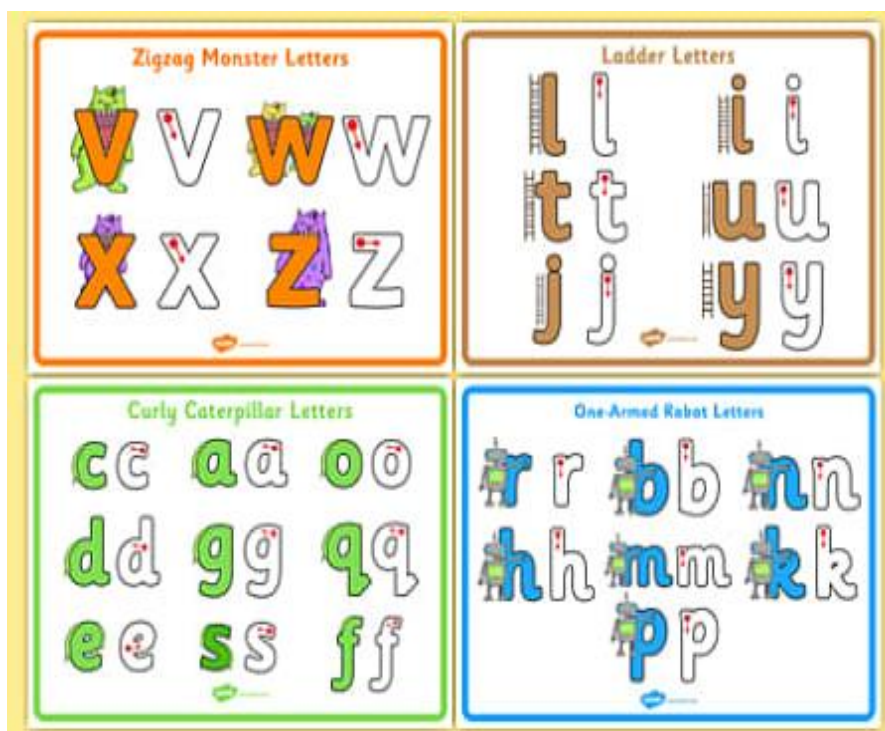


Handwriting crib sheet

Letter families and cursive formation:

In school we target letters individually when introducing the cursive formation. We also call the cursive formation, “curly school writing”. We talk about leading into each lowercase letter with a lead-in stroke. We also categorise letters into groups depending on how they are formed. See below for the “letter families” we refer to:

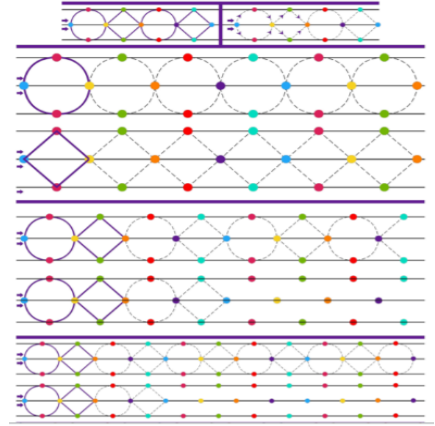


How we practise handwriting and warm up in school:

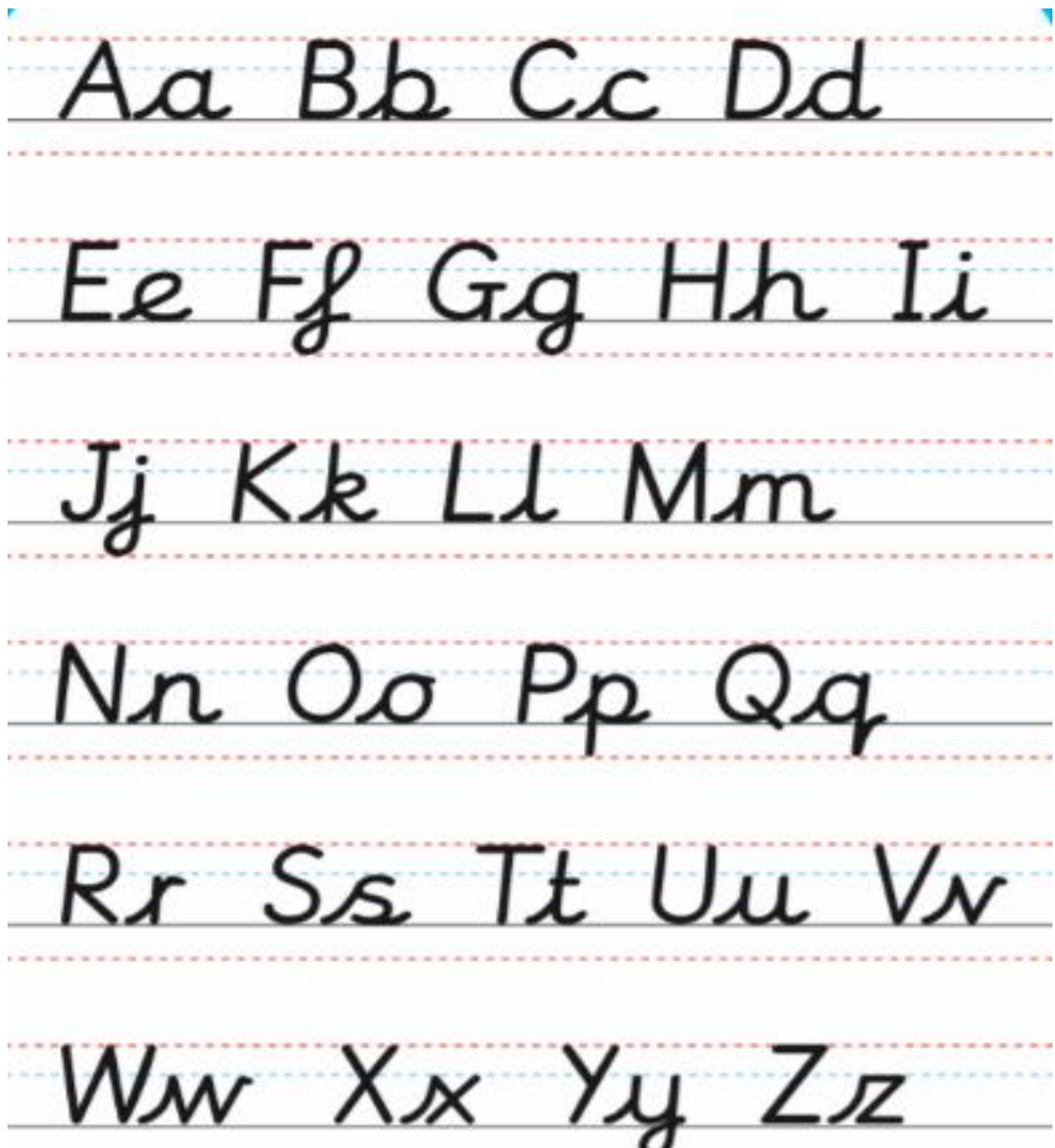
4-5 years old: make sure you are doing plenty of gross motor and fine motor activities with your child. Fine motor includes using lego, colouring, zipping and unzipping their own coat. These are tasks which require children to focus and coordinate their hands and fingers. Gross motor tasks include anything which requires “big” movements. Before more focused handwriting tasks it is nice for children to make big movements with their arms and hands. You can use chalk or paintbrushes and water outside to make patterns. Handwriting tasks include the children copying their own name regularly and tracing over big but single lowercase letters.



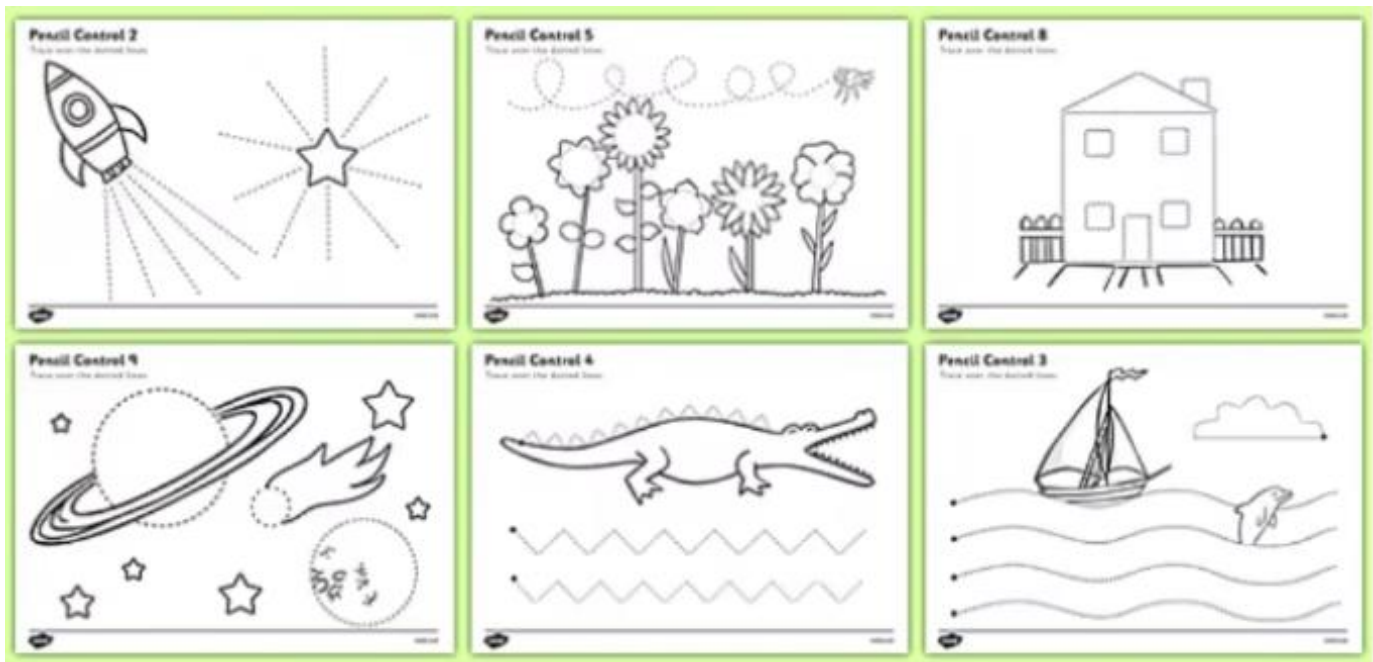
5-6 years old: most children are ready to focus their handwriting more and have better control over their cursive formation. Some children find leading into the letter and undoing printing habits hard. Doing plenty of the activities mentioned above is important. Often children find the “curly caterpillar” letters hard to use cursive formation, so encourage lots of tracing target letters along a line before having a go at copying the letter. Always apply the single letter to a whole word, for example, if your child is practising ‘c’ then they can write examples of words with ‘c’ in them.



Have all letters with their correct cursive formation available for your child to view as a visual prompt when they are doing written tasks.



Example of patterns which encourage the pencil control needed for good handwriting skills.



6-7 years old: children now begin to build on what they have practised in Year One and move onto joining their letters. If your child still needs to warm up before handwriting then encourage this before targeting single letters and/or words. Try encouraging your child to write short and dictated sentences and while they are doing this you can focus on giving lots of feedback on their handwriting, ensuring they are having a go at joining lowercase letters.

Joined up writing
Cursive handwriting

kick
kick
flick

Motivation:

Regularly use a sensory and play-based approach to handwriting to make it fun:

- Offer a variety of tools: wax crayons both fat and thin, chinks, chunky pencils, felt tips, paint brushes, sand and sticks.
- Work on a variety of surfaces: paper (white, black, coloured), blackboard, whiteboard, tracing paper, tin foil, sand paper, shiny card, etc.
- Adopt a variety of exploratory positions: lying on the tummy, standing, on all fours, kneeling, sitting and using a vertical surface, e.g. an easel or a wall.
- Write in a variety of sizes: big blackboards/whiteboards, old wallpaper, tiny bits of cards, old receipts and paper.
- YouTube: Occupational videos for warm ups- e.g. [OT Closet](#)

Example of resources (free and paid)

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/families/publications/write-with-me-writing-tips-for-parents>

https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0006/50010/04-WA_Summer13-p5-7.pdf

Hairy Letters, Nessy Learning LTD (ages- 4-6 years old)

Spatial Line Puzzles (Free version or £3.99)

Cursive Writing Wizard (Free or £4.99)