

Writing Ideas

Magic writing boards are great fun for children. These can be bought cheaply and used even on car journeys.

White boards encourage the children to write and practise mark making. Come and see Foundation staff if you wish to buy a pen and board.

Write with your child – ‘think aloud’ so they can hear the decisions you make as you write. Children will want to write if they see a purpose to the writing.

Talk about the words they see in everyday life- food packaging, signs in the supermarkets, captions on the buses and lorries, messages on birthday cards and invitations.

Write a shopping list together- model and allow them to take their own list to the shop to give the writing a purpose.

Send an email- Your child says the message and you type it initially. Children can develop computer skills at the same time. Try writing an invitation to a story character.

Provide your child with a ‘writing box’- put a range of writing items in the box –pens, pencils, rainbow pencils, old birthday cards, coloured paper, sticky tape to make little books. Rolls of wallpaper can be fixed to a table or a fence for large writing and drawing.

Praise them for their play writing- those early squiggles and marks show that your child is beginning to understand writing.

Set an example- make sure your child sees you writing.

Strengthen their writing hand-Try fun activities which strengthen your child’s hand. Eg: cutting, painting, squeezing playdough, picking up small things with tweezers and pegs.

Messages- leave messages with magnetic letters on the fridge for them to reply to.

Make up stories together- use their toys as characters and write the story with them as they say it. Make up a little booklet. Take photographs and use the pictures in the book.

Notices and signs- about important things in their play e.g. The Cave – Keep Out!; Shoe Shop – Open; Don’t walk on the seeds we have planted!; shopping lists for baby food

Captions- to add to photos they or the adults have taken.

Useful resources to promote writing at home

- sticky labels, e.g. for their letters, parcels, for labelling things they have made, labelling things for the role-play area
- paper in different shapes and sizes for any of their needs.
- an easel
- glittery / scented pens
- different sized writing implements – thick felt tips, paint brushes, fine pencils, sticks, wands, etc
- clipboards and pens for drawing and writing
- a bag of puppets, monsters and other soft toys
- an easily erected tent or a sheet for an office, cave or den to make a perfect writing area
- envelopes
- sticky tape
- glue
- coloured pencils
- scissors
- glitter



Pencil Grip

The correct pencil grasp is essential for good handwriting. Although most experts agree that a tripod pencil grasp is best (with 3 fingers on the pencil), there are subtle variations that may work just as well. The key to deciding whether a pencil grip is the correct one, is to ask whether it is efficient.

An efficient pencil grasp is one that allows the child to write neatly at a reasonable speed without tiring easily. Poor pencil grasps look awkward and do not use the hand muscles efficiently. This results in the child tiring easily and being unable to produce neat handwriting.

It is important for children to develop a mature, efficient, correct pencil grasp by going through the developmentally appropriate stages of various pencil grasps. Please do not force your young child to hold a pencil with 3 fingers before they are developmentally ready to do so.

For any assistance on this, please speak to your classroom teacher.

