

Date Reviewed	June 2024
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Agreed by: Learning and Achievement Committee Date: January 2025

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Signature: Signed electronically on Gov Hub

Highfield Nursery School and Children's Centre

Teaching and learning of literacy in the EYFS (reading and writing)

June 2024

Introduction



Reading and writing are closely linked. Learning to read and to write are the most difficult tasks children have to learn. For them to be successful now and later on, we have to offer them the right experiences and teaching. This document outlines the approaches we use at Highfield Nursery School.

Teaching a child to read and write is very complex. Many different approaches are needed if the child is to become a successful reader and writer. It is important that we share this document with you, so together we can offer your child the most useful experiences to support their journey to becoming readers and writers.

This document will be useful to anyone who is involved in Highfield, including staff, parents, governors and visitors.

Begin at the beginning

Reading and writing develop together and in parallel and are closely interwoven. They require slightly different sets of skills, but as the skills of reading develop and strengthen, so do the skills of writing. So, think of them together.

The process of making sense of those black marks on the page, and beginning to make your own marks on paper that other people can read starts early. It starts with talk. It is talk that helps literacy skills develop and provides the raw material for written communication.

Reading and writing float on a sea of talk.' James Britton, educationalist

Children start school with a vocabulary which has been learned mainly from their family and the literacy environment at home, as well as from their experiences with the wider world. A child's spoken vocabulary will be much larger than

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their reading or their written vocabularies at first. They will use words they have heard and understand in their everyday life. They will gradually acquire the beginnings of a reading or writing vocabulary from their immediate surroundings, their family and friends. There are so many words in the world – for a young child, they must be both useful and connected to a memorable experience. Exciting and enticing experiences will help children build language.

Having a low vocabulary will trap children in disadvantage. When the daily number of words for each group of children was projected across four years, the four-year-old child from the professional family will have heard 45 million words, the working-class child 26 million, and the welfare child only 13 million. *(US based study so the language used in this study slightly differs from terms used in the UK)*

Increased vocabulary depends on parental modelling of language, particularly before the age of 7. Children mainly use words their parents and other adults use with them in conversation, and develop larger vocabularies when their parents use more words.

The fundamental instincts of good parents, whatever their social class, are usually correct. The word gap among those children has nothing to do with how much those parents love them. They all love their children and want the best for them, but some parents have a better idea of what needs to be said and done to reach that best. They know the child needs to hear words repeatedly in meaningful sentences and questions.

When they start school, relatively high performing children know an average estimated vocabulary of 7100 words. In contrast, relatively poor performing pupils know 3000 words, acquiring only one word per day compared to the three words per day acquired by children with the largest vocabularies. This gap widens as children get older. And the wider the gap, the harder it is to bridge. The child exposed to a greater vocabulary is able to make links with known words when learning new language is able to quickly assimilate the new word into their vocabulary 'bank'. The child with less exposure to language has to work much harder and needs more time to understand and use new words.

Vocabulary is a strong indicator of reading success. It was established in the 1970s that children's declining reading comprehension compared to more able peers from age 8 onwards largely resulted from a lack of vocabulary knowledge and that this was primarily caused by a lack of learning opportunities, not a lack of natural ability. Chall et al. (1990) also found that disadvantaged students showed declining reading comprehension as their narrow vocabulary limited what they could understand from texts.

The statutory curriculum

Communication and language

Communication and language is a prime area of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Literacy (reading and writing) depends on communication and language.

Language is related to movement. Back in the Stone Age, human beings were making flint axes. The social nature of making axes out of flint developed in parallel to language – language development still resides in an area of the brain that overlaps with the area used for more complex cross body movements. This link is one of the reasons why we are required to place the early learning of literacy within children's self-chosen activity, and to make sure these activities happen in real and meaningful contexts.

Reading

Adults Role

Children deserve adults who...



- Talk...talk often, but also take the time to really listen
- Comment rather than ask questions
- Sing a range of nursery rhymes and songs—allowing the children to join in with words and actions. Supporting them to learn all of the words
- Share high quality book corners that are accessible, owned and loved by children, daily

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- Use eye contact and think of their positioning, allowing the child to see their facial expressions
- Model how to handle books appropriately and correctly
- Point out objects in books...encouraging the child to repeat words or sounds
- Support children to join in with repeated refrains in well known stories
- Invite children to use their imagination to make up a story for books that have no words
- Tell familiar and traditional stories to the children
- Support children to retell familiar and traditional stories
- Use puppets and props in a variety of ways, such as retelling a familiar story
- Make puppets and props to support retelling
- Point out words in the surrounding environment
- Allow children to make marks and share what they are drawing
- Opportunities for high quality adult- child interactions and sustained shared thinking to give children the extended vocabulary with which to write creatively
- Encourage picture drawing as it relates to the story
- Scribe children's stories and read to others
- Provide a range of experiences that encourage the children to talk and develop their language skills
- Enable children to experience the community...go to shops, a farm, on walks or to the Forest School. Support children to recall experiences in words, pictures, mark making and writing
- Use each child's interests to engage them and develop and extend these interests
- Recognise that children learn in different ways eg visual, auditory etc and provide stimulating experiences that reflect this
- Involving parents in understanding the importance of early literacy through parents workshops, newsletters and many more activities of this type

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Book handling skills progression

With an adult	Independently
	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows an interest in books as a familiar adult reads to them • Shows an interest in the pictures in books • Turning the pages/lifting flaps while an adult reads to them • Shows some interest in handling books as adults read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows some interest in handling books by themselves • Looks through the book, turning pages in a random order • Handles books and turns pages carefully • Holds the book the correct way round and the right way up • Turns the pages in the right direction from front to back • Shows awareness of the pictures • Shows awareness of the print

Reading skills progression

With an adult

- Shows an interest in listening to stories as a familiar adult reads to them
- Begins to have some favourite stories and books
- Shows an awareness of the role of the pictures in reading books
- Listens to stories with an increased level of attention and recall
- Begins to join in with repeated refrains in familiar stories
- Able to fill in the missing word when an adult reads a familiar story to them
- Learns simple versions of familiar stories (often traditional tales) by heart
- Makes simple predictions about stories
- Suggests how a story might end
- Talks about characters, events and settings in stories
- Makes suggestions for changes to known stories to create new ones
- Makes up news stories as part of a group Independently
- Recites repeated refrains from well-known and favourite stories
- Talks about the pictures
- Uses the pictures to retell known stories
- Uses the pictures to tell stories in less familiar/unknown books
- Shows an awareness of the print in books

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- Makes simple predictions about stories
- Talks about how a story might end
- Talks about characters and events in known stories
- Uses known stories as a basis for creating new ones
- Uses available props and resources to role play and retell known stories
- Uses available resources and their imagination to make up their own stories for an adult to scribe

Core rhymes

We have a core set of rhymes that we want children to know off by heart. We do this by singing them to and with the children on a regular basis and by asking parents/carers to do the same at home.

We take part in 'World Nursery Rhyme Week' each Autumn. Children are also exposed to a wider range of rhymes by adults and using digital media. Wherever possible we encourage all children to participate and be physically active when reciting rhymes.

Each class has a set of nursery rhyme spoons to support recognition and choosing of songs to sing during that session

Butterflies	Bumblebees and Dragonflies
Twinkle Twinkle Little Star Humpty Dumpty Wheels on the Bus Incy Wincy Spider Baa Baa Black Sheep Old McDonald Row, Row, Row the Boat	There are many ways to sing Hello Tommy Thumb Polly Put the Kettle On I'm a Little Teapot Hickory Dickory Dock Twinkle Twinkle Little Star Wind the Bobbin Up Jack and Jill Baa Baa Black Sheep Little Green Frog 5 Little Ducks 5 Currant Buns 5 Little Men in a Flying Saucer Little Peter rabbit Miss Polly Had a Dolly Heads Shoulders Knees and Toes

Songs

All staff sing regularly with the children, well known, new and made up songs. This includes during free flow, adult led sessions and at transition times for example when washing hands for lunch time, putting on wellies to go outside on a rainy day or during daily toothbrushing.

Story Curriculum

We have a set of core texts we want children to have experienced and a range of traditional stories to anchor each term and for the children to know off by heart. These stories are introduced during adult led sessions and are then available to the children in continuous and enhanced provision. The books are also available through home loans and the school library. We also ensure that the children are exposed to a wide range of other books, both fiction and non-fiction to support their interests and learning.

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Highfield Nursery School Story Curriculum 2024/25						Highfield Nursery School Story Curriculum 2024/25					
Butterflies						Dragonflies and Bumblebees					
Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Owl Babies	Whatever Next	Goldilocks	10 Ways to look after the world	Jack & the Beanstalk	Hungry Caterpillar	Monkey Puzzle	The story of Diwali	Goldilocks	10 Ways to look after the world	Jack & the Beanstalk	Hungry Caterpillar
3 Little Pigs		Polar Bear Polar Bear	Journey home from Grandpa's	Dear Zoo	Sharing a Shell	3 Little Pigs	Whatever Next	The Great Race	Drop	9 Ducks 9	Handa's Surprise
						Peter Rabbit	The Nativity	Emperors Egg	Going on an egg hunt	Handa's Hen	Somebody Crunched Colin

Supplementary stories we want the children to experience during their time at Highfield.

<p>The Gruffalo</p> <p>The Gruffalo's Child</p> <p>A Squash and a Squeeze</p> <p>Monkey Puzzle</p> <p>Stickman</p> <p>The Smartest Giant in Town</p> <p>Superworm</p> <p>Tiddler</p> <p>Oliver's Fruit Salad</p> <p>Oliver's Vegetables</p> <p>Not a Box</p> <p>Not a Stick</p> <p>Owl Babies</p> <p>Rosie's Walk</p>	<p>Titch</p> <p>The Train Ride</p> <p>Mr Gumpy's Outing</p> <p>Where's My Teddy?</p> <p>Ketchup on your Cornflakes</p> <p>Peace at Last</p> <p>Whatever Next!</p> <p>Supertato</p> <p>Pants</p> <p>Aliens Love Underpants</p> <p>Aliens in Underpants Save the World</p> <p>Billy's Bucket</p>	<p>Farmer Duck</p> <p>5 Minutes Peace</p> <p>Giraffes can't Dance</p> <p>Little Rabbit Foo Foo</p> <p>The Rainbow Fish</p> <p>The Jolly Postman</p> <p>Chocolate Moose for Greedy Goose</p> <p>Doing the Animal Bop</p> <p>Harry and the Bucket Full of Dinosaurs</p> <p>Oi Frog!</p> <p>Shark in the Park</p>
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**This is not an exhaustive list and will be added to from our extensive library and home loan books throughout the year – responsively following children's interests and experiences.*

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Home reading library

We provide all children with a Highfield Nursery School book bag.

We hold an extensive library of books in the main corridor of the school that are available for children and their parents to change their books at any time. There is no limit on how long children can keep a book for and no limit on how often books can be changed.

Home loans

Children are given a book, game or puzzle to take home to share with their families. They keep this resource for a week before bringing it back to be changed for a new resource. The resource will link to the Story Curriculum core text.

Read Happi

Reading Everyday And Discussing books Helps Achieve Positive Personal Identity



Read Happi is a four-week intervention to support the sharing of books and reading at home. Each week the selected children are provided with a book bag containing 5 books and corresponding cards to help support dialogic book talk. The aim is for parents to read every day with their child over the four-week period. The books are a range of emotional literacy books, aimed to help children to be able to recognise, process and understand their feelings, whilst at the same time, giving busy parents the opportunity to plan some quality time sharing a range of quality texts with their child.

Name recognition

Being able to recognise their name and the letters from it are important skills for young children. Their name and the letters in it are often the first word they recognise and attempt to read.

Name cards for self-registration and coat peg labels have the child's photo and first name on when they start. In the term before they leave to go to school the photo is removed.

Name cards for all Dragonflies and Bumblebees children are also available within the main learning environment for children to copy when writing their name. During adult led group times games are played to support children to recognise both their and other children's names and identify the initial sounds. Name cards are also used to support routines such as rolling snack and lunch.

Guidance on phonics

At Highfield Nursery School, we use a combination of Paddling with Phonics, Jolly Phonics songs and Letters and Sounds guidance.

- Vowels: 'a' as in apple 'e' as in egg 'i' as in insect 'o' as in orange 'u' as in umbrella. 'c' and 'g' are both initially the soft sounds (cat and girl). Some sounds are described as being "stretchy" (ssssss) and some are bouncy (d..d..d..d..d).
- We try very hard not to add on 'uh' at the end of sounds so that 'w' is w not wuh. This helps with blending so that b-a-t is said with the correct sounds not "buh - a - tuh".
- All the letters are known by the sounds. So M is known as "mmm" not as "em". You can check all the sounds on the Oxford Owl website – say the sounds. [Essential Letters and Sounds - Oxford Owl](#)

Learning environments

All the environments are carefully planned out within the different rooms to reflect the children's learning needs within reading. The children are observed and through careful assessment the environment reflects these needs and to promote curiosity, involvement and challenge.

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As part of our monitoring systems learning walks take place to evaluate the provision and to ensure there are quality learning opportunities for all children. This is discussed and any adjustments made.

Core texts and familiar stories are always available within the environment for children to access independently and to share with an adult. Alongside these books we also provide a wide variety of other books for children to support their learning, these include: rhyme, picture, touchy feely, fiction and non-fiction books. Adults model early reading skills and the resources are available for children to practice skills they have experienced in adult focused activities.

Whenever appropriate when an area is enhanced, books are added to promote learning linked to the children's interests. A range of fiction and non-fiction texts are selected to excite and engage the children.

Props, puppets and first-hand experiences are used to enhance stories and rhymes - this includes cooking activities, role play and enhancements to the water and sand. All supporting children to retell known stories and rhymes as well as making up their own.

Writing

This policy reflects our Nursery School's values and philosophy in relation to the teaching of writing. It sets out a detailed framework which the staff can work within.

It gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage for Communication and Language which sets out developmental progress.

Our aims for the children are...

- To become confident mark makers that use a range of resources to 'make their mark'
- To develop a love of writing and take this on through their life
- To be eager to learn new skills needed to become confident writers
- To develop their physical skills to ensure they are 'physically ready to write'
- To be confident and eager to share the meaning they ascribe to their marks with adults to scribe

How we teach writing

Learning to write at Highfield Nursery School is taught through developing both the physical skills to be able to hold a mark making tool, alongside developing an understanding that marks on paper have meaning.

All staff have received training in how young children learn to write and can recognise the stages of writing composition as well as the stages of development for mark making and pencil grip.

Staff support the children to develop their physical and mark making skills throughout our continuous provision, working indoors and outside. Children have the opportunity to explore, investigate and experiment daily, with a range of different materials which support gross and fine motor skill development.

Our language and print rich environment provide children with a visual prompt if needed to support their mark making and early writing skills. Writing for a range of purposes is modelled and encouraged at all times.

The learning environment and resources provided support the process and the staff constantly review and adapt both indoors and outside, to meet needs.

Learning to write is linked very closely to learning to read and many of the strategies will overlap between this and the reading policy to support the children on their writing journey.

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Parents/carers are a huge part of the process, with staff supporting their understanding of the value of early reading through inductions, story sessions, stay and play sessions and information sent home, on Tapestry and our website.

Sessions to support building the strength and skills for writing take place in Nursery as part of adult led sessions—including group times and small group interventions.

Opportunities for early writing should be 'real' and available everywhere - notebooks, whiteboards and pens, shopping lists, print in the environment and so on.

Examples of real writing:

Chloe covered the whole paper in loops and said, 'I'm writing.'

Samuel makes a mark on his dad's birthday card and says, 'That says Samuel.'

Marcia is playing in the café and writes customers' orders on her notepad. She tells the chef, 'They want pizzas.'

Physical development

Children's early mark-making and writing do not develop in isolation. Physical development is an important part of this, and has been recognised as a prime area in the revised EYFS. The fine/gross motor physical skills that children need for mark-making and writing will be supported across a wide variety of interesting and challenging opportunities.

Write Dance

<http://writedancetraining.com/about-write-dance/>

Write Dance is a movement-based approach which uses music and story-themes; plus rhymes and song lyrics to stimulate imaginative drawing. Physical skills for drawing replicate the movements used in cursive handwriting. Is a playful and creative way for children to practise the movements, the pressure and the speed that together make up letters. It emphasises that it is the movement and the rhythm of writing that is important rather than the formation and shape of the individual letters.

Development Movement Play (Jabadao)

'Development Movement Play is about making sure that children grow up with life in every limb - because it aids development and lays foundations for lifelong wellbeing.'

At Highfield, we are developmental movement specialists. In the background, and never compromising the spontaneity or the play, everything we do is underpinned with detailed theory, research and reflective practice.

An ongoing training programme means all of the Highfield Nursery School team have undergone the full Early DMP training with Jabadao and run this programme throughout all classes in the nursery.

Our DMP specialist (Angie Draper) shares her practice with other schools and settings, both supporting children and newly trained staff.

Yoga

Yoga sessions take place in the classroom. During each session the children will take part in a basic routine which includes breathing meditation techniques, accompanied by calming and relaxing music. Yoga stretches/poses are child friendly with names children will remember e.g. surfer, snake, tree.

Yoga is a great physical activity to do with children and supports the development of their gross motor skills, as well as improving balance, coordination and flexibility. Other benefits of practising yoga are: it increases confidence, improves concentration, promotes a healthy body, helps children manage stress through breathing and introduces mindfulness.

Physically ready to write

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We place a huge priority on supporting children's physical skills - both gross and fine motor in order for children to be 'physically ready to write'. Our outdoor learning environments support the development through fixed equipment (climbing frames, slides and sand pits), wheeled toys, brooms/large digging equipment, balls, hoops etc.

Vestibular sense

This is the sense of the relationship between the body, gravity and the ground. It tells you which way is up, how your body is orientated in relation to up and how your body is moving in space – often described as sense of balance.

Proprioception

Proprioception refers to the body's ability to perceive its own position in space. Examples of proprioception include: Knowing whether feet are on soft grass or hard cement without looking (even while wearing shoes), balancing on one leg, throwing a ball without having to look at the throwing arm. Knowing where your hands and feet are in relation to your body, and how much pressure to apply for a task.

Muscle strengthening

We focus across the school on developing children's muscles from largest to smallest

Progression in pencil grip

Most mark makers start here...

STAGE ONE Pivot: Shoulder Grip: Palm or Palmer or Palmer Supinate

During the early stages of development (babies), when children are learning to support their head, reach, grasp, and walk. They are using groups of muscles in their pelvis, back, shoulders, arms and neck. It is these upper body muscle groups that children use in the very emergent stages of mark making.

Children will have already developed a grasp that allows them to hold something tight without dropping it. This grasp is formed by wrapping the fingers around the object and making a fist with the object held in the middle. This is known as a 'palmer supinate grasp', ('palmer' from the use of the palm, 'supinate' meaning turning the palm upwards and 'grasp' meaning grip) and is the grip that children most commonly employ in early mark making.

At this stage in their development, the muscles of their upper body that are the most well developed are the neck, chest and back. It is these muscles that have the most strength, so it is these muscles that are used to help the hand to make those first emergent marks.

Often at this stage the child will have a fairly stiff wrist and a straight elbow with most of the movement coming from the shoulder. The type of mark that a child at this stage of development can make will be at the maximum range, so they are likely to be long and straight or large and circular as their range of movement is restricted to the strongest muscle group they have available.

STAGE TWO Pivot: Elbow (emergent or advanced) Grip: Palm

At this stage in development the shoulder becomes more of a support and the elbow starts to do most of the work. There are usually two noticeable stages in the elbow pivot.

The first is the 'emergent' stage where the elbow bends allowing for a greater range of movement, but the shoulder is still the main 'power' in moving the arm backwards and forwards. This looks like a sawing motion where the arm tends to move in straight lines across the body or from front to back.

When a child becomes more proficient in their elbow pivot then they begin to use the muscles in their upper and lower arm to swing their arm in and out from their body in a circular action. This is an 'advanced' elbow pivot (think stirring in a pot or creating a figure eight). This significantly increases the range of movement.

Often when the elbow pivot is developing, the wrist stays quite stiff and the grip is still palmer supinate.

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STAGE THREE Pivot: Wrist Grip: Usually Palm

As the pivot moves to the wrist, the elbow often tucks into the side of the body and the shoulder movement becomes minimal. Low load control is definitely in play. By the time that children reach the wrist pivot stage in their lower arms, upper arms and shoulders are all now well developed and their overall movement and balance tends to be far more fluid than it was when they first started out on this journey of development.

The wrist pivot stage is the one that children tend to stick with for the least amount of time before their pivot shifts again.

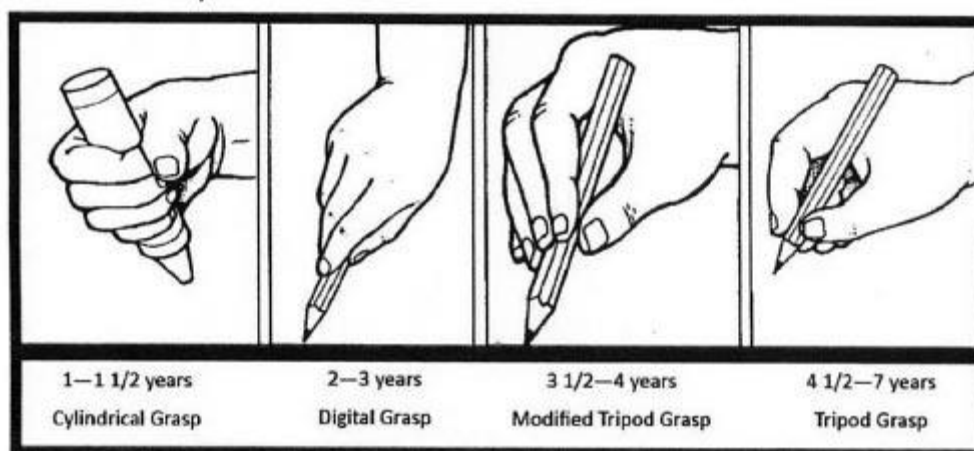
Often with a wrist pivot comes a change in a child's grip from palmer supinate to digital pronate. (digit meaning finger and pronate meaning to grasp with the palm turned down).

When a child adopts a digital pronate grip they bend their wrist to nearly 45 degrees, grip their mark making implement with three fingers and use their first finger to manipulate the end of it.

This is a clear sign that their stage of fine motor manipulation in moving forward and also an indicator that we need to be looking out for and encouraging the next stage of development both in pivot and grip.

The journey through the pivots doesn't stop here, it keeps on moving across the hands, knuckles and fingers.

The diagram below shows what different grips may look like and how they progress to the tripod grip. Each child's progression is unique and will be supported by our practitioners through taught sessions and support during exploratory, child led play – in the moment.



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Progression in drawing skills

The first stage of drawing is about exploring and developing motor coordination. Children begin to develop uncontrolled marks that don't represent anything, these might include: vertical and horizontal lines and multiple line drawings. Drawing is really about learning cause and effect and their ability to make things happen. It has little to do with creating and representing their world, and more to do with enjoying their movements and the effects of them. Their marks enable them to learn about the properties of objects, materials and tools such as pencils, pens, paint, crayons and paper.

This stage is known as controlled scribbling. It is characterised by spontaneous circular or to-and-fro scribbles and dots. Similar scribbles can be found in all children's drawings at this age and the shapes in them are necessary for developing drawing and writing skills later on. Toddlers begin to make drawings that include: horizontal and vertical lines, multiple loops and spirals, roughly drawn circles. At this age, children begin to discover the connection between the movements they make and the marks that form on the paper. They will begin to repeat movements on purpose.

During this stage, children begin to use basic shapes in their drawings as their fine motor control and hand-eye coordination improve. Drawings now begin to include the following shapes, combined in different ways: circles and squares, crosses and dots. At this stage, a child is able to tell you what her scribbles represent, although you may not be able to see what they have described. They usually name their picture while they are drawing it or after it is complete, but they do not start a drawing with a clear plan for what will they draw. The use of colour at this stage is unrealistic and children often prefer to use only one colour.

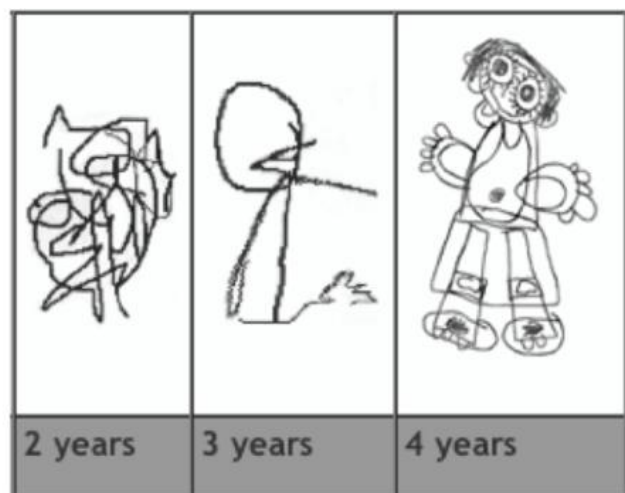
During this stage patterns start emerging in children's drawings. A child will make a pattern and interpret it as a representation of something, giving it a label. Drawings include: squares, circles and rectangles, attempts at triangles and diamonds, crosses, letter like marks.

During this stage children combine two or more shapes or forms together to form basic images, such as a rectangle and a circle to form a hat. Drawing takes on more meaning and intention. A child will usually decide what they are going to draw before they begin.

A child will now draw spontaneously and begin to show their own background, interests and experiences in their drawings. They draw what they know. Representation of people, animals and houses change constantly. Children will also name pictures before beginning. They are able to colour within the lines but use of colour may still be unrealistic. At this point, the people and objects may still be floating in the air as they are still developing spatial perception. They usually place themselves in the middle of a drawing due to their egocentric nature.

Drawing a person

- The first drawing of a person usually emerges around 3 or 4 years of age. These 'tadpole' people are drawn with just a head and usually legs directly attached to the head.
- Drawing of a person will progress from a head with legs to include details such as eyes. Children draw not what they see but what they know, and children will add details as they become important to them. Details such as arms, fingers and a trunk emerge.
- A portrait of a person emerges, with many details such as hair, hands and fingers, feet and a body.



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Progression in writing skills

Random marks

Children make marks in a range of media, often starting with food, sand, water and other sensory materials before moving to using specific mark making objects - chalk, paint and crayons.

Representational drawing

Children move towards drawings that represent their thoughts. Often telling others what they have drawn - giving their picture some meaning by telling an adult so they can scribe or by adding their own writing marks. They may then want to attempt to copy words an adult has written or from books, displays etc.

Drawings with strings of recognisable letters

Children write random recognisable letters - often from their names. The letters used have no relationships to sounds, they are however aware that print carries meaning.

Name writing

Being able to recognise their name and the letters from it are important skills for young children. Writing their name is often the first word they want to attempt to write. When teaching children how to write their names we ensure we only use a capital letter as the first letter and the rest are lower case letters. We model and support children by allowing them to copy their name from their name cards.

Outdoors

- Outdoors provides different but complementary opportunities for mark-making, particularly large scale. Simply moving an activity better done indoors to the outdoor environment is not effective. The outdoors, used for writing, should connect with the important aspect of supporting children's physical development. Puddles and paint brushes, sticks or leaves, small branches, bubbles in water. Mud and other malleable materials, coloured ice-cubes for painting on paper/fabric on a warm day etc. Paint on the ground or on large sheets of paper, either on the floor or upright against a wall or fence.
- Sand – children will mark-make with their hands, fingers and feet, and a variety of small tools, i.e. rakes, spades etc. Large paint-rollers, chalk and mops with water or paint, plant sprays. Pattern rubbing, taking images through paper of different textures and equipment outside.
- A well-resourced writing and mark-making area:
- large magnetic board with whiteboard pens, and magnetic letters, envelopes, paper for letter writing and a post-box. Parents are able to see the mark-making area and children can be encouraged to access these resources to support their self-chosen play.
- Throwing sponges at paper or fabric, footprints and handprints, paintbrushes tied to the end of bamboo poles.
- A large blackboard outdoors with chalks can be utilised for games or mark-making.

Working with parents/carers

We value our relationships with parents/carers and know that because of this our children make excellent progress. We have developed systems to share our understanding of writing development and what parents/carers can do to support children's learning at home.

Parents are invited to share targeted Developmental Movement Play sessions with their child and a highly trained practitioner. This enables modelling of the approach and encouraging the play to happen at home too.