

St. Bede's Catholic Infant School

Supporting your child with writing

November 2020



We would like to help you support your child as they learn to write.

Firstly, it's helpful to know what the Department for Education's 'expectations' are for writing.



Reception Year

- Use some clearly identifiable letters to communicate meaning.

The letters 'A', 'B', and 'C' are displayed in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter 'A' is orange, 'B' is blue, and 'C' is red. They are positioned horizontally and slightly overlap.

Year One



Pupils should be taught to:

- Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- Form lower-case letters in the right direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- Form capital letters and digits 0-9
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practice these

Year Two



Pupils should be taught to:

- Form lower-case letters of the correct size, relative to one another
- Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters
- Write capital letters and lower case letters of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another. Write digits correctly.
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

Here are some important
ways to help your child to
reach writing expectations...

1. Pencil Grip

Encourage your child to hold their pen/pencil correctly. We ask our children to use the tripod grasp, like this...



Click [HERE](#) to see the correct way to pick a pencil up



Dynamic Tripod Grasp

- Pencil is held in stable position between the thumb, index and middle finger.
- The ring and little fingers are bent and rest comfortably on the table.
- The index finger and thumb form an open space.
- The wrist is bent back slightly, and the forearm is resting on the table.
- The pencil is held about 1-2cm from the tip.

Click [HERE](#) to see ways to help your child establish a confident tripod grip.



2. Posture

Encourage your child to:

- sit with a straight, extended back
- sit with feet flat on the floor
- sit with ankles, knees and hips all at 90 degrees



Click [HERE](#) to watch a short video



3. Gross Motor Skills

Gross motor skills are controlled movements of the whole body or limbs. Gross motor skills help to develop posture and balance and are important in establishing good writing habits.

Activities to develop gross motor skills include:

Jumping on a trampoline or space hopper

Playing on swings and slides

Playing 'Statues'

Playing 'Simon Says'...jump like a frog, hop on one leg

Playing hopscotch

4. Fine Motor Skills

Fine motor skills are smaller movements, usually of the fingers or hand. Developing fine motor skills is a really important part of the writing process. Children need to develop their fine motor skills before they attempt more formal writing.

Activities to develop fine motor skills include:

Trace letters, pictures and patterns using pens/markers

Use scissors to cut along line shapes

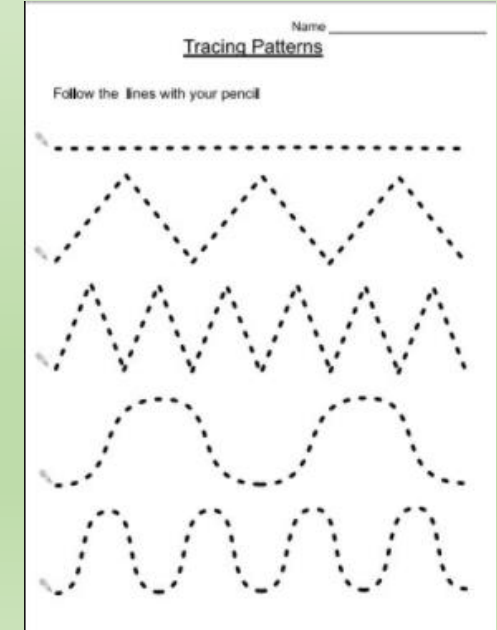
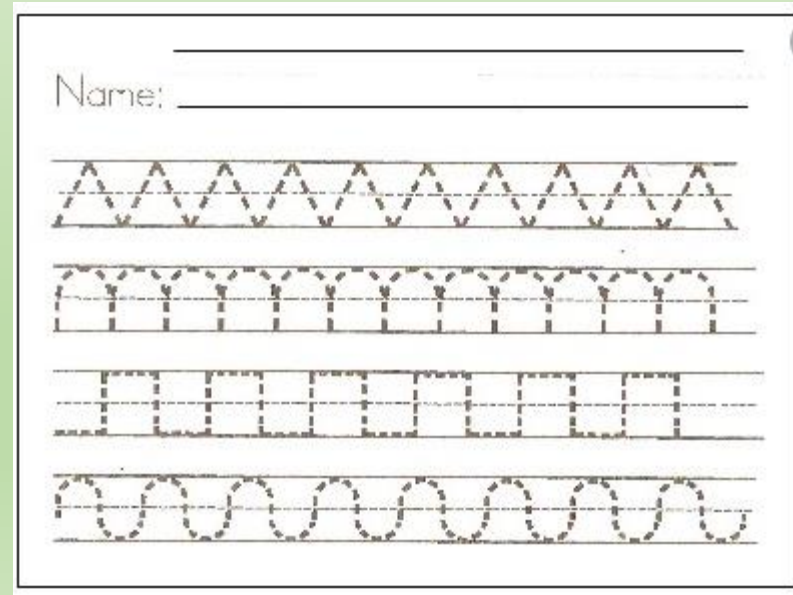
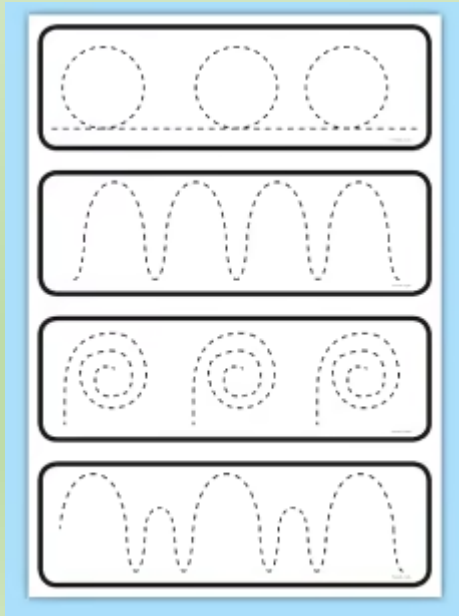
Playing with playdough or plasticine

Finger painting

Help with peeling and chopping when cooking

5. Pre-handwriting Patterns

Tracing patterns and shapes is a fun way for your child to develop their pencil control and is a great activity to practice as they begin to form letters correctly. Click [HERE](#) to download pencil control patterns.



6. Letter formation

As your child develops their pencil control they will be ready to create letter shapes. The ultimate aim is for the children to develop a good handwriting style, which means;



They can produce and maintain a good speed



They have a fluid movement that is comfortable



Letters are of consistent and appropriate size, positioned correctly



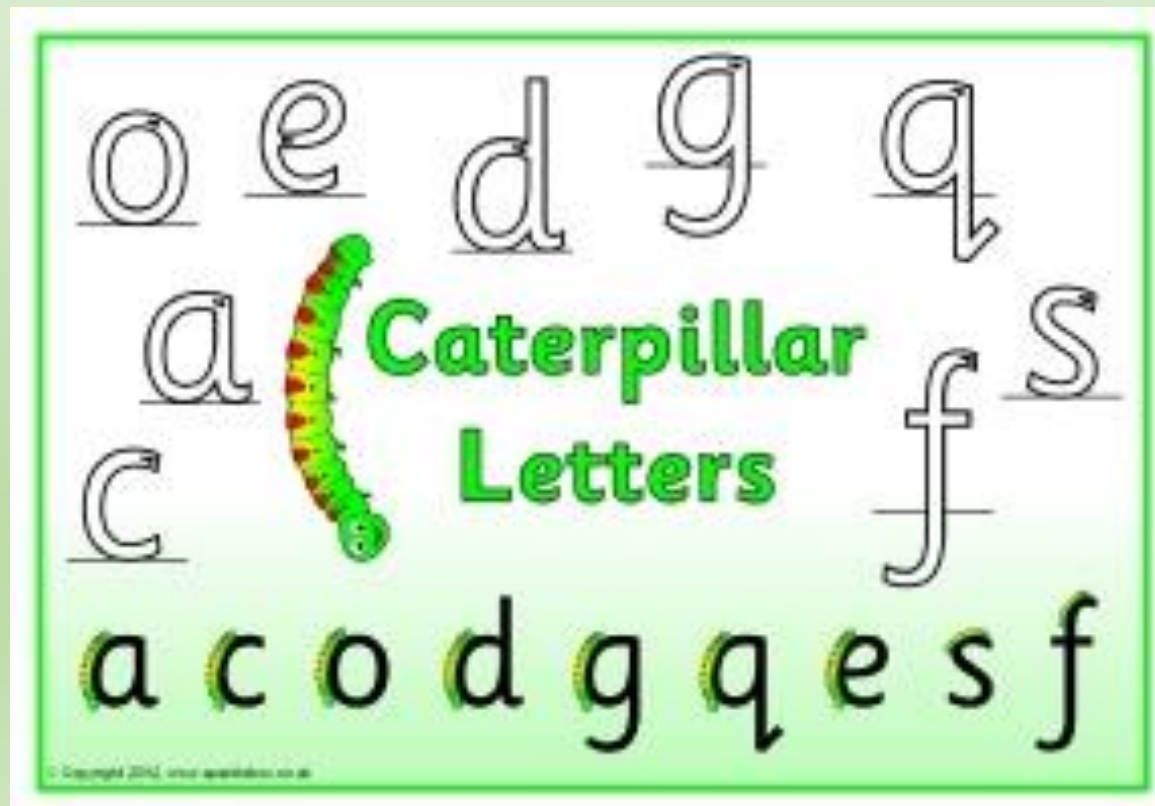
Handwriting is legible (so others can read it easily)

7. Letter families

Curly Caterpillar Letters

Each of these letters begins with a curl

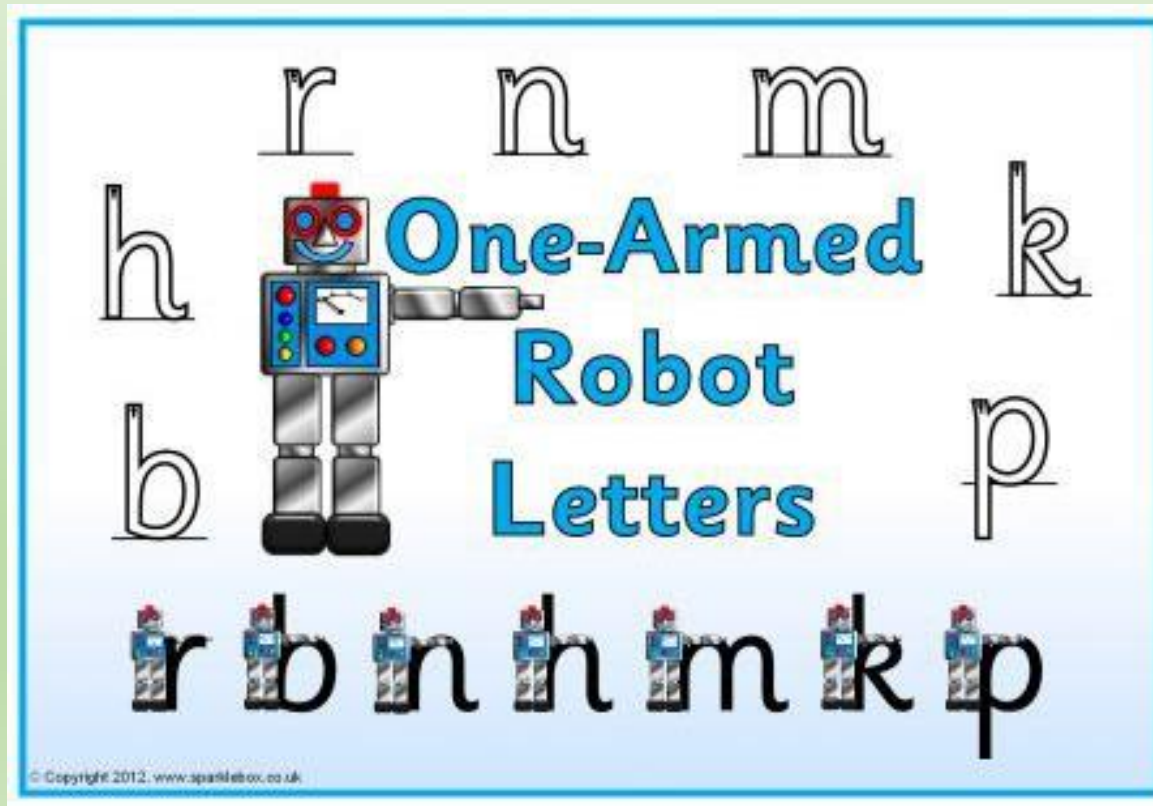
Click [HERE](#) to watch a short video about Curly Caterpillar letters



One armed robot letters

Each of these letters start with a straight line down, come up the same line and then curve to the right.

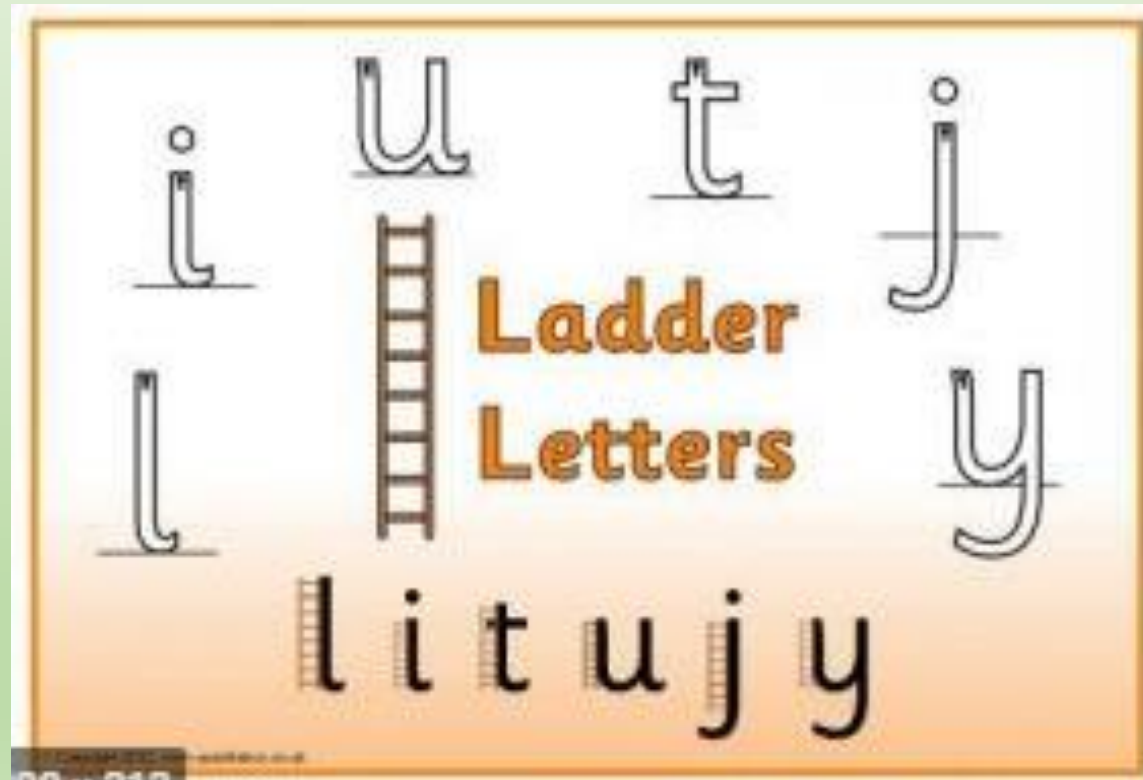
Click [HERE](#) to watch a short video about one armed robot letters



Long ladder letters

Each of these letters starts with a straight line down

Click [HERE](#) to watch a short video about long ladder letters



BBC
Bitesize

Zig zag letters

Each of these contains horizontal lines

Click [HERE](#) to watch a short video about zig zag letters



8. Joining letters

When your child can form each letter correctly, they will move onto precursive and cursive letters. At St. Bede's, we sometimes call these 'curly letters'. Each of these letters starts from the line and ends with a 'tail' which makes them easier to join. We never join a capital letter, eg, when writing name.



Left-handed writers

If your child is left-handed (approx. 10% of the population) this should not be seen as a disadvantage. There are a few easy things you can do to support your left-handed child:

- Put a mark on the left hand side of the paper to show where writing begins as some left-handed writers begin on the right-hand side
- Put the paper slightly to the left of their body
- Tilt the paper clockwise (slightly) to make writing more visible
- Try to keep wrist straight
- Try a slightly higher chair so that the child can see their writing

Click [HERE](#) for further information on supporting your left-handed child.



Helpful web links (click logos)



Login with Username: wid Password: nes
to practice letters at home



Help your child learn to write
by encouraging mark-making



Letter families



Pre-cursive alphabet

**If you have any questions
about supporting your
child's writing at home then
please contact your child's
class teacher...we are
always here to help!**

