

# Helping Your Child With Writing



Horspath C.E. Primary

Writing is quite often seen as a challenging area of the curriculum by children and understandingly so as it involves developing several skills.

At Horspath we expose children to a wide range of writing, ensuring that we give it relevance. Throughout the school we also emphasise writing across the curriculum and all efforts are valued.

We develop the individual needs of all children as well as teaching the knowledge that your child will need to develop their writing skills. Therefore the following guidance is organised into phases of development, rather than age or class.

Sarah Herring  
Literacy subject leader.

### **If your child is learning how to:**

- Make marks on paper
- Understand that these marks could mean something
- Understand that writing and drawing are different
- Write some letters

### **You can help by**

- Telling stories and saying nursery rhymes together
- Reading and writing together
- Talking about things that happen to you both
- Providing toys and games that will help to develop their fine movements, e.g. lego, jigsaws, modelling clay, etc.
- Writing your child's name with an initial capital letter followed by lower case letters
- Talking about the sounds and names of letters when your child asks
- Looking at print all around, e.g. in shops
- Showing and talking about how you write for a purpose, e.g. birthday cards, notes, letters.
- Providing magnetic letters and a fridge door for words and messages
- Writing notes to and for your child
- Making exciting writing and drawing materials available, e.g. paper, envelopes, crayons, paint and pencils
- Encouraging them to 'have a go' at writing
- Letting them help you to write a shopping list and then finding the things on the shelves
- Using the computer together
- Praising your child's attempts at writing, concentrating on the meaning rather than forming letters and words
- Displaying or making books of your child's writing to read back

### **If your child is learning how to:**

- Know that spoken words can be written down
- Read back his/her own writing
- Write recognisable words
- Write from left to right and top to bottom of a page
- Understand that the written message stays the same
- Write the most obvious sounds in a word
- Leave some spaces between words

### **You can help by**

- Continuing to tell stories and say rhymes together
- Making up stories together
- Continuing to read and write together and talk about what you are doing
- Writing messages to each other
- Providing interesting writing and drawing materials
- Making scrap books together, e.g. about holidays or special events
- Talking about different writing all around, e.g. telephone books, newspapers, signs and labels, posters
- Playing games with magnetic letters
- Helping children to make and write their own greetings cards
- Making an alphabet book with him/her
- Letting them help you to write a shopping list and then finding the things on the shelves
- Giving lots of praise, especially when they have a go at words
- Continuing to display and enjoy your child's writing

### **If your child is learning how to:**

- Write about things of interest
- Write in sentences
- Write for different reasons and in different forms, e.g. lists, messages, cards
- Use full stops and capital letters
- Check their writing to see if it makes sense
- Talk about how writing could be improved

### **You can help by**

- Continuing to display and enjoy your child's writing to show that you value it
- Continuing to tell and make up stories and rhymes together
- Continuing to read and write together
- Encouraging writing for a purpose, e.g. letters for information
- Talking about his or her writing
- Helping him or her to say sentences out loud before writing them down
- Encouraging him or her to use the computer
- Continuing to encourage him or her to have a go at words
- Playing word games, such as Boggle, Scrabble, Crosswords and Wordsearches
- Acting as a 'response partner' if your child asks you, e.g. helping him or her to check that sentences make sense or that ideas are in the right order.
- Praising your child's writing.

### **If your child is learning how to:**

- Talk about and use different forms of writing
- Vary their writing according to the person who will read it
- Use a range of punctuation
- Write longer sentences
- Make notes from information books
- Begin to use paragraphs
- Check their own writing and someone else's for meaning and accuracy
- Think about how to improve their choice of words

### **You can help by**

- Providing a quiet, comfortable place for reading and writing
- Talking about new words and drawing attention to effective words and phrases in texts you read together
- Providing a thesaurus and dictionary and helping them to use it effectively
- Continuing to support word processing
- Continuing to talk about your child's reading and writing
- Encouraging children to talk about newspaper and magazine articles
- Continuing to encourage your child to write for different reasons, e.g. letters for information, to explain, to praise
- Helping your child to make notes that record key words rather than whole sentences or paragraphs
- Praising your child's progress in writing

### **If your child is learning how to:**

- Use a personal writing style
- Write confidently in a range of forms in writing
- Spell and punctuate accurately
- Talk about their writing and how it was achieved
- Organise paragraphs into a satisfying piece of work
- Use a wide range of vocabulary
- Confidently read and revise his/her own writing
- Make notes and use these to help their own writing

### **You can help by**

- Continuing to provide a comfortable, quiet place for reading and writing
- Continuing to talk about your child's reading and writing
- Talking about issues in the news and on television
- Continuing to support your child's writing for a real purpose e.g. letters/ emails to friends and family, thank you cards/ letters, shopping lists, invitations
- Encouraging and helping him/her to edit and review writing
- Respecting your child's private diary writing
- Continuing to support your child's word processing skills
- Praising writing success and progress

## Phonics and Spellings

Phonics (the learning of the 'sound' of letters and letter combinations) is the basis of spelling. Recognising, using and blending sounds and learning sight words is vital to the development of your child's spelling skills.

After phonics teaching, children at Horspath School learn spelling 'rules' (e.g. 'i before e except after c'). You can help your child as he or she learns spelling rules by encouraging and supporting them with any task they are given to complete at home.

### You can help by

- Encouraging your child to say the sounds as they are writing a word.
- Talking about the spelling pattern your child is learning. What sounds, letter patterns or rule are they learning this week?

### You could

- help your child to put the spelling word into a sentence
- write the word in sand or shaving foam
- make the word out of magnetic letters
- write the word backwards
- write the word in the air
- write the word using paint, felt tips, crayon
- create a crossword together
- oral recall
- written practice
- write a funny spelling story- write the spelling words in colour and illustrate it
- write a riddle for each spelling word- the answer is the spelling word
- circle/ colour the vowels
- write the words using fancy letters

## Handwriting

Essentially how letters and words are formed on the page. Our cursive style of writing (all letters begin on the line) is taught from Foundation and is used throughout the school. Joined handwriting is the natural progression from early 'scribble' writing by infants and encourages 'flow' and learning of how words 'feel' when they are written.

Throughout Foundation and Key Stage One your child will be learning how form letters and he or she will begin to join letter.

### You can help by

- Prompting and encouraging your child to start each letter on the line and form each letter in the correct way.
- Encouraging your child to write in the cursive style whenever they write at home.
- Doing some extra handwriting practice at home, a few minutes can result in a great improvement over time.
- Encourage your child to join their letters

Please see your child's class teacher if you would like a copy of the cursive alphabet.