

Parents: why is cursive (joined-up) handwriting important?

Research has shown that the use of a continuous cursive handwriting style plays a significant role, not only in developing fine motor skills but also in learning spelling patterns. This is particularly important for children who struggle with spelling and find decoding writing patterns challenging. Once this skill has developed, the child should be able to recall spelling patterns with automaticity. The child can then focus on the content and structure of writing rather than the disconnected process of letter recollection. The brain thinks more rapidly and fluently in **whole words** than in single letters where the pen is lifted off the page much more frequently. Cursive handwriting therefore **encourages fluidity** of thought processes when writing and is also **much quicker**. This will be useful for any student in exams where time is limited. Cursive handwriting also develops hand/eye co-ordination and motor skills which can help develop skills in other areas of life and work.

How can I help my daughter?

Encourage your daughter to keep trying; sometimes the writing is worse before it gets better! With continuous practice using materials and guidance provided by the teacher or Literacy Co-ordinator, all pupils can learn to write cursively. Start small – 2 / 3 letter words. Join up the letters in words like ‘in’, ‘off’, ‘and’ and then progress to longer words which are well known and used frequently, like ‘then’, ‘where’ and ‘went’. Try the website www.teachhandwriting.co.uk for tips and animated examples of cursive writing.

After your daughter has got used to these, encourage her to extend the style of cursive writing to all of her writing in all subject areas.

It will be slow at first, especially if your daughter’s primary school didn’t enforce this once she had learnt it. However, it is worth working on it now and it will bring the benefits described above.

If you have any questions or would like to find out more about any aspect of school literacy provision and developments, please contact the school directly.

Thank you for your continued support.

D Kelly

Literacy Co-ordinator

