



## **Reception**

# **English Curriculum Document**

## Developing Writing

Research has consistently shown the need for mark making within the early years of a child's development. Traditionally mark making produces an interest for mark making equipment, formation and exploration of marks and then into handwriting. It is clear that if a child is encouraged to make marks for a variety of reasons and is allowed to develop marks with positive reinforcement that every mark matters, then the child will become a ready writer. We recognise that with an ever increasing pressure to get children writing correctly and with the correct pencil grip and handwriting style, the child may become disenchanted to writing very early on and even become a reluctant writer.

### Developing Pencil Grips in EYFS

The EYFS reforms recognises that gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movements both indoors and outdoors. In order to develop the children's fine motor skills, we recognise that gross motor skills are essential first. Children need to be able to control their bodies. This means that children need to be able to make large motor movements from their shoulder first, then elbow before being able to move their wrist effectively. In Early Years, we plan lots of gross motor activities to develop, strengthen and train muscles before expecting a child to make smaller fine motor movements with mark making equipment. This starts from the minute a child joins our EYFS provision in Under 3s and Nursery.

Children will then develop their fine motor skills using programmes such as Squiggle Whilst You Wiggle which works both gross and fine motor muscles and helps to strengthen and train muscles whilst mark making for the purpose of forming letters which will lead to formal handwriting. This is done in a fun, exciting way which engages the children and makes learning fun.

### Pencil Grip Progression

Once children have developed the correct gross motor and fine motor skills, a pencil or other mark making tool will be introduced. The pencil grip progression is detailed below, with suggested age ranges for each stage. At Red Lane, we recognise that some pupils may have a delayed pencil grip and support is offered in order to correct this grip at a very early age so that bad habits do not form. This helps to ensure the correct letter formation is taught from the very beginning. Tools such as triangular pencils are used and pencil grips are available for those who need additional support.

#### **Palmar Grip**

The pencil is held in the whole fist. Usually develops between the ages of one and two.



#### **Digital Pronate Grip**

All fingers are holding the pencil and the palm is facing downwards. Usually develops between the ages of two and four.



#### **Spplayed Four-Finger Grip**

Looks similar to how adults would hold a dart, with four fingers opposite the thumb. Usually develops between the ages of two and four.



#### **Static Tripod and Quadropod Grip**

Pencil is held with the first three or four fingers. Usually develops between the ages of three and five.



#### **Dynamic Tripod Grip**

The pencil is held lightly between the thumb and index finger and middle finger. The ring and little finger curl gently into the palm of the hand. Usually develops before the age of seven.



## **Progression in Mark Making and Writing**

Mark making is the process in which a child begins to use writing instruments to make marks on the paper which leads to developing the writing skills. Early mark making skills are essential in order to develop letter formation. There are two stages in early writing: mark making and developing writing.

### **Mark Making**

#### **Step 1 – Exploring marks.**

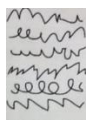
Children will begin by exploring with mark making tools such as pencils, crayons, paint brushes, their fingers and stamps. At this point children will not communicate meaning to their marks.

#### **Step 2 – Scribbling.**



Once children have explored mark making tools, they will begin to make marks with them in the form of scribbling. At this point children will not communicate meaning to their marks.

#### **Step 3 – Lines**



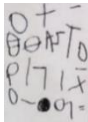
Next children will begin to form lines within their mark making. This usually begins with straight lines and will progress to curved lines and circles. Children may begin to communicate meaning to their marks. For example, a line may be a tree or a scribble may be a person. The lines may also be used to look like writing. For example, making a line of wavy marks to represent adult writing.

#### **Step 4 – Basic Pictures**



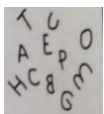
Children will begin to draw basic pictures and begin to communicate meaning to their marks. For example, they may draw a picture of their family and describe who is in the picture.

#### **Step 5 – Symbols and shapes**



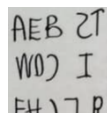
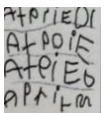
Children will now begin to form symbols and shapes that look like writing. They will assign meaning to their marks and may attempt to write their name with support from an adult.

#### **Step 6 – Random Letters**



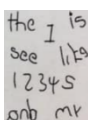
Children will develop from mark making into forming random letters but there is no connection between letters and sounds that they make. For example children many write o but they do not know what the sound is. Children will talk about their writing and give meaning to it. They will write their name from memory.

#### **Step 7 – Letter Strings**



From this, children will begin to write letter strings which travel from left to right and top to bottom. Children may be able to attempt to read their own writing, even though it would not have any connection to letters or sounds. This may progress as children leave spaces between the letters to resemble the idea of writing words.

#### **Step 8 – Copying Words**



Once children have developed the basic mark making skills, they may begin to copy marks, letters or words from the environment around them. For example, copying signs like stop or go. It is unlikely that the child would know what the words say at this stage.

## **Developing Writing**

From this early mark making stage, children will be able to develop their writing skills further. Typically, this would begin at the start of the Reception however all children will develop at a different rate. We recognise that developing the ability to write words, sentences and different text forms will be interconnected. The progression below shows how word writing forms, then sentence structure and then the ability to write different text forms. Some of these skills would be learnt at the same time.

### **Word Writing**

#### **Step 1 – Learning letter sounds**

Children will begin to learn new sounds during their phonic lessons. The phoneme and grapheme will be taught together.

#### **Step 2 – Letter formation – single letter sounds**

Once the sound has been taught, the children will learn how to form the grapheme using the correct RWI rhyme to support the formation of the letter.

#### **Step 3 – Hearing initial sounds**

Children will begin to hear the initial sound in a word e.g. m – mum.

#### **Step 4 – Writing initial sounds**

Children will hear the initial sound in the word and write down the corresponding grapheme to match. E.g. c for cat, d for dog.

#### **Step 5 – Orally blend**

Children will learn to orally blend words together using Fred Talk. For example they will be able to hear c-a-t and say cat.

#### **Step 6 – Letter strings**

Children will begin to write strings of letters to represent words. For example they may write two or three letters in sequence or they may write the first and last sound to represent a word. E.g. muy – mummy, pto – potato.

#### **Step 7 – VC/ CVC words**

Children will begin to segment words to spell them. They will hear the vc/cvc words by matching letters and sounds. Children will use fred fingers to say the sounds and pinch their fingers before writing a word.

#### **Step 8 – Writing high frequency words**

Children will write high frequency “red words” from memory.

#### **Step 9 – Writing words with vowel diagraphs/trigraphs**

Children will begin to write words which include vowel diagraphs such as ay/ee/igh and other diagraphs/trigraphs like ow/ur.

#### **Step 10 – Writing multi-syllabic words**

Children will then begin to write words with more than one syllable such as yellow.

#### **Step 11 – Writing words with alternative spellings of sounds**

Children will learn to write words with alternative spelling choices such as ai/ay/a-e. They will use adjacent consonants, alternative graphemes and split diagraphs. Plausible attempts using the known GPCs will be used by children.

## Sentence Writing

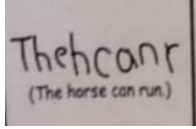
### **Step 1 – Orally rehearse sentences**

Children will orally formulate and say simple captions/sentences for writing.

### **Step 2 - Hold a sentence in memory**

Children will orally compose and hold a caption/sentence in their memory before starting to write it.

### **Step 3 – Writing dictated captions with known GPCs**

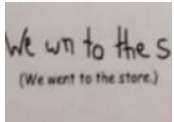


Children will repeat and recall dictated captions several times before writing it. Staff will only dictate sentences with sounds that the children have already learnt. Children may begin by writing a series of letters and sounds for their phrase. There may be no spaces between words. It should begin to be readable to other people.

### **Step 4 – Writing dictated sentences with known GPCs**

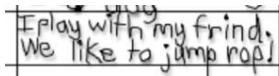
Children will repeat and recall dictated sentences several times before writing it. Staff will only dictate sentences with sounds that the children have already learnt. Children can recall the order of the words in their sentence. Finger spaces may be used but not always. Their writing will be readable and written using their phonic knowledge. Spelling will be plausible and children should be able to read their own sentence.

### **Step 5 – Finger spaces**



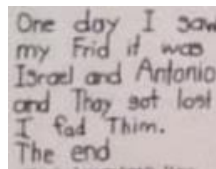
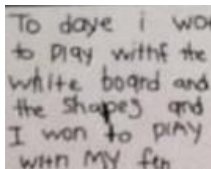
Children will be taught how to use finger spaces to separate words. Sentences should now have finger spaces and will be read easily by other children and adults.

### **Step 6 - Full stops and capital letters**



Children will be taught how to use full stops and how to form capital letters at the start of their sentence. Children will be introduced to capital letters for names too. Children will be able to re-read their work and check that it makes sense.

### **Step 7 – Punctuation types**



By this point, children will have the basic skills in writing and may now be writing two or three sentences using real spellings and silent letters. Children will begin to develop their knowledge of other forms of punctuation such as question marks and exclamation marks.

## Text forms and purposes

Once the children have mastered the early writing skills, their knowledge and skills can be applied to writing different text forms and for different purposes. This promotes engagement and enjoyment for writing.

Step 1 – Simple Labels (*To begin with labels may be initial sounds only.*)

Step 2 – Simple Lists

Step 3 – Short captions and messages e.g. greeting cards.

Step 4 – Instructions

Step 5 – Postcards

Step 6 – Simple stories (recall)

Step 7 - Letter

Step 8 – Narratives

## Writing Curriculum Structure

The curriculum has been planned and structured at a variety of levels in order to maximise learning by ensuring there is sufficient time dedicated to new learning and pupils are given frequent opportunity to revisit learning. The considered structure provides familiarity to pupils and allows them clearly understand the focus of each learning session.

The structure is as follows:

- A yearly structure of knowledge and skills (which is progressive each year)
- A structure for each term which breaks down the knowledge and skills to be taught each week
- A carousel structure which enables all children to work with the teacher or teaching assistant weekly in order to develop their writing skills.

The carousel structure will be introduced during week 2 and all children will begin to work in small groups with their teacher or teaching assistant. Each week there will be five activities planned to develop a range of skills including writing. Each day, each group will complete one of the activities. Some of these activities will be adult-led and some will be independent. Children will learn to work with an adult where they will be challenged and learn new skills. Children will also learn to independently on activities which are developmentally appropriate. Over the course of the year, the carousel will increase in length and difficulty in order to ensure the children are prepared for Year 1.

### **Carousel Structure**

During the carousel, each week one adult led writing activity will take place. This will be differentiated to meet the needs of each group however the idea is to ensure all children move at the same pace and that the attainment gap will close.

The lesson structure below shows how the carousel will increase in pace and difficulty. It sets out the basic skills which children will achieve and what should be evidenced within their writing skills books.

### **Autumn 1 Lesson structure**

| Lesson structure  |
|---|
| <b>Date and Learning Ladybird</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• T to write the date and LL for the children.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Mark Making</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop fine motor skills through the use of funky finger activities</li> <li>• Continue to develop pencil grip – identify those who need support.</li> <li>• Begin to hold a pencil to make marks/ draw pictures.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Formation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From week 5, practise writing the sounds which have been taught in phonics.</li> <li>• This may be RWI worksheets to provide children with the opportunity to trace the letters.</li> <li>• Move to writing the sound in their book on the lines when appropriate.</li> </ul> |

### **Autumn 2 Lesson structure**

*Week 1 and 2 continue as Autumn 1 structure. From Week 3, children to complete a line of letter formation practise before attempting their word writing.*

| Lesson structure  |
|---|
| <b>Date and Learning Ladybird</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• T to write the date and LL for the children.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Formation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued letter formation rehearsal – focus on those tricky letters which are often formed incorrectly.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Word writing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hear and write initial sounds</li> <li>• Writing CVC words with known GPCs – set 1 sounds only.</li> <li>• T to use RWI Fred Fingers to model</li> </ul> |

## Autumn 1

### Structure

#### Weekly structure week 1

Week 1 begins with a focus on settling children into school and developing relationships and routines. During this week, staff will begin to assess the children's mark making skills and pencil grips.

#### Weekly structure week 2

Week 2 begins with a focus on making marks. Children will be given plenty of opportunities to develop gross and fine motor skills as necessary. A range of mark making materials will be used to explore with their marks. The carousel approach will be introduced during week 2 and all children will begin to work in small groups with their teacher/teaching assistant. This may not involve direct mark making or traditional writing, if it is not developmentally appropriate. E.g. children may need to be outside developing gross motor skills first or developing their fine motor skills with funky fitness activities.

#### Weekly structure weeks 3-7

Over weeks 3-7, the carousel approach is repeated. This ensures a familiarity to pupils and also allows staff to embed the vital routines for learning. Children will begin to learn to sit at a table to write, when developmentally appropriate, and behaviour expectations will be embedded. This structure allows teachers and teaching assistants to work with every child each week. It also allows for the development of knowledge and the opportunity to recap and consolidate learning. By the end of the half-term, most children will be involved in the carousel approach.

| Autumn 1 |   |   |
|----------|---|---|
| Week     | Content   | Additional notes  |
| 1        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Transition week</li><li>Settling in</li><li>Developing relationships</li><li>Assessing pencil grip</li></ul>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Red Lane Way focus</li><li>Teaching presentation expectations in books</li><li>Class phonics sessions</li></ul> |
| 2        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Developing gross motor skills</li><li>Fine motor skill assessment</li><li>Funky finger activities</li></ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>RWInc groups to begin</li><li>Teaching presentation expectations in skills books</li></ul>                      |
| 3        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Exploring mark making</li><li>Pencil grip activities</li><li>Forming lines and circles.</li><li>Developing pencil grip</li></ul>  |   |
| 4        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Exploring mark making</li><li>Drawing pictures</li><li>Assigning meaning to their marks.</li><li>Developing pencil grip</li></ul> |   |
| 5        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Beginning to develop recognisable letters.</li><li>Letter formation in line with known GPCs – masdt.</li></ul>                    |   |
| 6        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Beginning to develop recognisable letters.</li><li>Letter formation in line with known GPCs - inpg</li></ul>                      |   |
| 7        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Beginning to develop recognisable letters.</li><li>Letter formation in line with known GPCs - ckubf</li></ul>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>RWInc assessment week</li></ul>   |

## Autumn 2

### Structure

| <b>Autumn 2</b> |  |  |
|-----------------|--|--|
| <b>Week</b>     | <b>Content</b>   | <b>Additional notes</b>  |
| <b>1</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Beginning to develop recognisable letters.</li><li>• Letter formation in line with known GPCs - elhrj</li></ul>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RWInc groups to begin</li></ul>  |
| <b>2</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Beginning to develop recognisable letters.</li><li>• Letter formation in line with known GPCs - vywzx</li></ul>                            |  |
| <b>3</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hear initial sounds</li><li>• Apply knowledge of letter formation to initial sounds.</li><li>• Orally blend sounds to form words</li></ul> |  |
| <b>4</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hear initial sounds</li><li>• Apply knowledge of letter formation to initial sounds.</li><li>• Orally blend sounds to form words</li></ul> |  |
| <b>5</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Segment words to spell CVC words</li><li>• Fred Fingers</li><li>• Write CVC words</li><li>• Write labels</li></ul>                         |  |
| <b>6</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Segment words to spell CVC words</li><li>• Fred Fingers</li><li>• Write CVC words</li><li>• Write labels</li></ul>                         |  |
| <b>7</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consolidation week</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RWInc assessment week</li></ul>  |
| <b>8</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consolidation week</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Class phonics sessions</li></ul> |