**Handwriting – Primary aged pupils**

* Your child should already be able to recognise (read) some of the letters by sound or name.
* As a general rule - work on two or three letters at a time but move at your child’s pace.
* Your child will need the necessary motor skills in order to do this work – although these activities could also link to a child’s Occupational Therapy work.

**Formation of a letter / linking to its sound (1)**

**Equipment:**

Feely letters / magnetic letters & bag / box or bowl of water

Play dough (or similar)

Small tray with dry sand or salt

Finger paints?! (messy but fun!)

Rough surface (e.g. carpet)

Smooth surfaces

Paints

White board (WB) & pens or paper / pens

Selection of coloured pens / pencils

**Instructions:**

1. Have the letters in a bag, box or water tray. Child closes eyes – selects feely letter or magnetic letter from a bag or water tray.
2. Child guesses letter by feeling the shape. Make sure they’re holding it the right way round.
3. Child opens eyes & watches while adult models using forefinger to trace over the shape of the letter saying the sound – child copies.
4. Make sure they start in the right place and move in the right direction.
5. Child makes the shape of the letter using play dough and / or in similar material.
6. Child traces the shape of the letter with forefinger -while saying the sound- on different surfaces – rough carpet, smooth table, soft cushion, etc.
7. Child copies the shape of the letter -while saying the sound -using different writing tools – painting, wax crayons, big WB / pens in different colours etc. (as available).
8. End with adult tracing a letter shape on child’s back / child guesses it.

**Additional activities:**

Could also – make the lower case letter shapes in collage, in pegs on a peg board, in Lego or in cooking with a letter shaped pastry cutter.

Or outside – in soil, in wet sand, ‘water’ paint on the ground etc / try to link to child’s interests.

**Formation of a letter / linking to its sound (2)**

(Based on the principle of ‘Multi-sensory Links’ from Dyslexia Action)

**Equipment:**

White board (WB) & pens or paper / pens

A4 sheet of paper – folded into 4 sections

Pencil

Coloured pencils or felt tipped pens

**Instructions:**

1. Child watches as adult writes letter on the white board (WB) saying the sound – modelling correct starting point and correct formation.
2. Looking at this model - The adult and child together practice ‘sky writing’ the letter saying the sound.
3. Using the paper, repeat step 1 – adult writes on the first section of the paper in pencil or in a highlighter pen saying the sound.
4. The child chooses a coloured pencil / pen and traces over the adults letter saying the sound.
5. The child then copies the letter in the second section of the paper and checks with the first section.
6. Adult folds the paper hiding sections 1 & 2.
7. (Ensure the WB is covered or the letter erased.)
8. Child writes the letter from memory in section 3, saying the sound, and then checks with the letter shape from sections 1 & 2.
9. Child then places pen at the correct starting point for the letter in section 4 of the paper – child closes eyes and forms the letter saying the sound. Child checks the letter. This can be repeated on the whiteboard.
10. Finally on the other side of the paper child produces their ‘best’ version of the letter. This could be kept in a record book.

**Remember to:**

**\* Demonstrate correct grip of writing tool**

**\*Use of hand rather than whole arm movements**

**\*Correct sitting**

**\*Correct position of paper**

If the child knows the letter names as well, instead of just saying the sound when writing the shape of the letter, encourage the child to say for example:

“*SSSS*” (letter sound) “is *es*” (letter name).

For letters that are frequently confused or reversed e.g. *b / d* – it will help to have a picture clue to show from step 1, and focus on the starting point of the letter – so for letter b have a picture of a bat and ball and focus on the top of the handle of the bat as the starting point (unless the school encourages full cursive writing in which case all letters start from the baseline – check the school policy).