



## **Our Lady Star of the Sea School**

### **Ways to Help at Home**

#### **Fine Motor Skills to strengthen the hands and get ready for writing**

- ☐ Drawing lazy eights. On a sheet of paper draw a large number 8 on its side. Get your child to trace over and over and over this in one fluid movement.
- ☐ Use poi or squeeze balls to strengthen your child wrists and encourage fluid motions with their hands. This will support your child's handwriting formation.
- ☐ Use BBQ tongs to pick up things. When they get good at these, they move to using tweezers and smaller objects like beads etc.
- ☐ Making rainbow letters. Write a letter onto a sheet of newspaper about the size of the newspaper. Get your child to trace over the letter with different coloured crayons or pencils to make the rainbow. Talk about the shape of the letter i.e 'a' around up and down. Get your child to tell the 'story' of how to make the shape. Do the same thing on concrete with chalk or with a paintbrush, food colouring and water.
- ☐ Draw some lines on paper and get your child to cut along these lines. Start with straight and process to squiggly as they get better.
- ☐ Encourage your child to squeeze, stretch, pinch and roll "snakes" or "worms" with the playdough or plasticine.
- ☐ Fill one bowl with water and leave another bowl empty. Get your child to soak a sponge in the water and then squeeze out the sponge into the other bowl.
- ☐ Encourage your child to use a paintbrush and write with this on the concrete with water or the fence. Ensure they are holding the paintbrush like a pencil.
- ☐ Divide a handful of uncooked rice into two plastic bowls and have an empty bowl handy. Give your child small plastic tweezers and grab a pair for yourself. Have a race to see who can be the first to transfer their rice into the empty bowl using the tweezers. If your child is struggling because the grains of rice are too small, you may want to begin with something that is a little larger.
- ☐ Fill a cup about a quarter full of water. Give your child an empty cup and an eyedropper or a clean medicine syringe. Have your child try to transfer the water from one cup to the other by drawing the water into the dropper or syringe and then dropping or squirting it into the empty cup. You could also give your child more cups, add food colouring to the water, and make this a colour-mixing experiment.
- ☐ Do some gardening with your child - using a trowel strengthens the hands and planting seeds requires them to use their pincer grip to pick up and place the seed in the soil.

### **During early years at school**

- ❑ Practise writing the lower case letters. Write them in a tray of sand or flour, or with a paintbrush and water. Use a squirty bottle filled with water and make the letter shape on the concrete or using crayons on a large sheet of newspaper make a rainbow letter by drawing over and over the letter in different colours.
- ❑ To help give clarity to your child's letter p / q confusion, remind them if the tail comes first it is a 'p', if the tummy comes first it is a 'q'. Get your child to practise writing them, saying the formation at the same time. Do the same with b / d saying if the stick comes first it's a 'b' and if the tummy comes first it's a 'd' Make the shape of the word 'bed' with your child's fingers to help show which letter is the b and which is the d. Remind them if the stick comes first it is a 'b', if the tummy comes first it is a 'd'
- ❑ Practise letters in their formation families i.e. l, t, f, i, j, k - c, o, a, e, g, d, q - r, n, m, h, b, p - u, y, v, w, x - s, z - say the formation as you practise i.e. start at the top of the line and go all the way to the bottom, back up the line to halfway and around to make a tummy.
- ❑ Encourage your child when writing to keep tall letters tall and 'tails' to go below the lines.

### **During Year 4 and beyond**

- ❑ Regular practise at writing things by hand - cards, shopping list, own stories, posters, banners etc

### **During Years 5 and 6**

- ❑ Practise learning and using the keyboard and its letter placements - use typing websites like [Dance Mat Typing](#) or Typing Tutor [Learn to Type | Free Typing Tutor - Typing.com](#)