

Dysgraphia

- Dysgraphia describes a marked difficulty with writing, and can occur within individuals of any age or cognitive ability. It is not necessarily linked with dyslexia, dyscalculia, speech and language difficulties, ADHD, autism or dyspraxia, but can occur in conjunction with these difficulties.
- Children with dysgraphia struggle with recording their learning - although they can *tell* you what they have learned.
- Letters tend to be poorly formed for the student's age. Generally, the writing looks untidy and irregular.
- Students with dysgraphia tend to miss out letters and words when writing sentences.
- Many spelling mistakes are found in the written work of dysgraphic students.
- Often, a mixture of upper case and lower case letters and irregular letter sizes and shapes are found.
- Difficulty planning and structuring a piece of written work is often experienced.
- Much frustration is caused by the dysgraphic student's inability to communicate their understanding and thoughts in writing. This can lead to reluctance and refusals to complete work or engage in homework activities.

Motor Skills and Dysgraphia

Where a person has both motor skills difficulties and Dysgraphia, the following features are commonly found:-

- Slow and laboured writing.
- Poor use of lines and spaces.
- Unusual pen / pencil grip.
- Sometimes, tremor when writing.
- Experiencing physical pain in the hand and/or arm when writing.
- Pressing very hard with the nib and imprinting on the paper and other sheets of paper underneath.





Some simple ideas to try

- ✓ Allow generous time when working on a written assignment.
- ✓ Use 'writing frames' which provide a basic structure for written work, to provide a starting point and a framework for students to write information.
- ✓ Try experimenting with pen grips and possibly a writing slope, to make the physical act of writing more comfortable.
- ✓ Develop typing skills so that some work can be done quicker on the computer. *However, it is important that handwriting skills are still worked on and developed.*
- ✓ For examinations, students may be eligible for examination concessions which can, where appropriate, include using a computer to type answers into or a scribe. Further information on examination concessions can be found on the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) website.
- ✓ Seek the advice of an Occupational therapist (via GP referral) if writing problems seem to be linked with motor skills difficulties.
- ✓ *Where difficulties persist and cause a high level of concern, consider exploring the pattern of difficulty with a **PsychEd** Educational Psychologist.*

Our assessments address all the areas and concerns highlighted in this leaflet.

