



Mark Making to Writing.

Emma Scott and
Laura Leddy

Meet the team

Emma Scott

- EYFS Lead at St Marie's Catholic Primary School.
- Teaching for over 17 years in Sefton, Liverpool and Knowsley authorities.
- Sure Start in Kirkby delivering services.
- My favourite food is Chinese.

Laura Leddy

- EYFS Lead at Stockbridge Village Primary.
- Teaching for 26 years across Leeds, Sefton and Knowsley
- AST for early years from 2006-2011
- My favourite food is tapas.

Aims of this workshop

- Support children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to develop the physical skills needed to become confident writers and ultimately improve writing outcomes.
- Provide practical, low cost ideas to enhance your mark making and writing opportunities within continuous indoors and outdoors provision.

Knowsley Data

2022 in depth

Table to show % of children who achieved the expected level

Area of Learning	Early Learning Goal	% of children achieving Expected Level (Knowsley)	% of children achieving Expected Level (National)
Communication and Language	Listening, attention and understanding	77.2%	82.1%
	Speaking	79.3%	82.6%
PSED	Self-Regulation	82.6%	85.1%
	Managing Self	84.1%	87%
	Building Relationships	86.5%	88.5%
PD	Gross motor skills	90.6%	92.1%
	Fine motor skills	82.6%	85.8%
Literacy	Comprehension	74.3%	80.3%
	Word reading	67.8%	74.7%
	Writing	61.5%	69.5%
Mathematics	Number	71.1%	77.8%
	Numerical Patterns	70.7%	77.2%
Understanding the World	Past and Present	76.3%	81.7%
	People, culture and communities	76.1%	81.3%
	The Natural world	82.7%	85.3%
Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with materials	83.7%	87.2%
	Being imaginative	83.2%	86.8%

The importance of physical development.

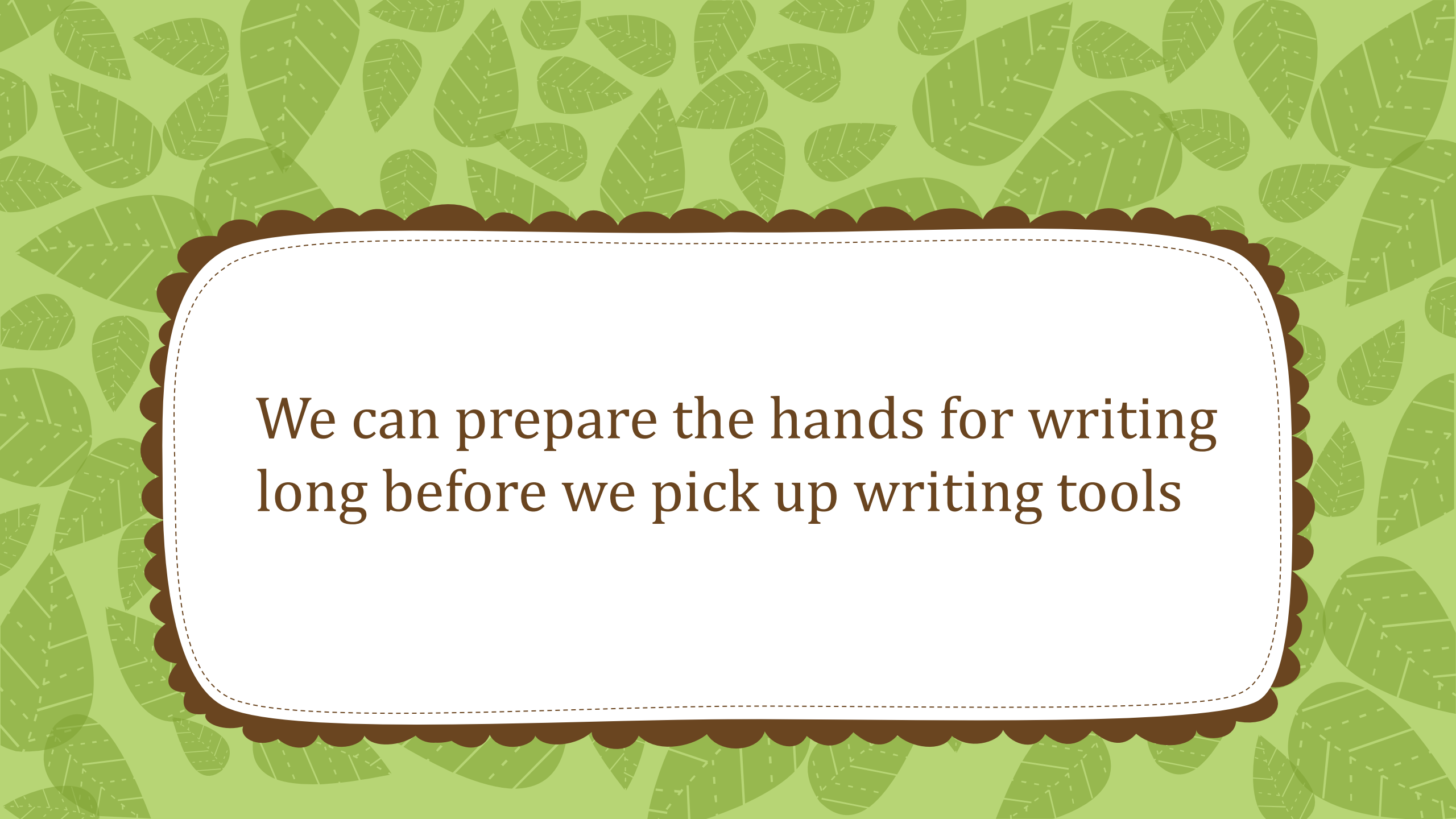


On the left is a typical preschool child's hand and on the right is a typical 7 year olds hand.

The reason we need to provide lots of practice is because our children's hands are still developing!

How their hands develop from the left to the right is through several years of physical play.

Psychologists have found a close connection between children's fine motor skills and their speech. Their work suggests the development of fine motor skills creates preconditions for many psychological processes, in particular speech and language development.



We can prepare the hands for writing
long before we pick up writing tools

Ideas for Fine motor skill development

Playdough

- With daily playdough activities a child's brain learns to control their fingers a lot quicker.
- Manipulating playdough is a fine muscle exercise. Information on brain development shows the fingers are one of the last things the brain controls during child development.
- Everyone loves dough and disco, the music stimulates our 'happiness chemicals' which in turn impact on memory.
- Playing with playdough has no age limit because fine muscle needs exercise just like gross muscles.
- ['I like to' playdough action song - Bing video](#)



- A combination of poem and finger movement positively influences a child's development.
- The oral tradition of any country provides examples of short poems or rhymes which are accompanied by finger movements.
- If your fingers move your mark making/handwriting will improve!



Hold both hands up in the air, palms out. Accompany each
verse with the appropriate finger movements.

*If you're happy and you know it - wiggle your fingers,
If you're happy and you know it - wiggle your fingers.
If you're happy and you know it
And you really want to show it,
If you're happy and you know it - wiggle your fingers.*

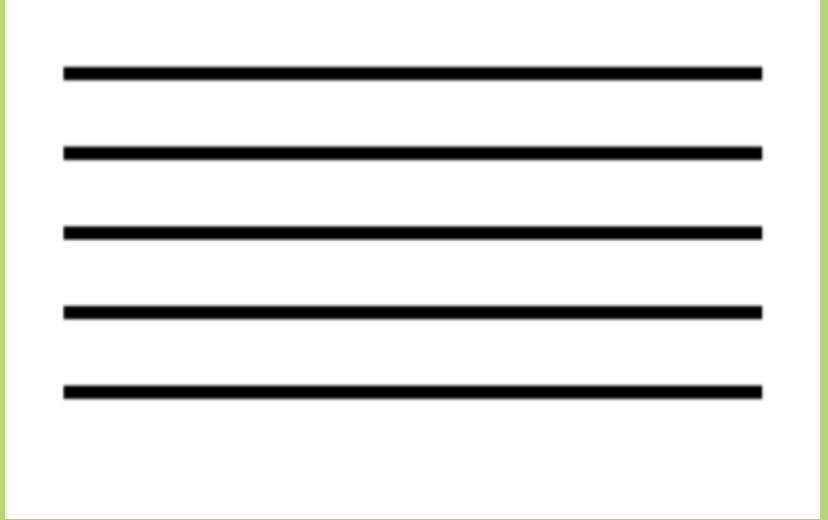
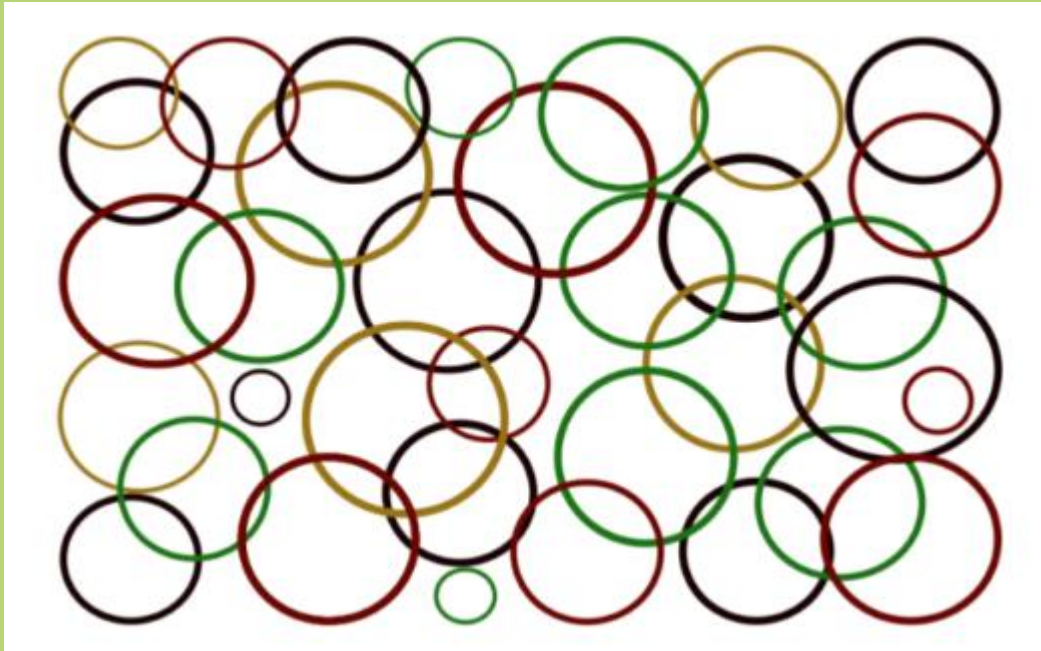
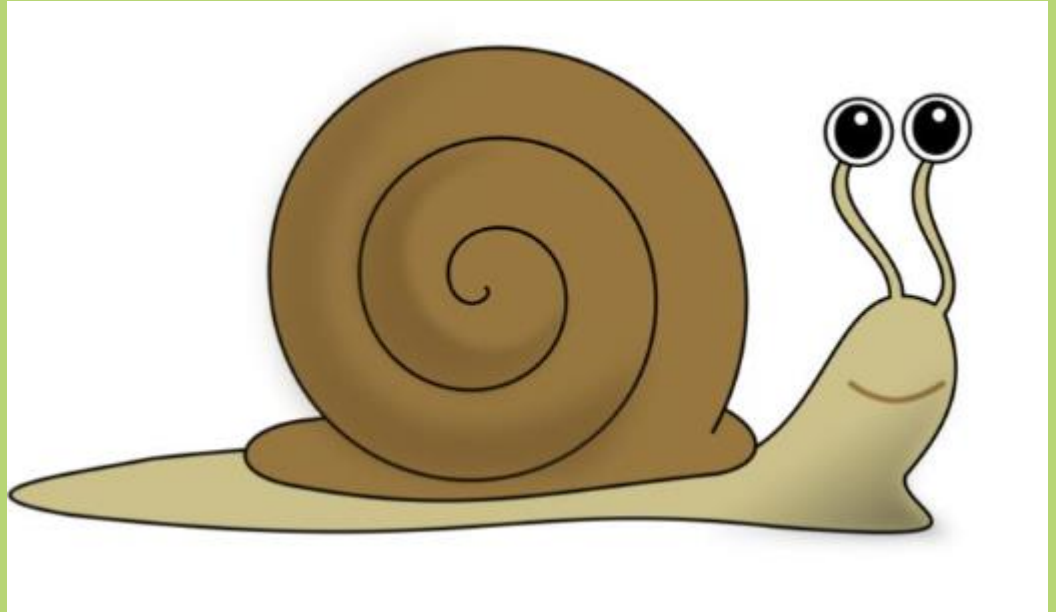
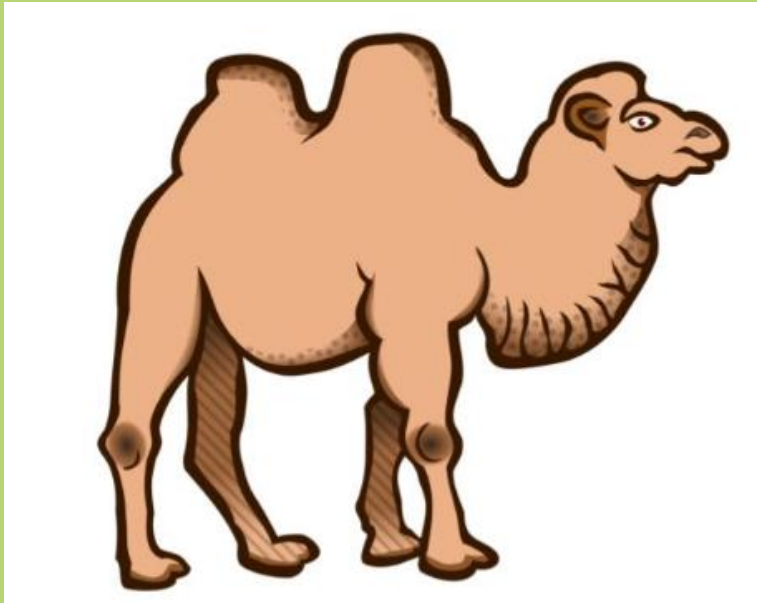
A list of possible actions includes: *tap, click, point, pull*

Fine motor skills



Movement to music





Gross motor skills



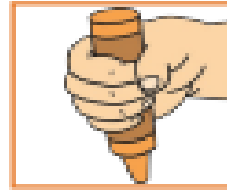
Ideas for Gross motor skill development

- Gross motor (physical) skills are those which require whole body movement and which involve the large (core stabilising) muscles of the body to perform everyday functions, such as standing, walking, running, and sitting upright. It also includes eye-hand coordination skills such as ball skills (throwing, catching, kicking).
- **Hop Scotch** for hopping, or other games that encourage direct task/skill practice.
- **Simon Says** for body awareness and movement planning (praxis).
- **Wheelbarrow walking** races for upper body strength and postural or trunk control.
- **Unstable surfaces:** Walking/climbing over unstable surfaces (e.g. large pillows) as it requires a lot of effort and increases overall body strength.
- **Catching and balancing:** Standing with one foot on a ball while catching another ball (encourages balance while practicing catching and throwing).
- **Large balls:** Begin catching with a large ball/balloon and only after the skill is mastered, move to a smaller sized ball.
- **Obstacle courses:** to combine lots of gross motor skills together into one practice.
- **Playground** climbing and swinging.
- **Swimming**
- **Mark making to music.**



Palmar Grip

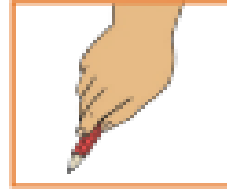
The pencil is held in the whole fist. Usually develops between the ages of one and two.



The elbow, wrist and fingers stay in a fixed position. Movement comes from the shoulder.

Digital Pronate Grip

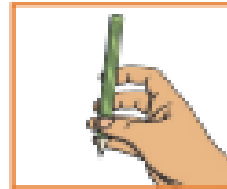
All fingers are holding the pencil and the palm is facing downwards. Usually develops between the ages of two and four.



The elbow and the wrist stay in a fixed position. Movement comes from the shoulder.

Splayed Four-Finger Grip

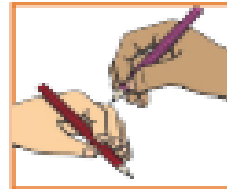
Looks similar to how adults would hold a dart, with four fingers opposite the thumb. Usually develops between the ages of two and four.



The hand is in the air, not resting on the table. Movement comes from the elbow and later the wrist. Fingertips and shoulders remain in a fixed position.

Static Tripod and Quadropod Grip

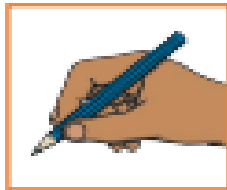
Pencil is held with the first three or four fingers. Usually develops between the ages of three and five.



Movement comes from the wrist. Fingertips, elbow and shoulder remain in a fixed position.

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.



The hand rests on the table. Movement comes from the fingertips. The wrist, elbow and shoulder remain in a fixed position.

Making their mark!

- Mark making is much more than just a scribble! Babies and toddlers learn and begin to make sense of the world through mark making.
- It is the beginning of a child's journey towards writing and is an important step in a child's development for handwriting, creativity and coordination.
- Initially children take pleasure from the physical activity of mark making, but as they develop, they realise that they can control their marks and their creativity starts to thrive

Emergent writing process

<p>1. Squiggle stages Starting randomly using squiggle whilst you wiggle to make marks that lead to letter formation</p>	<p>2. Squiggling into a writer with an awareness of letters going left to right to make sentences</p>	<p>3. Letters begin to appear within squiggle strings</p>
<p>4. Letter copy - left to right and progressively downwards</p>	<p>5. Letter huddles (with spaces to resemble words)</p>	<p>6. Picture labelling using initial letters to label</p>
<p>7. Copy writing. Copying words written in the environment</p>	<p>8. Beginning letters only (use 1st letter of a word to represent word)</p>	<p>9. Simple word formation. Beginning & end</p>
<p>10. Let's read what you've written</p>	<p>11. I can read what you've written</p>	<p>12. You are an independent writer</p>

Why writing is important 2021

<https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/literacy/writing>

Sharing ideas

- Fine motor skills
- Gross motor skills
- Mark making

