

STRATEGIES TO HELP CHILDREN WHO HAVE HANDWRITING DIFFICULTIES

Children who have handwriting difficulties often have difficulty conveying their thoughts and ideas accurately in written form. They will often benefit from the use of alternative strategies to support them in the classroom to demonstrate what they are capable of and to enable them to reach their full potential.

The following strategies can often help:

- Allow the child to use the pen or pencil that works best for them.
- Don't expect the child to focus on every aspect within a piece of written work e.g. use of capitals, full stops, spacing, positioning, spelling and punctuation. Choose 2-3 aspects of good handwriting, and ask the child to only focus on those. Decide what it is that you are hoping the children will get out of a piece of work – it may be that their organisation and ideas are the most important part of the piece of work, rather than the presentation of the writing itself.
- Allow extra time to complete written tasks/exams.
- Teach mind maps, spider diagrams and use of bullet points to reduce writing.
- Photocopy notes/instructions/handouts/homework sheets, rather than asking the child to copy them down. Or give them partly-prepared handouts or worksheets to complete.
- Consider alternatives to writing – try using word processing, voice recording/speech to text technology to record work.
- Encourage the child to develop keyboard skills and touch typing, especially for longer pieces of writing. Allow child to type homework and print off/email back to teacher
- Dictation can be a helpful strategy to use if resources allow this.
- Use classroom based ICT resources to minimise paper and pencil activities that are more challenging for the child. These are often very effective as it provides the child with a well presented legible piece of work which can be a real confidence boost to them.