

Survey on Teacher Training and Left-Handed Pupils

Background to Questionnaire for Teachers

The Left-Handers Club (LHC) is a leading organisation concerned with the needs of left-handers in all areas of society. It has been established for over 20 years, with a worldwide membership of over 100,000 left handed people.

Our members have constantly voiced concern that left-handed children are struggling with their handwriting and not developing a fluid and comfortable writing style. Many parents feel their children do not receive specific guidance at school on how a left-hander should write, and that very few teachers are (a) aware there are specific techniques that can help left-handed writers develop a clear, efficient and comfortable writing style, and (b) know what these essential steps are and how to implement them.

In order to obtain a clearer picture of the real situation in schools, we are asking teachers to complete this simple questionnaire on the provision of training for teachers in left-handed issues and the current guidance being given to left-handed students (if any).

The parent presenting you with this questionnaire is trying to support our efforts to obtain a clear, unbiased picture of current teaching practice in this area. We know you are committed to providing the best possible support for your students, and hope you will assist us in our efforts to establish what provision is currently being made for left-handed students, and to improve it where necessary. We will be combining the current best practice identified in this survey with our own existing guidance to produce a simple document to be circulated to parents, teachers and schools later this year.

Thank you for your time and your input.

Keith & Lauren Milsom

Organisers, Left-Handers Club

W: <http://www.lefthandersclub.org> E: keith@lefthandersclub.org

Post: Left Handers Club, PO Box 3149, Coulsdon, CR5 9EG

Please answer the questions below fully, using additional sheets if necessary to expand on your answers and attaching copies of any relevant documents.

Survey details

School name & location: _____ State/Private

Teacher name & position: _____

Age range of children you teach: _____

Parent name and contact details: _____

Please hand this form back to the parent named above and they will pass the information back to us.

Section A: Noting of Handedness.

1. Do you consider yourself to be left or right handed?
2. Does your school have any policy/directives relating to teaching left-handed children? (Please give full details and attach copies of any documents if possible)
3. Is a child's hand preference for writing noted anywhere on their school record?
4. Are you personally aware of how many left-handed pupils you have in the class you teach? If so, what percentage of the class are left-handed?

5. In your opinion, is it necessary or appropriate for left-handers to be given specific guidance relating to their handedness in developing skills such as handwriting?

Section B: Teacher Training

6. How long have you been a qualified teacher?

7. During your own teacher training did you receive any training specifically relating to teaching left-handed children how to write or perform other activities? If so, what was it?

8. Once qualified, have you had any instruction on left-handed writing techniques or other activities for lefthanders during your time as a teacher? If so, what was it?

9. Have you made any attempts yourself to find resources/information regarding left-handed writing techniques? If so what were they and where did you find them? (please include any web page urls)

Section C: Handwriting

10. During lessons, do you actively consider whether any of your pupils are using their left hand to write?

11. Do you try to encourage children who show a left-handed writing preference to try writing with their right hand instead? Please explain.

12. If you notice left-handed writing, do you give these pupils any additional writing guidance or techniques specifically related to writing left handed? If so, please specify

13. What provision do you make for left-handed writers with regard to positioning at the desk / in the classroom?

14. Do you have any writing grips/pens that are particularly helpful for left handed writing? If YES please specify. If NO do you allow / encourage parents to provide writing aids for their left-handed children?

15. Please describe any specific techniques you know of that are helpful for left-handed writers to employ?

Section D: Other activities

16. Does your school provide fully left-handed scissors (i.e. with blades reversed so the top blade is on the left, not simply with ambidextrous unmoulded hand grip). If so, how are they taught to use them?

17. Do you/your school provide any other tools / equipment / training aids specifically for left-handed children? If so, please describe:

18. Are you happy with the level of support given to left-handed pupils in your school?

19. Are you aware of any instance of a parent highlighting concerns that their child is struggling in any subject because of their handedness? If so, what was the problem and can you describe what action was taken to rectify this?

20. Would you be interested in any guidance notes we produce to help with teaching left-handed children or do you already have all you need? Please add your email address if you would like us to send them to you direct or join the Left handers Club at www.lefthandersclub.org to receive updates and links when they are available.

Yes / No

Email:

21. Please use this space for any other thoughts or comments on this issue.

That is the end of the survey. Thank you for taking part. Kindly return this document and any attachments to the parent who gave it to you and they will pass the information on to us. Your views and information are extremely valuable.

Parents, please visit www.lefthandersclub.org to enter the details from this survey form on our database. Our sincere thanks to you also, for taking the time to help us with this valuable assessment.