



# Handwriting

Handwriting requires a stable sitting posture (see sitting posture advice sheet) and good shoulder control to allow fine movement of the fingers. All activities should be carried out under adult supervision.

## Activities



- Ⓞ The child completes activities lying on their tummy and weight bearing through elbows. e.g. watching television, reading a book, completing a puzzle.
- Ⓞ Climbing, seesaw, tug of war and swing activities, with the child holding onto ropes.
- Ⓞ Craft activities involving cutting, scrunching, gluing and ripping paper and bending pipe cleaners.
- Ⓞ DIY game – toy tools such as sawing, drilling, hammering, screws and bolts.
- Ⓞ Enclosed trampolining. Try bouncing on all fours.
- Ⓞ Fuzzy felts – to position shapes on a line or to spell a word
- Ⓞ Games involving flicking small objects e.g. flicking paper balls off a table into a 'goal'.
- Ⓞ Place a firm elastic band around the tips of fingers and thumb. Open and close the elastic band 10 times with each hand.
- Ⓞ Play dough and plasticine – pinching, poking, squeezing.
- Ⓞ Playing with spinning tops, jacks, marbles and card games
- Ⓞ Posting coins or small objects into jars. Holding all items in your palm and post one by one. Screw lids onto the jars.
- Ⓞ Picking up items with tongs / clothes pegs / hanging out laundry.
- Ⓞ Racket and ball games e.g. volleyball, basketball, netball.
- Ⓞ Ribbon dancing
- Ⓞ Rope skipping – turning rope for other children or solo skipping.
- Ⓞ Obstacle courses involving crawling on all fours or commando style.
- Ⓞ Swimming
- Ⓞ Threading beads to make jewellery
- Ⓞ Turning keys
- Ⓞ Walking fingers. Place a piece of tape along the table. Walk index and middle fingers (ring and little fingers curled out of the way) along the tape. Change hands.



# Preparation



- Ⓢ Make sure the child is sitting in a stable, symmetrical and upright posture (please see sitting posture advice sheet).
- Ⓢ Warm up shoulders and hands with wall or chair push ups, playing with play dough or plasticine or pencil twirling games.
- Ⓢ Make sure the pencil is sharp.
- Ⓢ Make sure you have appropriate writing utensils and keep the work surface clear, to allow space for the writing arm to move.

# Practice



These ideas will help with practicing handwriting.

- Ⓢ Hold the pencil with your thumb, index and middle fingers. Where necessary try pencil grips or triangular pencils. Hold the pencil a good inch from the nib so that you can see what you are writing without smudging it.
- Ⓢ Use lined paper with margins either side. Angle the paper at about 30'-45'. Paper should be parallel with writing arm. Supporting hand should hold paper still, and move the paper up as your child's writing gets near the bottom of the page.
- Ⓢ Stencil and tracing activities
- Ⓢ Colouring in activities, staying within the line.
- Ⓢ Pre-writing pattern worksheets, keeping on the line.
- Ⓢ Dot to dot work sheets
- Ⓢ Hand over hand writing
- Ⓢ Drawing letter shapes in the air to music
- Ⓢ Working together as two or more children, get them to lie on the floor and use themselves to make letter shapes.



- Ⓢ Copying over letter shapes
- Ⓢ Write letter shapes with chalk, crayons, finger paints, pencils and pens etc
- Ⓢ Write letters in the air with eyes shut
- Ⓢ Recognition of shapes and letters through touch (sticky letters, fuzzy felt, magnetic letters, sandpaper letters).
- Ⓢ Drawing and writing onto vertical surfaces. e.g. chalk board, whiteboard
- Ⓢ Drawing and writing with chalks on the pavement
- Ⓢ Write with scented markers



# Adjustments



The following items could assist with developing your child's handwriting skills however this list is not exhaustive. Please find purchasing information under resources.

- Ⓢ Investigate different types of pens/pencils, eg softer pencils (B,HB,2B), hand-hugger, fine liner and fountain pens.
- Ⓢ Pencil Grips. These can aid grip and finger positioning.
- Ⓢ Fibre tip pens tend to blot on the paper and a roller ball pen doesn't.
- Ⓢ Glossy Paper. This allows easier pencil / pen movement.
- Ⓢ Carbon Paper. This enables awareness of writing pressure.
- Ⓢ Angled writing surface. This encourages more upright posture.
- Ⓢ With any adjustment in pen, try for a couple of weeks before swapping.

