

Information for parents and teachers

Handwriting

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Handwriting is an extremely complex process. Visual skills are crucial to handwriting, because acuity, visual perception, and visual and sequential memory all enable the writer to see letters and words. Without the ability to see the forms constructed, children will not be able to perceive similarities and differences among them, or to remember what they saw.

Handwriting is a perceptual-motor skill that requires the student to perceive a letter form, then translate the perceived form into a written symbol using motor skills. At the same time, the writer integrates previous perceptual images, through memory, and new visual images, including the working surface and the markings that have been made.

Sequence of handwriting skills

1. Grasping and using crayons and paint brushes.
2. Grasping and holding a pencil.
3. Moving the pencil in random patterns.
4. Reproducing patterns, such as line and wave patterns, letters, numbers and words.
5. Copying letters and words.
6. Writing letters and words in manuscript.
7. Developing flowing movements required for cursive writing.
8. Copying cursive letters and words.
9. Writing cursive letters and words.
10. Writing sentences and paragraphs.

By the end of Year 4 most students rely totally on cursive writing. Individual students with a history of learning or motor problems may still require assistance.

When teaching writing, stress consistent movement from left to right. For example, when teaching the letter "t" emphasise drawing the first down stroke from top to bottom and the second stroke from left to right. Students who cross the "t" from left to right and then from right to left could be opening themselves up to directional confusion.

For more Information

If you require further information please contact:

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