

During the beginning of the Autumn Term we have a big focus on activities that promote fine motor and hand strength development. Every child's development is different and they will progress at different rates across the year. These sorts of activities are used as both direct 'adult led' tasks as well as independent activities for the children access when they choose to.

Previous Learning and Activities

(See the Autumn Knowledge Organiser for further information)

Mark Making and Pre Writing

Mark making and pre writing skills are the fundamental skills children need to develop before they are able to write.

- Chalks outside on the ground.
- Water and paint brushes to make marks on the ground / walls outside.
- Using natural objects like sticks to make marks in sand or soil.
- Large paper or the back of wall paper rolls and felt tips / wax crayons to make large marks and movements.
- Flour / sand / glitter in a tray and use fingers or brushes to make marks.

Finger strength

Finger and hand strength is important if children are to eventually develop a fluid handwriting style. Activities include –

- Playing with playdough, manipulating the dough into different shaped.
- Using pegs to pick up and transfer objects such as pom poms or pegging on and off a string.
- Squeezing a soft ball or balled up socks.
- Wringing water out of flannel in the bath or water tray.

Fine Motor Skills

The ability to control your fine motor skills enables you to produce small exact movements such as forming letters when writing. Activities include –

- Threading and lacing. Threading beads or pasta pieces on a string or lace.
- Peeling stickers off a sheet and placing them in designated places on paper.
- Fastening and unfastening buttons on clothing or activity mats.
- Placing objects such as buttons along straight, wavy and zigzag lines.

Name Writing

During the Spring Term the children are taught to begin to write their name. This can be done in many different ways as outlined in the 'mark making and pre writing' section. Every child's development is different and as their fine motor skills progress children will become more confident using a pencil to practise forming the letters in their name.

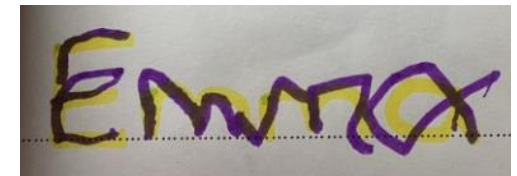
Children usually begin by tracing the letters in their name, first with their finger over the top:



Next, we encourage children to mark make over the top:



Next, we encourage them to trace over the top of the letters, pre written in colour or maybe dots:



We use lower case letters.

Mark Making and Pre Writing.

When children become confident making larger scale marks that the form of lines, dots, shapes or patterns, we begin to encourage them to smaller, more controlled marks.

Activities to promote mark making can include –

- Chalks outside on the ground – tracing along lines, within predrawn spaces.
- Painting patterns and lines.



- Using fingers or natural objects like sticks to make patterns in sand, flour, glitter trays etc.



- Tracing along lines.



- Using felt tips / wax crayons to begin to colour in pictures.

Fine Motor Skills

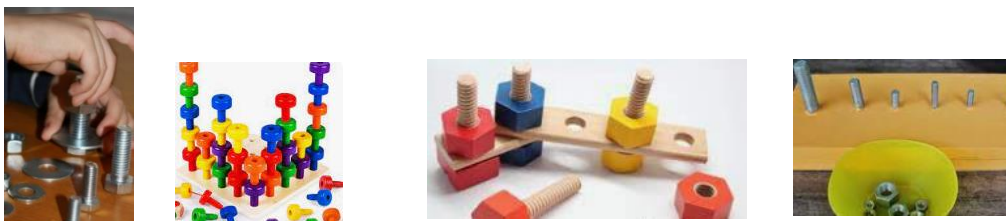
As a child's ability to control their fine motor skills develops, they are able to reduce the size of the toys they are manipulating.

Activities to support the development of fine motor control include –

- Threading and lacing. Threading beads onto a lace.



- Fastening and unfastening buttons on clothing or activity mats.
- Putting nuts and bolts together and tightening and loosening them.



Finger Strength

As children develop more strength and control, they are able to do more complex tasks.

Activities that help to build children's finger strength include –

- Playing with playdough, manipulating the dough into different shapes.



- Stretching elastic bands over a tin can.



Pencil Grip.

Every child's development is different and the time they take to develop the skills to hold a pencil in the 'tripod grip' will be different to their peers. There are 5 developmental stages that children usually go through before they can successfully use a tripod grip.

- **Stage 1** – Palmer-supinate grasp. Holding the pencil in the fist / whole hand.
- **Stage 2** – Palmar or digital pronate grasp. Hold the pencil with the palm of the hand facing down towards the table.
- **Stage 3** – Four finger and thumb grip. Holding the pencil between the thumb and four fingers with the pencil in a nearly vertical upright position.
- **Stage 4** – Static tripod grip. Holding the pencil in almost the correct position.
- **Stage 5** – Mature / dynamic tripod grip. Holding the pencil between thumb and index finger with the pencil supported on the middle finger.

