

# Writing in Reception



# Children need physical strength to be able to write.

Before a child starts to write they need to have secure gross motor skills (large physical movements), to help strengthen the upper body.

- There are a range of activities to help with this:
- Digging
- Wide circular movements from the shoulder
- Climbing
- Jumping
- Balancing
- Skipping
- Batting
- Swinging
- Throwing



We provide lots of physical opportunities both inside and outside to develop muscles needed to write.

# We always start our day with a fun 'Busy Fingers Session'

Once a child has strong upper body muscles, they then need to have secure fine motor skills (small physical movements), to help strengthen the hands.

To help with this in school, the children complete a range of fine motor activities to help build up the muscles in the hand, these include:

- Dough work
- Threading
- Using tweezers
- Scooping
- Building Lego
- Using pegs
- Using scissors
- Doing up zips
- Peeling fruit



Developing fine motor control enables dexterity and precision in daily activities like writing, using scissors, and getting dressed.



Playdough fun is a great way to strengthen hands at home.



Less screen time, more play time!

# Less Screen time, more play time

Too much screen time can negatively impact both fine and gross motor skills.

Constant swiping and tapping limit varied hand movements, which leads to underdeveloped hand muscles and poor dexterity.

It also limits active play, resulting in reduced strength, coordination.



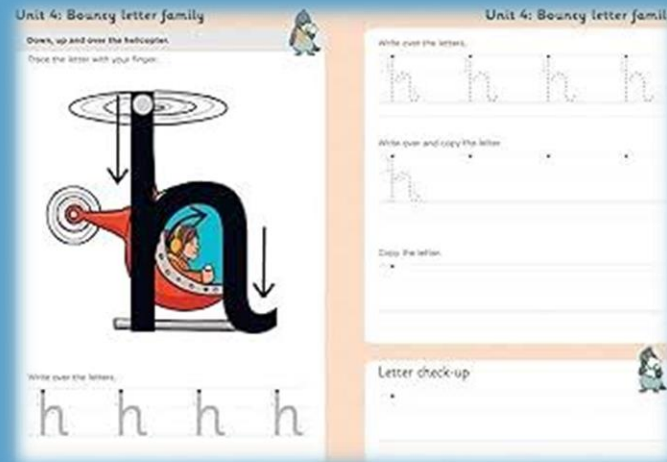
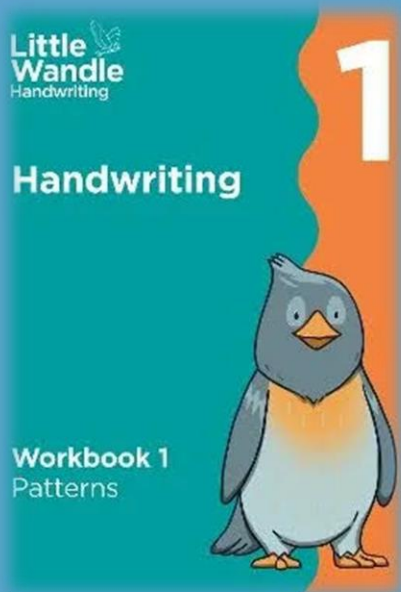
# What does our writing curriculum look like?

- Foundational skills needed to write are progressively built on, through carefully planned physical development, communication and language, and writing opportunities in Reception.
- Our curriculum is centred around books to give plentiful opportunities to read and enjoy books.
- We provide interesting and exciting texts to motivate and engage our children in reading and writing.
- We read like a writer. We look at front covers, blurbs, learn about punctuation etc..
- We place a heavy focus on Oracy and learn new vocab to use in our speaking, storytelling and writing.
- We place a heavy focus on transcription (spelling/handwriting/mark making) and develop composition alongside.
- We use the NELI Communication & Language programme to support oracy in our writers.
- We 'share the pen' and write for a purpose. It might be a shopping list, a short story or a letter to Santa!

# We have a daily taught handwriting session

In Reception we teach daily whole-class handwriting sessions using the structured Little Wandle handwriting programme. It is a systematic and research-informed early handwriting approach.

The programme is designed to run alongside our phonic teaching and provides a strong foundation for teaching letter formation and developing writing fluency.

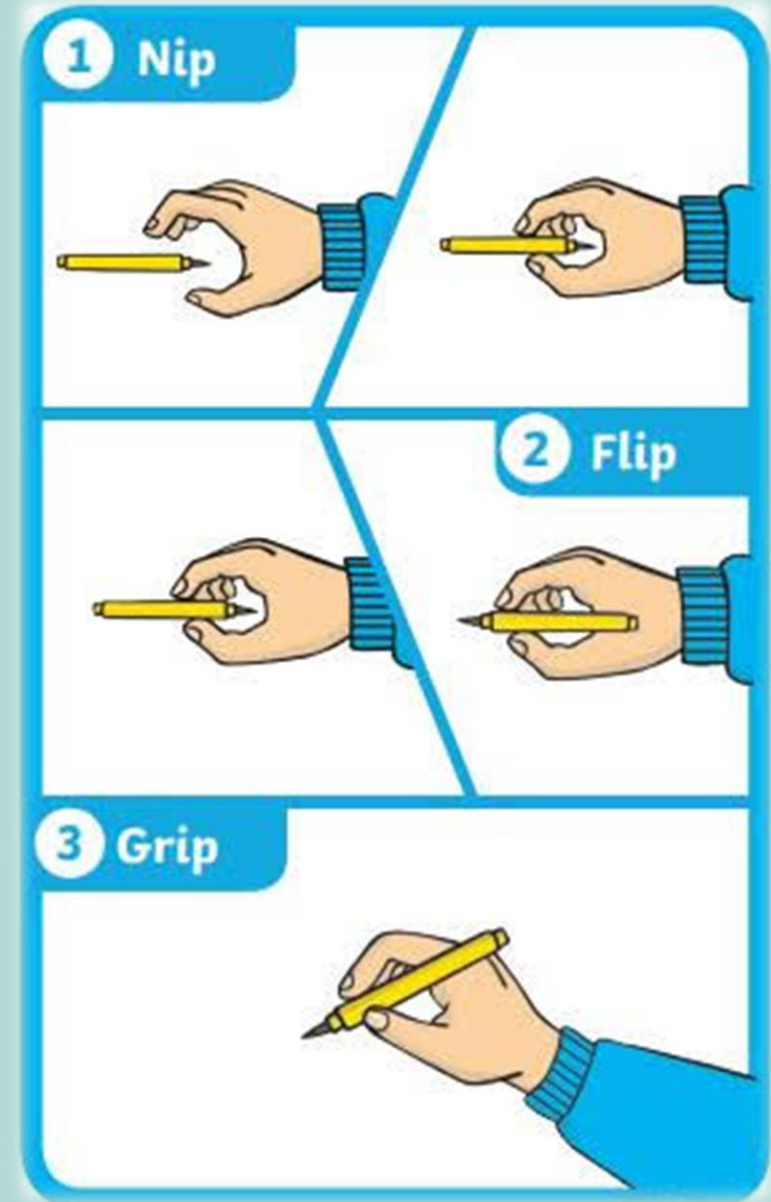


# Holding the pencil correctly is very important.

We encourage the tripod grip.

Watch the short video clip to show you how to help your child with the correct grip.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=li8QbOQ4aCc>



# Stages of writing

There are a few stages before a child will write a sentence.

Gross motor skills develop

Fine motor skills develop

Mark making

Letter formation

Writing words

Writing sentences

## Stages of Writing

Stage	Description	Example
Drawing/scribbling	Scribbles look random but are purposeful for the child. Represent ideas	
Wavy scribbles or "pretend writing"	Imitates writing from left to right or pretending to write words	
Drawing and letter strings	Draws pictures and writes strings of random letters from left to right	
Copying words and early phonetic spelling	Draws pictures, copies words and adds in phonetic spelling (using letters—mostly just consonants—to represent each sound they hear)	
Phonetic spelling	Writes words by using letters to represent EACH sound that is heard	
Phonetic spelling with sentence writing	Writes sentences with phonetic spelling. Most words have spaces between	
Conventional spelling with sentence writing	Writes with complete sentences with (mostly) correct spelling	

# Mark Making Matters!

We encourage lots of lots of mark making both inside and outside, big and small. These early marks are a child's first steps into writing, drawing and communicating. By encouraging mark making, we help children develop fine motor skills, creativity, and the foundation of literacy.

Mark making can be done using a range of resources, not just pencils! We use;

- Chalks, chalkboards, pavement/patio
- Paint , paintbrushes, fingers
- Mops and long handled brushes
- Sand
- Water sprays
- Gloop in trays
- Paper and pens
- Whiteboards and pens
- Paper on the wall inside and outside
- Post it notes
- Old cards



# Writing words and sentences

During our phonics sessions, as well as correct letter formation, the children are taught to use their phonetic knowledge to segment words for writing words and sentences.

We use sound mats that children can access which contain the sounds that have been learnt in class through our phonics scheme.

At school we like to make writing or attempts to write meaningful and purposeful so that children enjoy it and see the reason to write. For example:

- Writing a message to their friends
- Labelling their model
- Writing shopping lists in the home corner
- Writing recipes
- Writing song lyrics
- Labelling art work
- Writing a phone number
- Secret codes
- Writing cards
- Labelling their picture



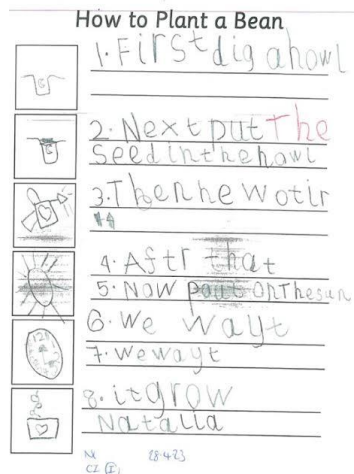
# Writing Early Learning Goal

At the end of Reception, the children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs)

The writing ELGs are:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are formed correctly.
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

See some examples below:



tomiss swan  
you are  
invited  
to my  
party  
love  
scarlett  
XXXXXXXXXX

I went to  
London I saw  
bong I went to  
the moose  
m

# How can you help at home ?

Your support in your child's learning is invaluable! At home you could:

- Help your child write their name and form letters correctly.
- Ask your child about the sounds they have been learning in phonics.
- Encourage your child to have a go and use phonetically plausible attempts when writing words.
- Encourage your child to watch you write for a reason e.g. writing a shopping list, cards, letters etc.
- Break it down with your child: Listen to the word e.g. dog- Segment the word e.g. d-o-g.
- Help your child to remember the letter name for each sound.
- Remind them to use the correct pencil grip.
- Remind them to write from left to right.
- Encourage less screen time and more active play.

