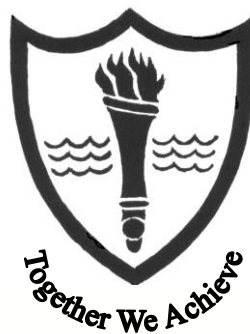




# HINGUAR PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY



Helping your child with their  
learning

Handwriting Booklet



## **Supporting your child's handwriting at home.**

### **How can you help?**

Most importantly, you can show your child that you value and admire the skill. We use the 'PenPals' handwriting scheme at Hinguar Primary School and Nursery. For more information

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8doaJvID50>

### **Emergent Writing**

When children start to write they learn first by 'Mark Making' - literally making marks on the paper. Very young children like to make scribbles on paper. They learn to write by making marks that they will sometimes tell you they are writing. These marks mean something to the child, so it is important that you value them as writing and take them seriously and these will soon start to look like letters.

Handwriting can be further supported by activities such as bead threading, Lego building, mark making in sand, finger painting or colouring as these activities develop muscle control in their hands and wrists. This is a very important step and should be encouraged and enjoyed.

### **Further Writing Development**

Have a small selection of handwriting materials readily available at home. For example soft pencils (B Grade), felt-tip pens. Chunky pencils help to develop emergent writer's pencil grip.

Let handwriting play a part in your family's daily life, for example.....

- making lists and labels
- keeping a family diary
- leaving notes for each other in busy households
- keeping in touch with distant friends and relatives
- designing and making home-made notelets and greetings cards.

Display your child's work – if you haven't got a noticeboard, you could use the fridge door. After being on display, favourite pieces could be pasted into a scrap book to build up a unique record of progress and achievement.

Encourage your child to sit properly when they are writing. They will get the best results if your child

- is in a good light
- sits on an upright chair
- sits at a comfortable height
- keeps their back straight
- their head is high enough to see the pen/pencil point forming the letters.

Good posture is vital for any child, but it is particularly important if your child is left-handed, because people who are left handed have a tendency to develop a cramped, curled hand position which makes writing very hard work. Sitting properly helps to prevent this. So do your best to provide somewhere your child can work, even if it's the end of the kitchen table.

### What materials are needed?

You can make a start with whatever pens, pencils and paper are to hand, but, as your child gets better, they will begin to have particular preferences, and you might need to widen the choices available. If you're choosing pens, remember that young children get on best with those that have a bit of 'bite'. Ball points tend to run too easily over the paper and this is a particular problem for left-handed children. Fibre-tips and felt-tips are easier to control.

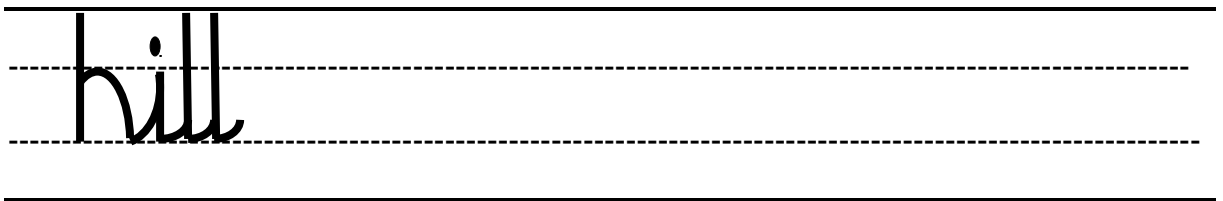
Learning to write well can use up quite a lot of paper, so it is sensible to save the better quality sheets for final drafts and special assignments. You can use cheaper recycled or re-used paper for daily practice..

As your child demonstrates their letter formation guidelines can help your child to produce regular, well-sized writing. You can easily make a set of guidelines from an A4 sheet ruled in black fibre-tip.

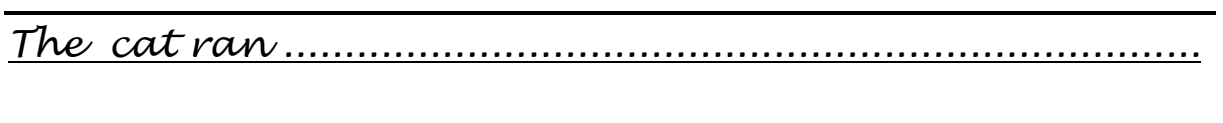
### Early Writers (focus writing on a line)



### Developing joined handwriting (ascenders and descenders)



### Confident joined handwriting (1 cm )



Draw a margin round the page and encourage your child to decorate each piece of work with a handwriting pattern. Border patterns are more than just decoration. They help to develop a feel for the rhythm of fluent writing, establish basic hand and arm movements and also encourage regularity in the size and shape of letters.

### **Supporting the development of joined handwriting at home**

We would not recommend you try to teach your child to join their writing before they are ready. The school uses the handwriting scheme Pen Pals and would normally be starting to join handwriting in year 2 and by the end of this year most children should have developed towards a joining habit unless your child has particular difficulties. For information on Pen Pals style <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8doaJvID50>  
You child's class teacher will discuss and share ideas on how to support your child's handwriting.

### **To Sum Up...**

Good handwriting is still a vital accomplishment, and practice doesn't have to be a chore. Make sure your child has somewhere to work, a small collection of varied writing implements and an interesting reason for getting started. That way you're laying the foundations for a skill that will be valuable all their life.