

Occupational Therapy Advice

2017



Improving letter formation:

Suggested strategies and activities:

- * To make it easier to remember the way letters are formed, it is best to teach them in groups. It is useful to use consistent verbal cues when teaching the letter group – this should be done through all activities and reinforced between home and school. Please liaise with the class teacher to determine which letter formation your child's school uses, as this can vary. Examples have been given below – you may need to adjust the grouping of letters or verbal cues to suit the chosen handwriting style:
 - Magic c letters: a, c, d, g, o, q, s
"Start like a 'C' "
 - Diver letters: b, h, m, n, p, r
"Down, up and over"
 - Straight letters: i, j, l, t
"Start at the top. . . "
 - Diagonal letters: v, w, x, z
 - Tricky letters: e, u, y, k, f
- * Teach only one group at a time, until the child has learnt them properly. Start with the 'Magic C letters'.
- * Emphasise starting points for letters and the correct direction of lines. You can use dot-to-dot or arrows to show the correct formation.
- * A multi-sensory approach helps children to learn by involving additional senses. The following steps will be beneficial:
 1. MOVE! Let the child use their body or big arm movements to practice letters e.g. 'air writing' or making the letters in the air with long ribbons.
 2. TOUCH! Use lots of different textures for them to write in or feel e.g. a salt tray or shaving foam or let them form the letters out of play dough or pipe cleaners.
 3. WRITE! Try not to just practice on paper. Write on blackboards, with chalk on the pavement or on a whiteboard.
- * Letter cards can be placed on the child's desk as visual cues if there are letters that they frequently confuse or reverse.

Let us know if you have any questions!