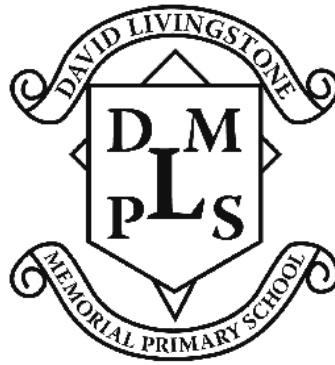


Welcome to David Livingstone Memorial Primary School



How to help
your child with
writing and spelling

Developing fine motor skills to develop successful writers

Before your child begins learning to write properly, they need to develop muscle control in their hands and fingers.

You can help your child to develop these muscles by encouraging them to play with:

- Construction toys e.g. Duplo, Lego
- Play dough or plasticine
- Large piece jigsaws



Encouraging your child to use their hands and fingers to develop the fine motor skills that are required for writing will help them to write in Primary 1. Here are some fun "finger gym" activities you could try:

- Sorting coins, Lego bricks, small toys, etc.
- Threading beads and lacing shoes
- Cutting out using scissors safely (Tommy Thumb and Middle Man)
- Colouring within the lines
- Dot-to-dot pictures
- Using play dough or plasticine to practise rolling into long "sausage" shapes and rolling pieces into a ball
- Finger painting and painting with a small brush or cotton bud
- Making shapes and pictures using pipe cleaners
- Encouraging your child to draw more detailed pictures, e.g. a face with eyes, nose, mouth, ears, eyebrows, eyelashes, teeth, etc.



Encouraging emergent writers

In Primary 1, we work hard to ensure children learn the correct formation of each letter and to develop careful, neat handwriting. This helps children to join letters in the future.

To develop an interest in writing, we encourage children from a young age to experiment with letter formation using different writing tools.

Using multi-sensory approaches allows children to learn in a fun and engaging way. Below are some examples you could try with your child:

- Writing letters in sand
- Writing letters using chalk outside
- Using pipe cleaners to make letters
- Moulding letters using play dough and plasticine
- Writing letters using different colours (rainbow writing)



You can also help by:

- Modelling how to hold a pencil correctly using the "snappy crocodile" grip
- Using a sharp, full sized pencil (preferably a thicker, chunky pencil to begin with)
- Encouraging your child to write during play activities
- Encouraging your child to write their name on any drawings or writing that they do



Learning to Spell

"I explore sounds, letters and words, discovering how they work together, and I can use what I learn to help me as I read or write." LIT 0-01a / LIT 0-11a / LIT 0-20a Curriculum for Excellence, Early Level Writing

Current research has shown that children learn to read and write best when they are taught **letter sounds**.

We currently use the Jolly Phonics and North Lanarkshire Literacy programmes combined. Below is the order of initial sounds taught in Primary 1:

1. a t s i p n -> 2. r m d e c k (ck)
3. g l f o b u -> 4. h w j v y z q(u) x

Once the first initial sounds are taught (a,t,s,i,p,n), these sounds will be used to teach word building skills, as well as blending skills for reading.

We use the following 5 step approach:

1. **Say** (say the word aloud)
sit
2. **Make** (make the word using the different letter sounds)
s then i then t
3. **Break** (break the word into the different sounds)
s i t
4. **Blend** (blend the word slowly together to read it aloud)
s -> i -> t
5. **Write** (write the word that has been made)
sit



The North Lanarkshire Literacy programme also encourages children from very early on in Primary 1 to be able to spell and read common words.

These words will allow children to begin constructing and writing short sentences very quickly. For example, once the first sounds have been taught (a,t,s,i,p,n) and the first common words have been taught (a, at, the, I, in, it, an, is, and) children could write:

I sat. A tin.
In the pan. It is a tap. etc.