

Handwriting

What you might see	What this could mean	Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change in the quality of writing such as poor letter formation or messy or illegible writing. • Child's speed of writing is reduced and has difficulty keeping up with the class. • Child's writing deteriorates after a short period of time. • Child complains of discomfort or pain when writing. • Child has difficulty stabilising the paper when writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscle weakness of the writing hand or upper limb. • Reduced fine motor dexterity, reduced co-ordination. • Child may have had to adopt a new grasp due to weakness or sensory changes. • Child may have had to switch dominance and learn to write with non-dominant hand. • Fatigue / reduced stamina • Unsteadiness when writing, possible tremor. • Reduced awareness of non-dominant side, and poor use of this side as a stabilizer. • Tightness of muscles of upper limb particularly wrist and fingers demonstrated in difficulty opening hand and holding hand out flat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the use of adaptive aids such as pencil grips. • Trial of variety of different pens, including fine felt tip pens, pens with built up barrels, etc. • Reduce the amount of written output required – provide photocopies, or handouts of information. • Frequent rest periods. • Allow use of a sloping desktop (with non-slip mat underneath) to change the angle of the writing surface and hold paper in place. • Give realistic targets – modify the amount of written work. • Reduce quantity of homework. • Consider partly prepared worksheets to complete. • Allow some work in point form. • Give extra time to complete a written activity. • Trial assistive technology, e.g. Alphasmart, Dana, laptop computer. • Allow use of a scribe. • Consider special provisions for exams. • Provide prompts to hold paper, visual cues for hand position. • Encourage child to stabilize paper with non-dominant hand. • Allow child to stretch hand.