

## Touch Typing

### Physical & Medical Team

#### When?

- Most success seen from age 7 upwards. Year 5 or 6 is ideal time before bad habits have been established. A spelling age of 7 years is often advised, although some children learn spelling patterns more easily though remembering the physical position of the keys so although advised, it is not always essential.
- Little and often- aim for 10/ 15 minutes every day if possible. Touch typing can be achieved in as little as 10h practice providing it is regular and often.
- The student has to want to learn touch typing so it is best at an age when they appreciate the benefits.

#### Who?

- It is an excellent skill for **all** pupils to learn. Students who struggle with reading and writing or who have special needs may take longer to learn and may need more repetition.
- Children who are struggling to produce legible handwriting but have adequate fine motor skills may benefit from learning as an alternative to handwriting.

#### How?

- Children with literacy difficulties may find touch typing programmes that use real words easier to learn than those that use nonsense letter patterns.
- A clear large onscreen keyboard that shows the position of the letters and fingers can also help, but should not be relied upon.
- Covering the student's fingers with a privacy screen (some plywood can be screwed together to make a cover that goes across the keyboard to shield fingers or cereal box can be cut to make a cover)

There are lots of different touch typing tutors on the market. I have selected the following ones as they have been designed with children in mind, however this is by no means an exhaustive list!

#### Free online software

- BBC dancemat is a free typing tutor for kids. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/z3c6tfr>
- <http://www.sense-lang.org/typing/tutor/keyboarding.php>
- Doorway online <http://www.doorwayonline.org.uk/>

#### Software to purchase

- Nessy Fingers £30 single user license. Colourful typing tutor uses games and real words to practice touch typing. UK english
- English type Junior £39 single user license (Primary age)  
English Type Senior £39 single user license (secondary age)  
This software was developed by and Educational Psychologist in the UK and uses whole words rather than nonsense letter strings
- Touch type 2 £39 single user license. A straightforward typing tutor with U.K. voice and clear layout. Not as visually appealing as some but suitable for all ages.

#### IPad

- There is a wide variety of IPad apps for touch typing. If using these please ensure that a separate keyboard is used as touch typing cannot be effectively taught on the onscreen keyboard.

Diagrams from : <http://keyboarding.ccsd.edu/help-for-students/typing-position>

