

Writing and Drawing

Left-Handers

Writing Tool and Grip.

In order to see as they write and to prevent smudging, the left-hander should hold the pencil/pen at least 3 centimetres from the point. This can be indicated by a small elastic band around the desired area for grip, which can be removed once the child is familiar with the position. This is known as a tripod grip

This grip, taught in early stages, along with sitting and paper position should eliminate the need for a 'hooked' hand. If this hasn't developed, it can be remedied in the following ways:

- Vertical blackboard writing using handwriting patterns. This encourages a full arm movement with greater freedom and a less cramped position
- Frequent practice of large writing on paper should be provided
- Using a sloping desk
- Attention to correct sitting and paper position
- Use of a thick barrel pen, crayons, felt tip for writing patterns

Seating

- Check that a left-hander is not sitting too close to the right of a right-hander. This will avoid their arms colliding. Some, but not all, left-handers will find writing easier if they can sit on a higher chair. BUT their feet should still be firmly planted on the floor
- When copying a word, numbers, letters, writing patterns etc. a left-hander is helped if these are placed down the right hand side of the page

Writing Implement

- It can be harder for a left-handed writer to write with a very fine nib. Offer pens and pencils with broader and more flexible nibs
- When using pens, avoid ink which appears very "wet" as this can be easily smudged. Do use ink which flows freely, to help reduce writing pressure which can lead to pain over longer pieces of written work
- Use softer leaded pencils e.g. 2B rather than HB to reduce writing pressure
- Try different pens and pencils with your child.



Paper Position

- Allow the child to tilt the paper slightly to the right. Around 45° is usually appropriate but allow the child to experiment until they feel comfortable
- Left-handed writers may require more space at a shared desk or prefer to sit on the left of a shared desk so they do not bump arms with their peer when writing