



# Staffroom



News

## Australian National Handwriting Style

Categories: [News](#)

In response to my enquiry about the possibility of a national handwriting style for Australian schools, ACARA correspondence stated that "...the Australian Curriculum does not specify a recommended style of handwriting nor does ACARA have a particular preference for one style.

ACARA's main interest is that students learn to write fluently and legibly with developing automaticity. State and territory education authorities identify the style of handwriting to be taught in schools".

Personally, I believe the purpose of learning to write is simply to be able to communicate a message. Does it really matter if the letter 'f' has a long tail or not? Does it matter which style 'a' children choose to write? The more important factor is whether or not they can read each of the different versions that they will see appear in various forms of text.

As a child, I had remarkably neat handwriting and I was schooled back in the day where awards for "1st in the Grade Handwriting" were still handed out. Every year I proudly collected my certificate. Mind you, I had the worst pencil grip imaginable. I still do. Teachers tried to correct it every year and I always refused to change it. I couldn't see the point. Clearly my writing was neater than anybody else's so why change? My Year 5 teacher told me I'd never be able to get through university with such an awful pencil grip because my hands would fatigue before I could complete an essay. To me that seemed like a challenge, and one I've obviously never forgotten. I did make it through university... twice. However, by the time I stepped into the classroom as a teacher, I had long ago realised what he was trying to do.

As a parent of a child with special needs who has struggled to learn to speak and to toilet train, any effort in learning to write is celebrated. I honestly don't care if she writes in capital letters, green pen, or holds her pencil in obscure ways. In fact, she has also been blessed with double jointed thumbs so using the correct pencil grip is yet another challenge that seems close to impossible for her. However, when she chooses to write, I can understand the message she is trying to convey. So, the goal has been achieved.


A past colleague of mine once complained that one of my ex-students was a cause for concern in her class. In handwriting lessons, he insisted on writing in green pencil. She found it infuriating. I asked the objective of the lesson; was it to write neatly and form letters correctly or to write in lead pencil? Okay, perhaps I'm letting standards slip here. But, in some cases, it's something we can afford to do. In this case, the student also happened to have Aspergers Syndrome. His writing was lovely, just green.

During the remainder of the year and in 2012, ACARA will be considering the possibility of "nominating or developing a nationally consistent handwriting style but no decision has been made for a project of this kind. Any such project would involve consultation with states and territories and, even if agreement were reached on one style, would likely take some time to implement"

So we won't have a national handwriting style any time soon. However, we can still celebrate the best writing efforts in all our students, no matter what their style of handwriting.

Related posts:

- 1. [Australia's National Curriculum](#)

 Spread The Love, Share Our Article



**FREE TEACHING RESOURCES FOR YOUR CLASSROOM**

**YES, I would like my FREE Teaching Resources.**

**Benefit from:**  
New resources and our top tips delivered to your inbox weekly.

[Click here for INSTANT DOWNLOAD](#)




### Printable Resources



### Teaching Supplies

#### SUBSCRIBE TO MY BLOG

 [Get the latest via RSS | Email](#)

 [Want to know my tweets?](#)

 [Join me at Facebook](#)

#### HELPFUL SITES

- [Seating Plan Creator](#)

#### TAGS

Adobe Acrobat 2010 Adobe PDF Reader Adobe Reader Australia Australian Brisbane children learning about money Classroom games classroom games in china create our own dice for classroom games creative teacher discount Donate Donate Teaching Resources educational games email scam engaging in books First day Flood Recovery fly swat games Free teaching resource games games with chopsticks games with ping pong ball Learn About Money literacy lessons with magazines mathematics game maths games National



## Comments

45

Like

Agreed! There has recently been a bit of attention to the fact that some school don't teach cursive handwriting anymore, because they can't find the time, what with all the other subjects students needs to focus on. While to an extent, I agree that at times it CAN seem pointless (if the child can write, does it need to be in cursive in this day and age?), however, the same excuse could be said for other areas of learning – is it pointless to teach students how to draw a tree? No, because one day it may be useful. Knowing how to write in cursive also opens up the option for children to choose which style they wish to write in cursive or now – it's about ensuring these students are taught the different options so they can make an informed choice when that time comes. That being said, I don't think a child should be FORCED to write in a certain style – as long as they can understand the cursive or print forms and can choose which form is most suited for themselves, should it really matter? And of course, with technology being what it is, and almost everyone above primary school being required to TYPE assignments, essays and so on – should there not be some time made to teach TYPING skills alongside handwriting?

Lisa

Sep 19, 2011

Having taught vic mod cursive in Early Childhood over the years (WA), children can develop their own writing style that is neat and legible, given time. As long as they are encouraged to write and given opportunities to do so, does it matter what font we use nationally? I have children from other states in class who have been confused but I encourage them with what they feel comfortable with. Getting them to write and form a quality sentence with as few spelling errors as possible is more important to me. The "powers that be" need to make up their minds so we can get on with teaching and end speculation!

Tracie Shepherd

Sep 19, 2011

I think a national starting age is an important factor to a national curriculum. Comparing 4 year olds to 6 year olds simply isn't rational (and yes I think 4 is too young to go to school I believe a child should have already turned 5).

tania

Sep 19, 2011

Curriculum National  
Handwriting Font Premier's  
Fund primary school Queensland  
Floods RSPCA sight word splat  
Simple Classroom Games splat game  
survey  
Teacher  
Resources teaching  
children about money teaching  
resources teach this  
update adobe Victora Floods voucher

i wish the det would create an australian wide font.... i teach on the border and have children move from nsw to vic often.... the sooner the better.

**luarna**

Sep 19, 2011

Interesting article, thanks for sharing. My son in grade 1 has Aspergers, so I had a little giggle as I read about the boy with the green pen and guessed before you mentioned Aspergers. Infuriating to the teacher as you say, but so important to that boy - beyond words to explain why. I just can't bear the thought of trying to change my sons writing if ours is changed !

**KA**

Sep 19, 2011

I also have an ASD student in my class and when he does his homework in biro, that is ok. He is doing his homework. During class time he will occasionally ask to use a different colour pencil to do his work and that is ok too. He is fulfilling his requirements to learn.

**Karen**

Sep 20, 2011

I get frustrated with schools who have book checks to see how neat the handwriting is. As long as handwriting is legible and can be read by the teacher, that is what is important, not how beautifully the letters were formed.

Jenny

Sep 25, 2011

**Jenny**

Sep 25, 2011

I have to agree that having a consistent starting age is a very important factor and one which the governments should have worked on before a national curriculum. Working in a mining town we have children from different states move here and it does make it difficult when they go into a class based on their age not their ability.

**Sandra**

Sep 25, 2011

I also agree that the purpose of the lesson is the main focus, the most important thing is that the handwriting is legible no matter what font or colour it is written in. My father, and a lot of males I know all write in upper case and have done all their lives. There again, if thats the best way for them to put pen to paper and

get the message across, so be it!

Cheryl W.A. 14/10/11

**Cheryl S**  
Oct 14, 2011

I'm not easily impressed but you've done it with that positng.

**Kapri**  
Dec 27, 2011

Nice to read your blog

**Katie**  
Jan 16, 2012



### Add a Comment

Required

Will not be published. Required

Add Comment

## My Latest Tweet

No public Twitter messages.

## Recent Comments

- tabata on Unpacking the Australian Curriculum
- Emily on Adobe PDF Reader email scam
- Katie on Australian National Handwriting Style
- Kapri on Australian National Handwriting Style

## About Us