

St Anne's CE Primary School and Nursery



Handwriting Policy Evidence of Intentions and Practice

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1. Handwriting at St Anne's CE Primary:

At St Anne's, we are very proud of our children's handwriting and our joined handwriting style. We use cursive joins as the basis of our handwriting policy and cover all of the requirements of the National Curriculum. From Year 1, children write in A4 handwriting, lined books for all curriculum areas. We focus on developing autonomous, consistent and neat handwriting across all subject areas. Our curriculum encourages children to take pride in their presentation and to always produce work to their highest standard. We recognise that neat, legible handwriting and presentation are important life skills. Children at St Anne's work towards achieving a 'handwriting pen licence' in Year 3 onwards.

2. WriteWell Approach

At St Anne's we use Schofield and Sims WriteWell approach to teach and develop our children's handwriting. This approach develops fluency, legibility and eventually speed, so that by the end of KS2, children can write their ideas confidently in all writing across the curriculum. Using WriteWell to support this at St Anne's, ensures there is a systematic and consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting, and provides us with a clearly structured whole school scheme.

3. Our Aims:

- A consistent approach to handwriting and presentation across the whole school, ensuring high levels of presentation in all curriculum areas.
- Handwriting in our school is modelled to a high standard.
- All children develop the correct posture and pencil grip for writing.
- All children achieve a neat, legible handwriting style with correctly formed (and joined) cursive handwriting.
- All children have a sense of pride in producing work to a high standard.
- Our children to develop fluency and speed; writing autonomously with confidence and correct orientation.

4. Teaching and Learning at St Anne's

- Children experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across the school.
- We develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line and we offer continuous support in finding a comfortable grip.
- We help children to understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly.
- Children are encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- Children are supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting.
- Children are shown how to be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- Our children are equipped to use their skills with confidence and pride in real life situations.

Lowercase letter examples:

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Uppercase letters examples:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Number examples:

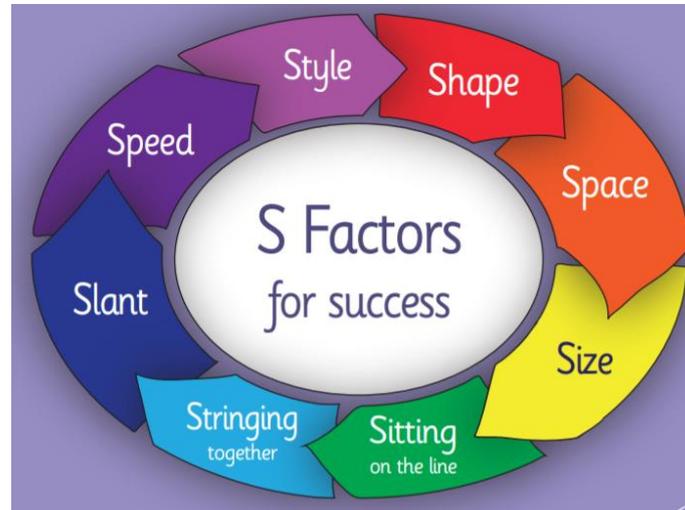
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

The break letters (letters that aren't joined from) are:

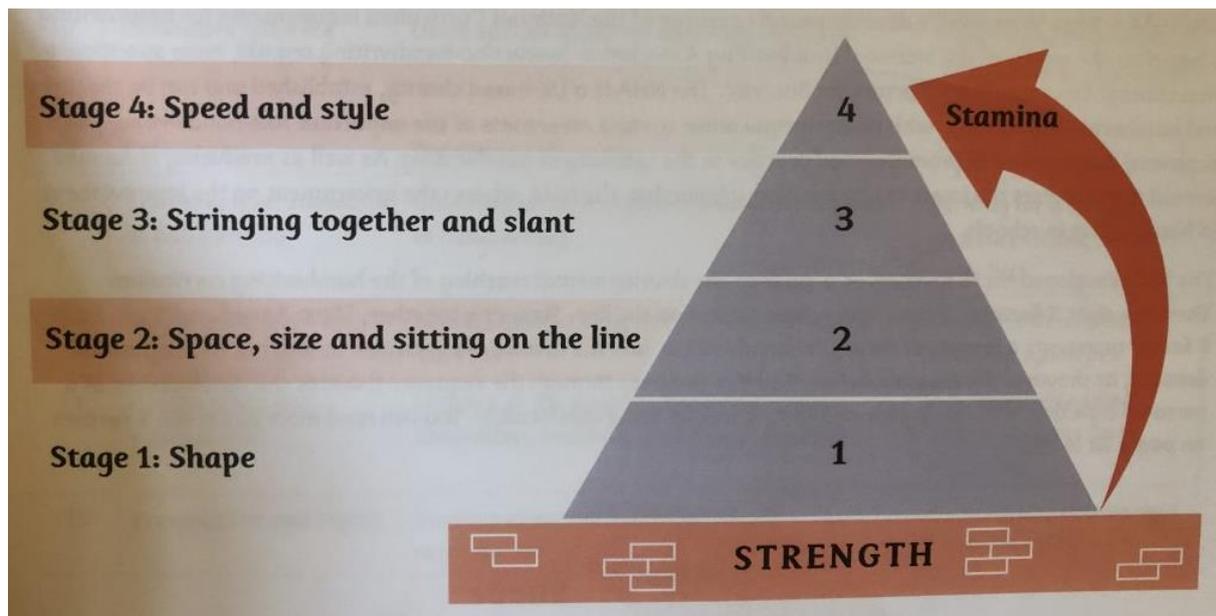
b g j p q x y z s

5. A Developmental approach

Handwriting is a developmental process that requires simultaneous engagement of a range of capabilities, including physical strength; visual perception; and both gross and fine motor skills. Children must constantly draw on existing knowledge as they gradually grasp the features of fluent handwriting. WriteWell provides us with a strong, progressive, and developmental coverage of the National Curriculum requirements for handwriting, that sit in line with the advice from the National Handwriting Association. They advise using the following steps for success:



When using WriteWell, the eight S Factors are grouped into four developmental stages, and then split into 11 discrete modules that take the form of 11 pupil books as shown below.



WriteWell Stage	Coverage of NHA S factors	Pupil books
Stage 1	Shape	Books 1–4
Stage 2	Space, Size, Sitting on the line	Book 5
Stage 3	Stringing together, Slant	Books 6–9
Stage 4	Speed, Style	Books 10–11

Stage 1: Shape **Books 1 to 4**



Once children are ready, they begin **Stage 1: Shape** (covered in **Books 1 to 4**). This Stage begins with writing patterns. As well as boosting pencil control and hand–eye coordination, the patterns develop the movements needed to form letters. Children then learn to form the lowercase letter shapes, starting and finishing in the correct place. These are introduced in 'letter family' groups to ensure that the correct movements are learnt. Correct letter formation, as well as shape, is essential for joining letters together and building speed later on. Stage 1 ends with learning to form capital letters and numbers.

Stage 2: Space, size and sitting on the line **Book 5**



Once letter formation is secure, children move on to **Stage 2: Space, size and sitting on the line** (**Book 5**). Here they learn how to arrange their writing on baselines. They learn to form letters of the correct size relative to one another and to position their letters correctly. They also learn about spacing letters within words and leaving appropriate spaces between words.

Stage 3: Stringing together and slant

Books 6 to 9



Once Stages 1 and 2 are secure, children move on to **Stage 3: Stringing together and slant** (Books 6 to 9). Here they learn to join (or string together) letters. This is a detailed Stage. Children are systematically introduced to using the basic diagonal and horizontal joins to join different letters. Throughout **Stage 3**, children also build confidence by using the joins to join words. This Stage ends by focusing on consistent, fluent joining. (Note: Slant is a natural feature of fluent joined writing for some children and the joined style used does have a slight slant to the right. Although not formally taught in **Stage 3**, children should be encouraged to use a slanted style if it improves their fluency. A more slanted style is introduced as an option in **Stage 4** to improve speed and style.)

Stage 4: Speed and style

Books 10 and 11



Once joining is secure, children move on to **Stage 4: Speed and style** (Books 10 and 11). Here the focus is on speeding up writing, while maintaining legibility in order to meet the various curriculum demands. Children are encouraged to develop a personal style of handwriting that is fast, fluent and legible and can be adapted for different purposes and tasks.

6. The Teaching Model

The teaching model is based on focused teaching session, using the following pedagogical approach.



The Pupil books provide carefully structured progression and a consistent approach to teaching and learning handwriting throughout the programme. The books each contain 15 teaching units, followed by one or more writing challenges. Each unit has a clear focus, which is explained at the beginning of each unit. The unit activities, which correspond with the steps of the teaching model, ensure that the focus is understood, attempted, practised, and then applied. It is intended that teachers assess pupils' progress after they complete each activity type.

In EYFS (including Nursery):

- Children start mark making on plain paper but are soon introduced to lines to encourage and support the appropriate position on the baseline (Appendix 1).
- Children regularly explore line and pattern making.
- Movements are regularly incorporated to enhance gross motor skills such as: air writing, pattern making and dancing.
- Children are supported in developing balance and upper body strength to help with the core strength and posture for writing through PE activities.
- Children engage with daily hand strengthening as part of their Phonics lessons.
- As part of our continuous provision and targeted support, children develop fine motor skills: fastening, buttons, pulling up zips, threading, tweezers, cutting, sticking, pinching, making collages with wool or string etc.
- As part of daily Phonics lessons, letter formation is focused on, modelled and practised. Children have opportunities to learn letter formations through a sensory approach and then apply to handwriting. Children are taught using a tripod grip.
- In EFYS, our children learn the different shaped letter families.
- Great emphasis is also placed on the correct formation of numeral digits, with a focus on appropriate and consistent size and orientation.
- Children are taught to recognise and use capital letters.
- Children are taught that we write from left to write and left-handed children are given support in finding a comfortable writing position.

In KS1:

Children are taught to begin to join their letters from Year 1 onwards. Handwriting is taught as a discrete subject weekly and is practised daily in Phonics lessons. The correct position for writing and the tripod grip is reinforced and built upon from EYFS (Appendix 1 and 2). Gross and fine motor skills continue to be a priority in KS1. Children practise patterns and free flowing motions daily and continue to build on hand strength from EYFS.

KS1 teachers put particular focus on:

- Continuing to develop their fine and gross motor skills through a multi-sensory range of activities.
- Learning letter families and applying and using knowledge from Phonics lessons.
- Writing both lower case and upper-case letters consistently in the correct orientation.
- Writing from left to write with all letters sitting on the line.
- Finding a convenient position for their page and having the correct posture and position for writing (Appendix 1).

Children are taught:

- Early cursive joins.
- The diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.

- Ascenders and descenders (ensuring that ascenders reach the appropriate height and that descenders sit below the line).
- Break letters (letters which are not joined from **b g j p q x y z s**),
- To confidently use the handwriting lines in their A4 writing books, working towards forming letters of consistent size, shape and orientation.

Children who are not making expected progress with their handwriting are given extra support and support materials

In KS2:

During this stage, the children continue to have direct teaching and regular practice of handwriting. Handwriting is also practised in spelling sessions. Teachers continue to model high quality handwriting in all areas. The joins continue to be taught and break letters focused on too. Teachers continue to teach the horizontal and diagonal strokes needed to join letters. Children who are not making expected progress with their handwriting are given extra support and support materials. The sitting position for writing is regularly modelled too and we do P checks – see ‘Across our school P checks’). Children are awarded a handwriting pen when letter formation and joins are secure and presentation is neat. This will be assessed on an individual basis by class teachers.

We aim for children to develop a clear and fluent style by the end of Key Stage 2 and that they are able to adapt their handwriting for the following different purposes:

- A neat legible hand for finished, presented work in all curriculum areas.
- Faster script for notes.
- Print for labelling maps or diagrams.

We expect children to join in all curriculum areas and focus on neat and legible presentation; always taking pride in their work.

7. Handwriting on the Timetable:

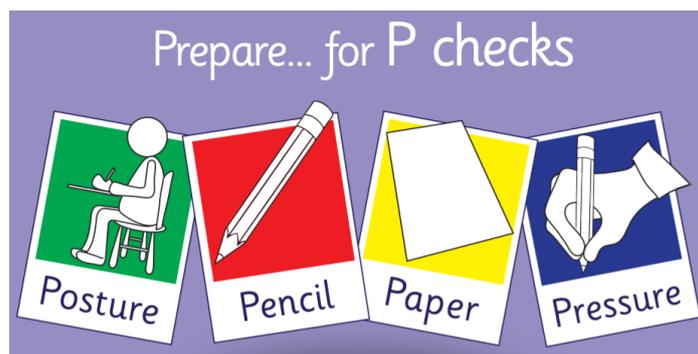
In EYFS, letter formations are focused on and practised in Phonics sessions and through continuous provision and targeted support.

In KS1, in addition to phonics sessions, there are also a minimum of 2 15-minute discrete handwriting sessions each week and handwriting is also practised during spelling lessons.

In KS2, there are a minimum of 2 15-minute discrete handwriting sessions each week and handwriting is also practised during spelling lessons.

8. P Checks:

We use P checks to help children to remember the key skills and top tips for handwriting:



Handwriting is a complex skill that involves many different mental and physical capabilities. Often, issues relating to the physical process are the cause of handwriting problems. For example, poor posture or pencil grip can make writing laborious or even painful.

The P Checks have been developed by the NHA help to focus teachers and pupils on important features of the physical writing process and establish good practice. It is important to establish good habits early, as writing habits are very difficult to change once formed and these P Checks should be introduced as early as Stage 1.

9. Left Handed Pupils at St Anne's:

Teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- Paper should be positioned to right for left handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual
 - Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision
 - Pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side
 - Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space – avoiding elbows knocking
 - Left handed pupils should be encouraged to bring their hands down and round so a hooked, claw like style doesn't develop
 - Extra practise with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically and where this is the case, we use intervention.
- (Appendix 3)

10. Equal Opportunities / Inclusion:

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and provision will be made for this. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with our SENDCo to develop a programme designed for the individual child or an intervention. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc. Outside agencies can be contacted where appropriate.

11. Assessment:

Below, the National Curriculum Requirements are outlined for each Key Stage.

<u>End of Key Stage 1 Assessment</u>	
Working towards the expected standard:	Forming lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place - Forming lower-case letters in the correct size relative to one another in some of the writing - Using spacing between words
Working at the expected standard:	- Using the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in some of their writing. - Writing capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters. - Using spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.
Working at greater depth within the expected standard:	- Using the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in most of their writing.

<u>End of Key Stage 2 Assessment</u>	
Working towards the expected standard:	- Producing legible joined handwriting.
Working at the expected standard:	- Maintaining legibility, fluency and speed in handwriting through choosing whether or not to join specific letters.
Working at greater depth within the expected standard:	- No additional requirements for handwriting, individual style mastered.

On-going formative assessment:

To ensure our children are meeting their age-related expectations, we ensure assessment is an integral part of our teaching sequence. This allows errors and difficulties to be identified and corrected straightaway before they become ingrained.

Ongoing assessment should involve observing children writing, so that the process, as well as the finished product, can also be assessed.

Self-Assessment:

Self-assessment always plays an important role in handwriting development as it helps pupils to see how they can improve their own writing. There should be opportunities for this within each unit of handwriting taught. Simple strategies, such as circling their best letter shape and identifying one to improve, can be introduced from Stage 1. In Stages 2 – 4, checklists can be used to help develop children's ability to look at their writing critically, checking key aspects and deciding what needs to be improved.

This should also be occasionally supported by peer assessment.

Summative Assessment:

As a more formal assessment is needed from time to time to assess progress in handwriting, identify long term problems and check children are ready to move on, we use WriteWell's assessment resources as outlined below.

Writing Analysis Sheet:

These analysis sheets are provided for each developmental stage, they include a checklist of relevant criteria to help focus your assessment of a piece of writing. The list includes the P checks and S Factors as well as more specific points about letter shapes, joins and style that are relevant to the Stage. See Appendix 4 for an example.

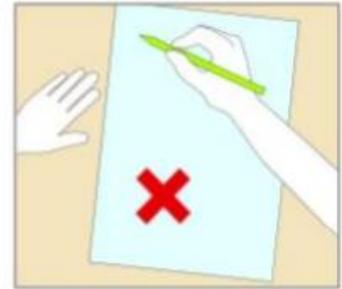
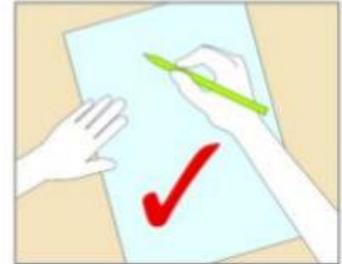
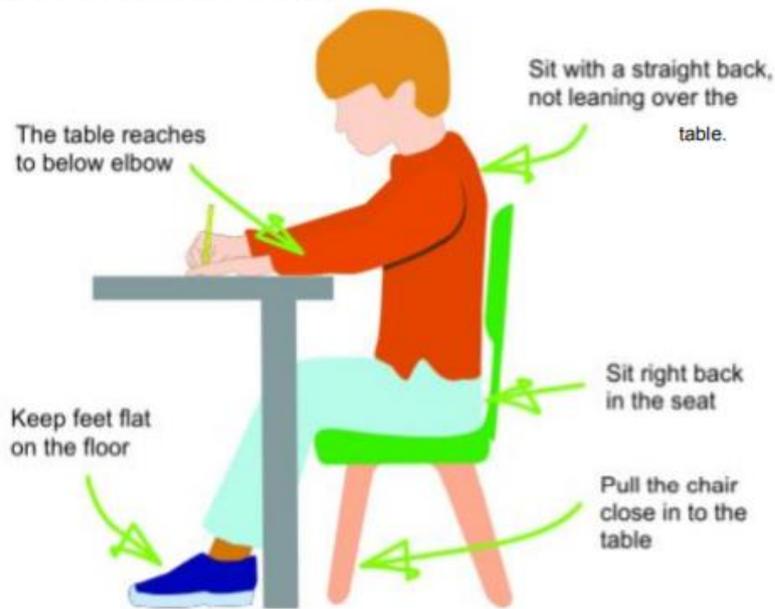
Ready to Go Assessment.

These are also provided at the end of each Stage and assesses whether a pupil is ready to move onto the next stage of the programmes. This varies in context, but typically involves copying text or writing from dictation. See Appendix 5.

Appendix 1:
The Sitting Position for Writing:

Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

SITTING POSITION



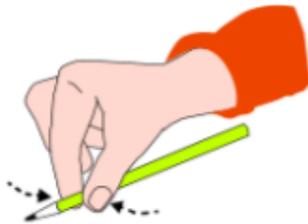
Paper position for right-handed children

Appendix 2:

The Tripod Grip

Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib.

1

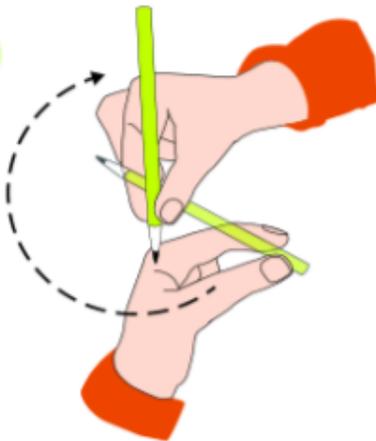


1) Grip the pencil with your index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.

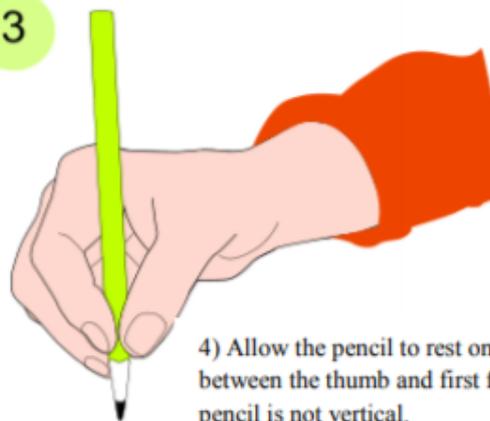
2) With your free hand, spin the pencil from underneath.

3) Use your middle finger to support the underside of the pencil.

2



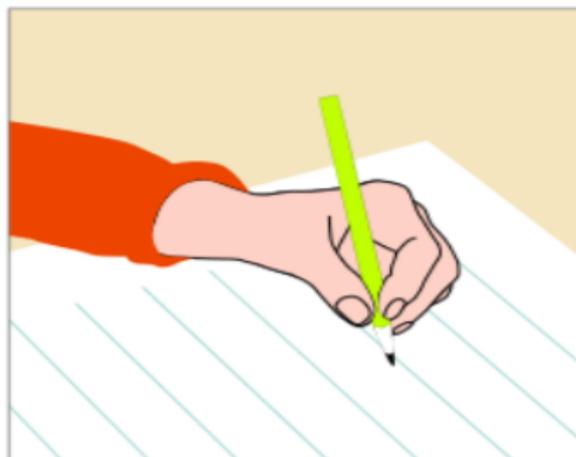
3



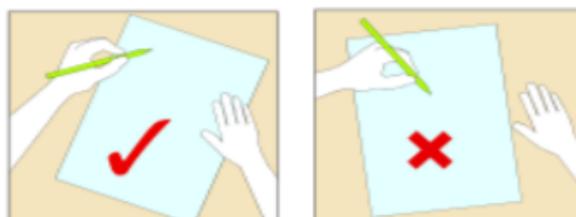
4) Allow the pencil to rest on the web between the thumb and first finger so that the pencil is not vertical.

Appendix 3:

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow right-handed teachers as they demonstrate letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.



- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.



Paper position for left-handed children

Appendix 4

Writing Analysis Sheet Example

STAGE 4 Writing analysis sheet

Pupil's name: _____

Date: _____

Tick the circles to show standard achieved:

- 1 Significant problems
- 2 Some irregularities
- 3 Consistently correct



	Learning	Standard achieved			Notes/Evidence
P checks	Posture	1	2	3	
	Pencil grip	1	2	3	
	Paper position	1	2	3	
	Pressure	1	2	3	
Speed	Writing legibly at an appropriate speed	1	2	3	
	Selecting appropriate speed and standard of writing for a task	1	2	3	
Style	Consistent use of personal style	1	2	3	
	Selecting appropriate style for a task	1	2	3	
	Selecting appropriate writing tool for a task	1	2	3	
Consistency and quality	Choice of letter shapes	1	2	3	
	Size of letters and sitting on the baseline	1	2	3	
	Spacing within and between words	1	2	3	
	Use of slant or upright letters	1	2	3	
	Stringing together (fluent, consistent choice of join)	1	2	3	

Next steps

Appendix 5

Ready to Go Assessments

Schneider & Sims WriteWell

STAGE 4 Ready to Go assessment

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 1 Write the passage read to you. You will need to write quickly but legibly.

Training to be an astronaut

- 2 Complete this formal letter. Write a draft of the letter in the space below. Then make a best copy of the letter on a separate piece of paper. Use an appropriate standard of handwriting each time.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to complain about the appalling state of the playground at our school.

I am most concerned that _____

I would be most grateful if you could _____
