

# Approaches to early writing indoors and outdoors.

Blog post by; *Natasha Garrad EYFS lead  
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Early writing has always seemed to be the trickiest of developmental areas to 'crack' The phrase 'reluctant writers' seems to be used when talking about some children, so how to we address this? Through using research, quality first teaching high-quality interactions, invitations to play, creating exciting opportunities, open-ended activities and lots of reflection.



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Writing has historically been our lowest ELG within Reception. We follow RWI as a phonics scheme and we also use kinetic letters to support handwriting (recommendation 3 of the EEF preparing for early literacy 2021). We prioritise communication and language within our whole curriculum, which, as research shows, has the highest impact upon children's development. We use strategies such as high-quality interactions using the ShREC approach, poetry basket and talk for writing but felt we still needed something further. I attended training for Greg Botterill's 'Drawing Club' in the Summer term and began introducing it to a class to trial it.



I also decided to reflect on pre-writing skills and those large movements that, we know through research, supports early writing for our youngest learners. I introduced 'squiggle whilst you wiggle' into Nursery and 'wiggle me into squiggle' for our two year old provision.

Fine motor interventions within continuous provision are planned and delivered on a weekly basis for Reception.



We use feedback and 'in the moment' marking as a school, modelling and correcting letter formation.

"Across the different intervention types, demonstration and feedback were deemed beneficial for the development of children's letter formation skills" (Ray, 2022). (Taken from the EEF Evidence Store. Early Literacy.

Writing opportunities are provided across the indoors and outdoors, as well as having access to a continuous provision writing area which is well stocked with resources. The enhancements are carefully thought out and designed to be inviting for 4 and 5 year olds. After all, we want our children to want to write!





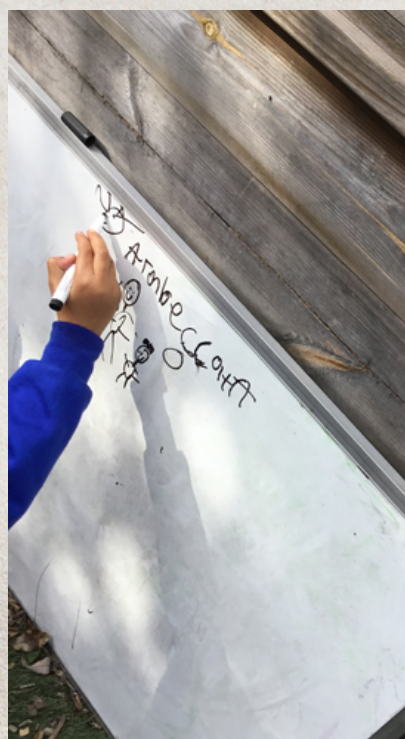
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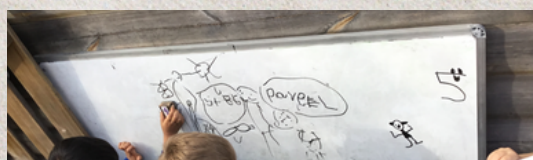
Fine motor activities that can be accessed, with a focus on nature, supports pencil grip and resilience ready for writing. These enhancements support our children further by creating the foundation for writing and don't have to be limited to indoors..



When thinking about Early writing, I like to reflect upon the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and how these can be further supported within the 'lens' of writing. It is important that we consider the children in our setting and their needs whilst planning and reviewing to ensure writing is enjoyable and appealing to a 4 year old!



Our children love to engage with the outdoors and we are very lucky to have one of our Forest school leads with us in Reception. When considering our outdoor writing opportunities, we ensure it is suited to outdoors and not an indoor activity just taken outside. Enhancements and continuous provision for outdoors should be on larger scales and finding ways to embrace nature is also used as a vehicle for learning.



Our mud kitchen is always popular and enhancements of simple recipes and notepads to record orders quickly evolved into a seasonal cafe.

Large, vertical whiteboards and chalk boards are provided for the children and they have access to continuous provision within learning areas, such as a literacy and maths shed, mud kitchen, design sheets etc.....



Enhancements are added with carefully selected activities designed for outdoor use. These activities are often on a larger scale, using clipboards or outdoor props for support, but can also be as simple as using a paintbrush and colored water for mark-making on the walls.