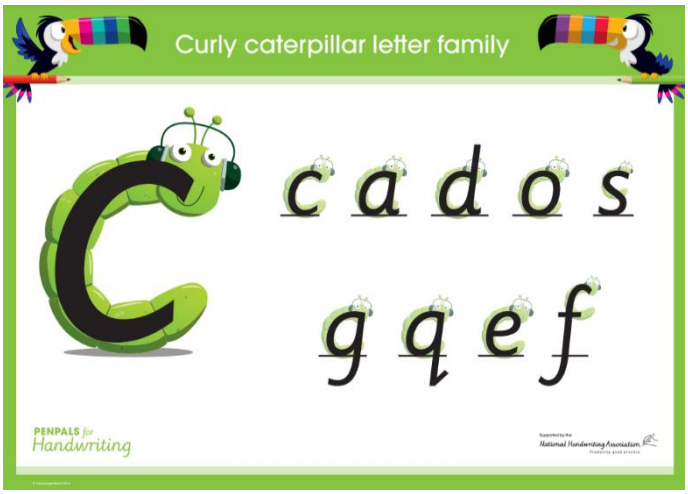
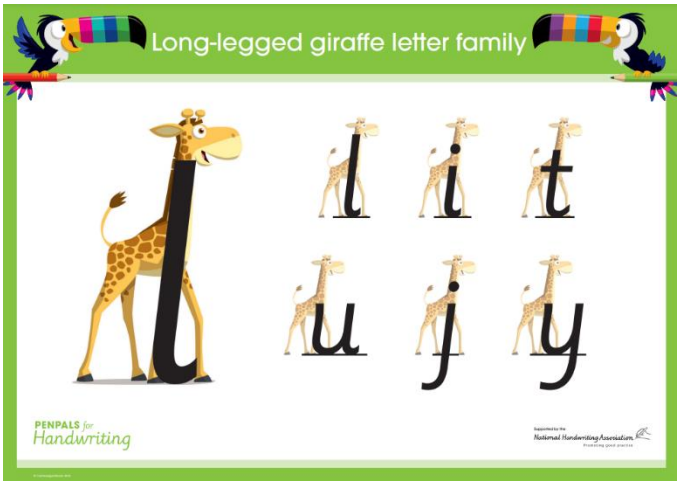
child

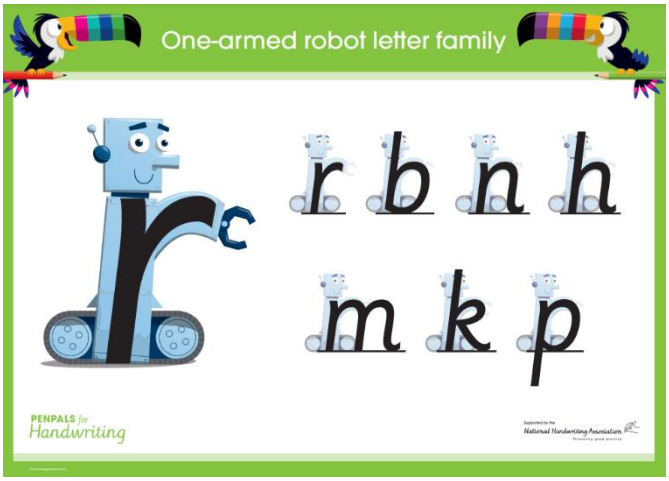
home school

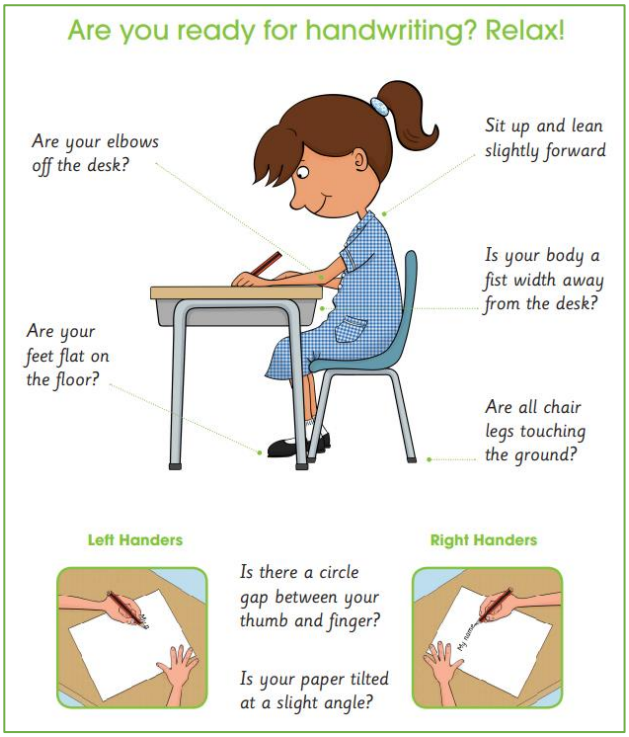
Handwriting at Bernards Heath

Children learn to form letters in "families" that all share some of the same movements. Fluent handwriting enables children to focus their attention on recording their ideas in fluent sentences that closely match their spoken language. The guide below shows how we teach each letter family and the language we use to help children to remember them.









Developmental levels of pencil hold

1 Whole-hand grasp: using a fisted hand.

- Around 1–2 years.
- Use of upper body muscles.
- Movement comes mainly from the shoulder with the arm moving as a unit.

2 Beginning to use the fingers: no longer using whole-hand grasp.

- Around 2–3 years.
- Use of forearm.
- Movement is still quite stiff but there may be some wrist movement.

a

b

3 Holds pencil between thumb and two fingers: no longer using whole-hand grasp.

- Around 3–4 years.
- Both of these grips are the crude beginnings of the tripod grip. The hand tends to move as a unit, with limited wrist movement.

Children at this stage need more experiences that will strengthen their muscles (cutting, working with dough etc.) to increase readiness for a precision pen hold.

4 Moving towards the tripod grip.

- Around 4–6 years.
- Holds pencil near point between first two fingers and thumb and uses it with good control.
- Finger movements and wrist now in play.
- Moving to a comfortable and efficient tripod grip: a precise three-way or tripod use of thumb, index and middle fingers.

PENPALS for Handwriting

Supported by the National Handwriting Association
Promoting good practice

© Cambridge Reach Ltd