

## Claregate Primary School: Handwriting Guidance for Parent / Carers

At Claregate we follow a handwriting scheme throughout school called “Penpals”. This teaches our pupils to develop fast, fluent and legible handwriting. In order to support this, it is vital that any support you provide at home is in line with the school policy. These guidelines state the stages of development.

### **Penpals for Handwriting: Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) Information**

**Preparation for handwriting involves developing four key areas:**

- ❑ Gross motor control: the ability to control the body.
- ❑ Fine motor control: the ability to fine-tune the movements of the arm, hand and fingers.
- ❑ Visual control: the ability to co-ordinate hand-eye movements.
- ❑ Spatial control: the awareness of oneself in space, an awareness of direction (left/right) and plane (horizontal/vertical) and how to transfer that on to paper.

**Here are some things you can do at home to develop these key areas:**

Fine motor control such as holding a pencil depends on their ability in gross motor control such as balance, throwing, hopping etc.

- Play with a ball: kick, catch, throw, bounce, etc.
- Play with equipment: hoops, Frisbees, stilts, large-scale building kits
- Use large climbing frames in parks.
- Enjoy finger rhymes.
- Making and modelling: cutting, sticking, moulding, cooking, sewing, threading, using a range of materials: play dough, plasticine, wood.
- Experiment with a range of tools and equipment: pens, pencils, crayons, felt tips, scissors, hole punches, tweezers.
- Jigsaw puzzles and board games.
- Painting, colouring and ‘making marks’ on different sizes of paper, creating pattern in sand or flour.
- Don’t expect them to write too early, patterns and circular movements will develop naturally.



As part of developing confidence in these key areas pupils begin to explore patterns and basic letter shapes. We experiment with the following seven basic patterns, which are excellent preparation for more formal work on letter formation. These are:-

- Straight line
- Upward loops
- Downward loops
- Circles
- Zigzags
- Figures of eights
- Spirals.

## Penpals for Handwriting: Foundation 2 (3-5 year olds) Information

Pattern practice and 'play' writing are an important part of handwriting development. Pupils will be practising letter formation in a number of exciting ways; in sand, using paint, in the air, on the interactive whiteboard as well as on paper with a pencil.

Where does the letter start?

- Long ladder letters (l, i, t, u, j, y)
- One armed robot letters (r, b, n, h, m, k, p)
- Curly caterpillar letters (c, a, d, o, s, g, q, e, f)
- Zigzag monsters (z, v, w, x)

The family of curly caterpillar letters

c a d o s g q e f  
c a d o s g q e f

The family of long ladder letters

l i t u j y  
l i t u j y

The family of zig-zag monster letters

z v w x  
z v w x

The family of one-armed robot letters

r b n h m k p  
r b n h m k p

## Penpals for Handwriting: Year 1 Information

Letter formation should now be more familiar and secure. As a reminder, correct letter formation for lower case letters is as follows:

a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z

Capital letters are formed as follows:

A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z

During this school year, pupils will begin to join some pairs of letters within a word. They will be introduced to two main join types:

- Diagonal joins with to ascender: at, al, th, ch, cl, in, im, cr, tr, dr, lp, mp, id, ig, nd, ld, ng
- Diagonal joins with no ascender: ee, ai, ay, ime, ine,
- Horizontal join with no ascender: op, oy, one, ome, oa, og, wa, wo
- Horizontal join with to ascender: ol, ot, wh, oh, of, if

### ***Penpals for Handwriting: Year 2 Information***

*Pupils will be introduced to:*

- *Joins from r: url, irl, irt, ere,*
- *Joins from s: dis, ws, sh, ai, su, se, sp, sm, rs*
- *Joins from f: ft, fl,*
- *Introducing joins from: qu, rr, ss, ff*

### ***Penpals for Handwriting: Year 3 Information***

*Pupils will be introduced to:*

- *Progressing from break letters to joining b and p diagonals: bi, bu, pi, pu*
- *Speed and fluency practice*
- *Relative size and consistency*
- *Consistency in spacing*
- *Handwriting style.*

### ***Penpals for Handwriting: Year 4 Information***

*Pupils will be introduced to:*

- *Sloped writing*
- *Speed and fluency for note taking and abbreviations*
- *Font styles*

### ***Penpals for Handwriting: Years 5 and 6 Information***

*Pupils will be introduced to:*

- *Developing a style for speed*

*By this stage, pupils should be joining accurately and consistently leading to the development of a mature and comfortable style of writing.*