

## Top Tips - KEYBOARD RECOGNITION SKILLS

- Some research states that children are ready to touch type by age of 6 – 8 – but this can be affected by literacy levels/ motor skills/ spatial awareness
- Some children can learn 'sight typing,' where proper fingering is used and key recall is automatic
- Some cannot use all fingers and need to learn 'vertical typing'
- Others are best with keyboard recognition
- All need variation and reinforcement to develop keyboarding skills
- Short regular sessions are best
- Children need to be supervised or work in pairs
- Phases – skill building/ skill application/ review and extension (n.b long learning period between learning keyboard and being able to use word processing as a useful tool and a considerable gap between copying words and creating an original piece of work)
- When to teach – ICT lesson/ part of curriculum/ dedicated keyboarding sessions/ touch typing clubs
- Programs should be attractive but not distractive
- Finger exercises – needed as a warm up
- Good posture – feet flat on floor, body facing computer
- Left handers – can obtain a left handed keyboard which has numerical pad and navigational keys mounted on left side. Position mouse to left of keyboard and/or use a left handed mouse
- Use a suitable size of font – compare with print script in book pupil is using e.g. Sassoon Primary Infant, Comic Sans or Times or Ariel for older pupils
- Use a chart to show position of left (ASDF G /H JKL) and right hand on home keys– see chart
- Coloured string can be placed down centre of keyboard to separate the sides
- Cover hands where possible
- Point out that the F and J keys have baubles on them to anchor hands
- Thumbs rest on space bar
- Use finger tips only, explain how hands hover over the keys and wrists slightly bent above keyboard
- Name the characters (silently) as they touch the keys
- Say 'space' at the end of each group of letters
- Aim for a steady speed
- Do not correct errors till the end
- Teach in stages small enough to produce success
- Relax for every few minutes to loosen and shake out hands/ arms/ shoulders
- Introduce the frequently used words and letter strings as soon as possible
- Use shift key to produce capital letters – practice using name

- Progs – BBC website <https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/articles/z3c6tfr>: English Type Junior/ Senior: Nessy Finger (5 interactive lessons): 2 Simple 2 Type
- Sticky Keys – accessibility option in control panel
- Keyboard stickers – ( Keytools, Granada Learning, inclusive technology)Easy Keysy
- Keyboard chart display : correct finger placements: - see chart
- On line - words per minute typing speed test
- Finger exercises- stretch fingers as far as possible then relax them. Repeat five times. Curl fingers and thumbs into scratch position, without letting them touch palms of hands. Slowly tighten and then relax hands, repeat five times. Adapted from 'Read and Type, A Gift for Life,' by P. Mayhew