunks of letters, directionality, and so on;
- identify and correctly form the twenty-six lower-case and upper case letters;
- develop awareness of letter patterns which appear regularly in English;
- develop sufficient legibility and fluency to enable them to focus on the message, form and purpose of the writing; and
- develop understanding of the purposes of legible writing.

## **Fluent writers**

Students are ready to join letters when they:

- can correctly form the twenty-six lower-case letters to write words, using an efficient pen grip;
- show consistent use of slope, size, spacing and letter alignment;
- show signs of trying to join the letters together; and
- have developed an understanding of common letter patterns.

Speed loops can be introduced to students:

- when joining techniques are established; and
- if the student develops an interest in speed-looping.

Once students have a well-developed standard form, usually during the middle years of schooling, they can be encouraged to personalise Victorian Modern Cursive. Students at this stage may be:

- developing a personalised style which is legible, fluent, durable and aesthetically pleasing;
- using efficient deviations from the model form, if appropriate; and
- using embellishments and alternative styles for different purposes, if appropriate.

## **Word processing skills**

From an early age, students should be supported with the development of the following word processing skills:

- the constant position of letters on a QWERTY keyboard;
- using the space bar and shift button for capital letters;
- cutting, copying and pasting;
- creating a bulleted list;
- changing the page format from portrait to landscape;
- using different font sizes for effect;
- creating numbered lists; and
- aligning, inserting objects and formatting text around objects.



## **References**

Department of Education and Training Western Australia (2007) K-10 English Syllabus (Writing scope and sequence).

*The Teaching of Handwriting*, Revised Edition, Department of Education, Victoria.

## **K-1 parents may download Queensland Beginners Font alphabet charts**

[http://www.k-3teacherresourcesmembers.com/free\\_downloads/Alphabet\\_Chart\\_Qld\\_1-NEW.pdf](http://www.k-3teacherresourcesmembers.com/free_downloads/Alphabet_Chart_Qld_1-NEW.pdf)

Number size	Year	Australian Curriculum	Paper	Line size	Writing Tool	Corrections	Ruling up	Time Allocation	Other Considerations
 Two thirds of a line 	Foundation	Produce some lower case and upper case letters using learned letter formations (ACELY1653)	Plain paper Lines as a scaffold to support writing	X	Thick triangular lead pencil	Cross out	X	Combined with fine motor rotations, mat sessions and demonstrated activities.	Queensland Beginner's Font
	Year 1	Write using unjoined lower case and upper case letters (ACELY1663)	Standard unbroken lines for Term 1. Dotted thirds Term 2 onwards	24mm	Thick triangular lead pencil	Cross out eraser	X	3x20 minutes	Queensland Beginner's Font
	Year 2	Write legibly and with growing fluency using unjoined upper case and lower case letters (ACELY1673)	Dotted thirds	18mm	Standard sized lead pencil and red pencil	Cross out eraser	Red pencil margin with one line at the top.	3x20 minutes	Introduction of Victorian Modern Cursive with closed p and b
	Year 3	Write using joined letters that are clearly formed and consistent in size (ACELY1684)	Dotted thirds	14mm	Standard sized lead pencil	Cross out Eraser	Red pencil One line on top and one on bottom for margin.	3x20 minutes	Victorian Modern Cursive with closed p and b. Joining of letters begins as students are ready to progress to this stage.
	Year 4	Write using clearly-formed joined letters, and develop increased fluency and automaticity (ACELY1696)	Dotted thirds	14mm	Lead pencil. Red pen for ruling up and marking	Ruled lead pencil line through error Eraser for labelling.	Red pen One line on top and one on bottom for margin. Columns of 7cm (2cm width for Mental Maths)	2x20 minutes	Victorian Modern Cursive with closed p and b Joining of letters continue.
	Year 5	Develop a handwriting style that is becoming legible, fluent and automatic (ACELY1706)	Dotted thirds in all books	8mm	Lead pencil. Pencil for labelling maps and diagrams. Red pen for ruling up. Transition to blue pen by end of Term 1. Fine liner optional for presentation.	Rule blue line through error Eraser for labelling.	Red pen One line on top and one on bottom for margin. Columns of 7cm (2cm width for Mental Maths)	2x20 minutes	Victorian Modern Cursive with closed p and b. Letters are joined.
	Year 6	Develop a handwriting style that is legible, fluent and automatic and varies according to audience and purpose (ACELY1716)	Standard lines	8mm	Blue and red pen Pencil for labelling maps and diagrams. Fine liner optional for presentation.	No liquid paper Rule blue line through	Red pen One line on top and one on bottom for margin. Columns of 7cm (2cm width for Mental Maths)	2x20 minutes	Victorian Modern Cursive with closed p and b Speed loops introduced Beginning to develop a personal style
Year 7	Consolidate a personal handwriting style that is legible, fluent and automatic and supports writing for extended periods (ACELY1727)	Standard lines	8mm	Blue and red pen Pencil for labelling maps and diagrams. Fine liner optional for presentation.	No liquid paper Rule blue line through	Red pen One line on top and one on bottom for margin. Columns of 7cm (2cm width for Mental Maths)	2x20 minutes	Victorian Modern Cursive with closed p and b Continue to develop personal style	

K-1 Handwriting

Queensland

ABCDEFGHIJK

LMNOPQRSTU

VWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnop

qrstuvwxyz

1234567890

Years 2 – 5 Handwriting

**Appendix A**  
**Victorian Modern Cursive**

Unjoined including capitals for right-handers  
on single lines

abcdefghijklm

nopqrstuvwxyz

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

A B C D E F G H I

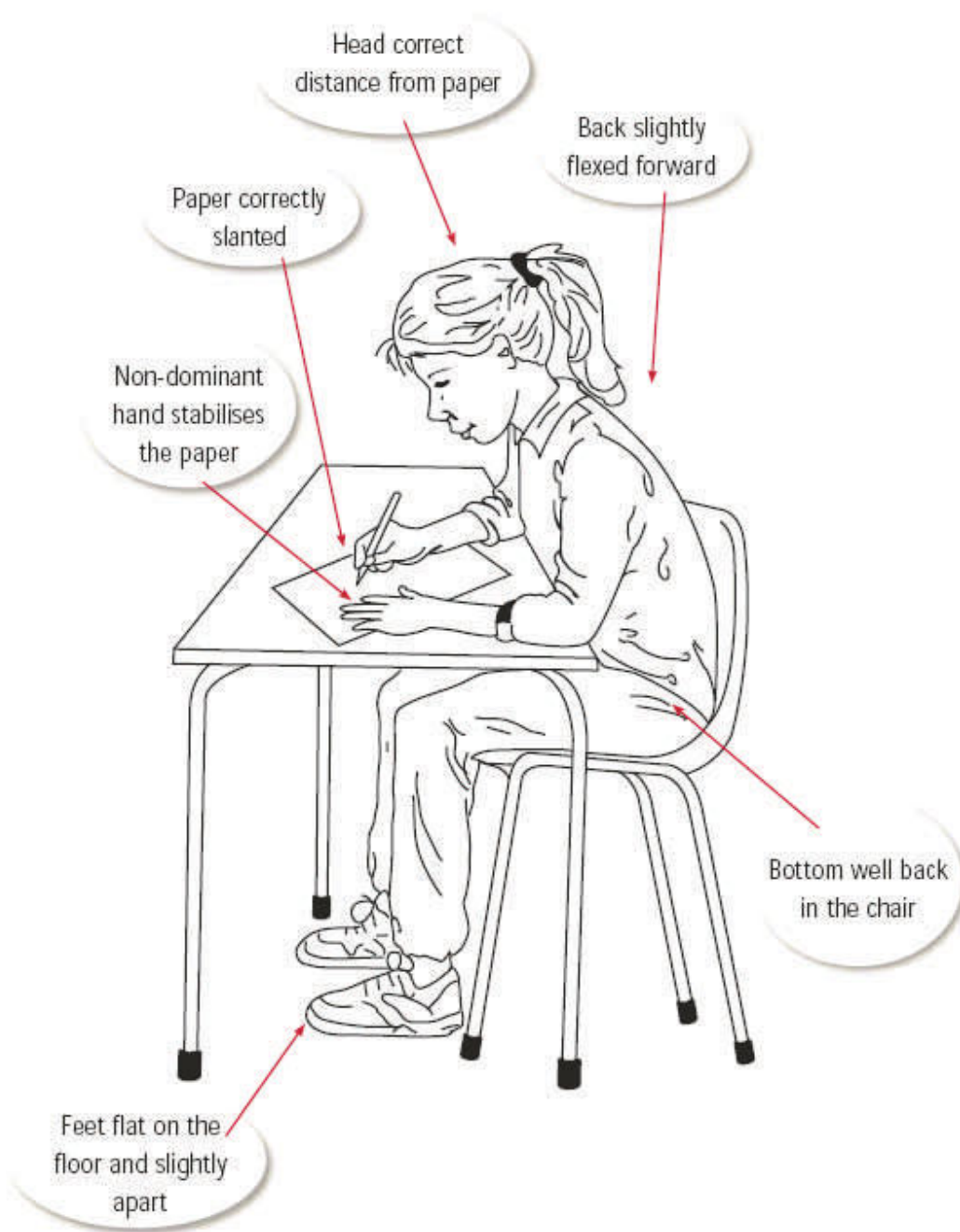
J K L M N O P Q R

S T U V W X Y Z

## Years 6-7 Handwriting

### Appendix **F** Victorian Modern Cursive Using speed loops

abcdefghijklmn  
opqrstuvwxyz  
quiet black yellow  
through joke life



Reference: <http://www.education.tas.gov.au/school/curriculum/resources/Handwriting.pdf>