

During the spring term, we continue to provide lots of activities that support the development of the children’s finger strength and fine motor skills. Lots of opportunities are still provided for the children to continue to practise writing their names. This can include their surnames as well as their first name. As the children continue to learn the phase 2 phonemes in their phonics lessons and write CVC words, we concentrate on using the correct letter formation, working towards a tripod pencil grip.

Previous learning and activities.

(See the Autumn Knowledge Organiser for further information)

Finger strength

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

- Playing with playdough
- Using pegs or tweezers to move objects from one place to another
- Squeezing a soft ball

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
- Fastening/ unfastening buttons
- Placing small objects along lines

Name writing

Every child’s development is different and some children may still be practising to form the letters correctly in their name. This is nothing to worry about, and the children will receive plenty of support and opportunities to practise. Children are taught how to form the letters correctly by learning where to start each letter and how to move their pencil to form each letter.

Trace your name.

George

Can you write your name on your own?

Letter formation.

As we continue to learn the phonemes linked to the ‘Bug Club’ phonics scheme we spend a lot of time practising letter formation, developing the children’s fine motor skills as well as a clear handwriting style. The children become more familiar with the 4 handwriting letter families and which letters belong to each group. During the spring term, we provide lots of activities to build on the children’s confidence to be able to become independent writers, encouraging them to ‘have a go’ at activities before seeking help.

- **Curly Caterpillar Letters** – c, a, o, q, g, d, e, f. Each one is formed with a rounded movement to start writing the letter. ‘Curl the caterpillar round’.
- **Ladder letters** – l, t, u, j, y. These letters are formed by starting at the top and forming a straight line down, each one is finished slightly differently.
- **One Armed Robot Letters** – r, b, n, h, m, k, p. These letters always start ‘at the robots head, go straight down, then up and over the robot’s arm’.
- **Zigzag Monster Letters** – v, w, x, z. These letters are made up of diagonal or zig zag writing movements.

Curly Caterpillar Letters
c c a a o o
q q g g d d
e e s s f f

Ladder Letters
l l i i
t t u u
j j y y

One Armed Robot Letters
r r b b n n
h h m m
k k p p

Zigzag Monster Letters
v v w w
x x z z

Phase 2 Sound Mat

s	ss	a	t	p	i	n	m	d
g	o	c	k	ck	e	u	r	
h	b	f	ff	l	ll			

Sun, Dress, Apple, Tap, Pan, Insect, Nest, Mat, Dog, Goat, Octopus, Cat, Key, Sock, Elephant, Umbrella, Rat, Hat, Bag, Fan, Muffin, Leg, Doll

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Writing CVC words.
(Consonant – Vowel – Consonant)

As the children build up the number of phonemes, they recognise from Phase 2 and become more confident forming the letters, they can build on the number of CVC words they are able to write.

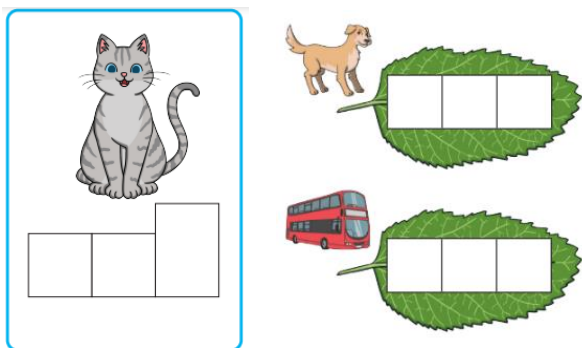
To support their independence when writing we use the phrase:

'Say the word, chop the word, write the word'.

This encourages the children to use their segmenting skills to hear all the sounds in the word and then write them down to make the word. For example, when writing the CVC word 'cat' the children will –

- 'Say the word' – cat
- 'Chop the word' – c – a – t
- 'Write the word' – they write each letter as they say it.

To support the children when writing CVC words, we use pictures to help prompt which word to write. These can also include phoneme boxes to help the children to recognise the 1st, 2nd and 3rd sound in the word and write each letter clearly.



Writing captions.

When children become confident writing 'CVC' words and can clearly hear and write all the sounds in that word, then they are ready to progress to writing 'captions'. This is writing 2 or 3 words together to form a short caption. For example: 'A bus.' or 'A red bus'.

To support the children to do this we encourage children to:

- Say the caption
- Clap each word
- Count how many words they need to write.

Then as with the CVC words they need to:

'Say the word, chop the word, write the word'

for each word in the caption. We also begin to introduce using a finger space between each word.



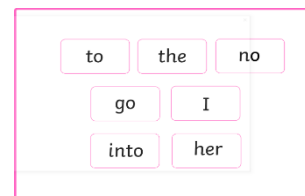
The next step for the children is to include an 'everyday word' from set 2 in their caption. These are the words we use frequently and most of them cannot be segmented or sounded out. For example, 'the'.

The children are taught to **'See it, say it'**.

For example – 'Pat the dog'.

These are the Set 2 everyday words.





How can I help at home?

To support your child with writing at home you can:

- **Practise letter formation.** Look at the 4 handwriting families and which letters belong to each one. Practise forming the letters, starting and finishing in the correct place. Watch this clip demonstrating letter formation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYYSBProJH4>

- **Practise writing their name with them.** Look at the letters in their name and which letter family they belong to.

Where does each letter start and finish?

When they are confident with their first name, move on to practise writing both first name and surname.

- **Practise CVC words.** Remind your child of the phrase 'say the word, chop the word, write the word'.

Can you write a list of words using this technique?

Some words could include, sun, pen, bag, hat, pin, tap, mat, dog, cot, run.

- **Practise captions.** When your child is confident at writing single words move on to writing 2 or 3 words together. Encourage them to repeat the caption before writing it, then say each word as they write it. Remind them to leave a finger space between each word. Captions could be:

- A sad man.
- Pots and pans.
- The red cap.
- A bad dog.