

Handwriting Policy



Aim:

Boolavogue N.S. aims that all children should acquire a neat hand which is simultaneously legible and fast-flowing so that they can write clearly, fluently and quickly and thus cope with the everyday writing demands of life and school. Children should grow up accustomed to taking care in the way they present their work and to regarding its appearance as an important aspect of the whole production.

In this policy we aim to:

- Help develop a positive attitude to handwriting
- Assist the children in holding writing implements correctly
- Help the children achieve a script which can be read easily
- Ensure the children develop a fluent, cursive handwriting style

Objective:

Brendan Culligan's *Go with the Flow Handwriting* series, published by CJ Fallon, has been adopted for use in all classes in Boolavogue N.S. Handwriting is a vital skill and a rational and systematic approach is essential if pupils are to develop their penmanship and creative writing ability. The main objective of this writing scheme is to provide for pupils, teachers and parents a rational and carefully designed and sequenced programme that will enable the introduction of a cursive style of handwriting from the beginning of schooling. In doing so, the scheme adheres to the principles of the new Primary Language Curriculum, which proposes that, in Stage 1, pupils write 'upper and lower case letters as separate flowing letters'. Having achieved the progression milestones a–h, pupils will then write 'using cursive script' (Primary Language Curriculum, p.53).

This handwriting scheme is designed to develop the pupil's ability to write legibly in a relaxed way at an acceptable speed. It is critical to note that in this handwriting scheme, cursive writing from the beginning means that there is no joining of letters in *Go with the Flow A and B* but rather the 'leading in and out' of letters. The joining of letters commences in *Go with the Flow C*.

Special emphasis will be placed on:

- Preparation: pre-writing activities in Infant classes include scribbling, colouring, rainbow colouring, channelling, tracing, copying, patterns, mazes and activities to help develop fine motor skills
- Pencil grip: Pick up the pencil between the thumb and index finger, flick it back and place the middle finger underneath. Most letters are formed without lifting the pencil

off the page, for a few letters (t, i, j, x, F, K, Q, X) two movements will be required, For H, three movements will be required.

- Posture: Sit at a table with both feet on the floor. Pull the chair in and sit up straight. The non-writing hand should steady the paper.
- Paper angle: Keep the paper/copy to the right/left of your body, depending on whether writing with the right/left hand. Angle the paper/copy, more if writing with the left hand. Place the writing hand below the writing line.
- Practice (letter formation is clearly illustrated and an alphabet reference may be provided for pre-cursive and cursive scripts).
- Self Assessment: It is hoped that the children will engage in self-assessment whereby the pupil ticks the 'face' that they feel best indicates how well the page was completed.

Implementation:

- A cursive style of handwriting throughout the school is to be used
- Handwriting workbooks from Brendan Culligan's *Go With The Flow Handwriting* series, published by CJ Fallon have been adopted for use in all classes throughout the school. Special handwriting *Learn to Write* B2 and B4 copies may also be used for practice in the junior classes and with support teachers.
- Triangular pencils, sometimes known as hand huggers will be encouraged in Infant Classes. Pencils will be used for writing exclusively up to the end of Fourth Class. Pens will be used in Fifth and Sixth Class for writing, with Berol Writing Handwriting Pens advised for handwriting practice.
- Copies: Infants use B15 copies for the majority of their class work. 1st class use B4 copies for Irish, English and Homework for the whole year. 2nd class use them for the first term or until the copy runs out and then they move onto A11 copies. However, if the teacher feels the child's writing has deteriorated, the child will be put back on B4 copies until such as time as the writing improves again. 3rd – 6th classes use A11 copies for all subjects.

Go with the Flow Content:

Infant Level:

Go With The Flow A

- Pre-writing activities (incorporating the eight basic writing movements along with undercurves and overcurves)
- Colouring shapes of basic movements
- Activities to develop fine motor skills, including mazes
- Channelling, tracing and copying patterns and letter-like formations
- Matching the most commonly used lower case letters (reading/writing letters)
- Matching the most commonly used upper case letters (reading/writing letters)
- Focus on correct letter formation – practising separate flowing letters and the leading in and out of letters
- Practising the most commonly used lower case letters (e, t, a, o, i, n, s, h)
- Practising four of the most commonly used upper case letters (I, T, W, S)

Go With The Flow B:

- Tracing and colouring activities
- Circular and diagonal mazes
- Joining dots and colouring activities
- Revision of the most commonly used lower and upper case letters (reading/writing letters)
- Matching next group of common lower case letters (r, d, l, u, c, m, f, g, y)
- Matching next group of common upper case letters (H, A, B, Y, M)
- Practising these letters by channelling, tracing and copying
- Matching next group of common lower case letters (p, w, b, v, k)
- Matching next group of common upper case letters (N, O, D, L, F, C, G, E)
- Practising these letters by channelling, tracing and copying
- Matching last group of common lower case letters (x, j, q, z)
- Matching last group of common upper case letters (P, R, J, K, U, Q, V, X, Z)
- Revision – matching all lower to upper case cursive letters

1st / 2nd Class:

Go With The Flow C:

- Revision of all upper and lower case letters
- Beginning to join letter strings (tracing and copying)
- The most common two-letter joins (in red, to indicate that they are not real words)
- The most common two-letter words (in green)
- The most common double letters (in red, to indicate that they are not real words)
- Practising these two-letter strings on their own (tracing and copying) and then in real words.

Go With The Flow D:

- Revision of upper case letters
- Emphasis on and revision of difficult joins (b, o, f, r, v, w)
- Revision of two letter words
- Practising the most common trigraphs
- Practising the most common rimes
- Practising the most common three, four, five, six and seven-letter words
- Practising days, months and numbers.

3rd / 4th Class:

Go With The Flow E:

- Revision of common rhyming words
- Revision sentences.

Go with the Flow F:

- Revision sentences
- Practising to increase legibility, consistency and quality
- Pupils encouraged to personalise their writing.

5th /6th Class:

Go With The Flow G & H:

- Revision sentences linked to writing genres
- Practising to increase legibility, consistency and quality

- Pupils encouraged to personalise their writing.

Boolavogue N.S adopted this new whole school approach to cursive handwriting in September 2018. In order to establish this new approach effectively the staff collaboratively decided to introduce one workbook to each classroom for the academic year 2018-2019;

Junior/Senior Infants: *Go with the Flow A*

1st/2nd Class: *Go with the Flow C*

3rd/4th Class: *Go with the Flow E*

5th/6th Class: *Go with the Flow G*

This approach will be reviewed at the end of the academic year.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed in September 2019.

Signed: _____ (Chairperson)

_____ (Principal)

Date: _____

Draft