

Walton Lane Nursery School and Rocking Horse Club

Writing Curriculum

People are social beings and need to communicate, and writing is one of the many forms of communication that we enable children to develop at WLNSRHC. As with reading, writing must be built on a solid foundation of good communication and language skills which comes from home – the children’s first educators, and from the experiences that we provide in nursery.

As a result of rich playful experiences we will take the children on a journey where mark making and writing is a tool that enables them to make their thinking visible, whether that is to an audience or to their future self. It is essential that mark making and writing is enjoyable for all children so they are motivated to record and represent their thoughts through the handwritten word and through digital technologies.

Aims

At WLNSRHC we aim that

- Children enjoy mark making and writing
- Children record their thoughts and ideas through mark making and writing confidently
- Children draw on their knowledge of their world, their learning and their experience of books and stories in their mark making and writing
- Children develop their fine motor skills so they are able to use mark making implements with control and developing precision
- Children develop an understanding of how to form some letters correctly
- Children use their developing phonological awareness to write letters and simple words
- Children are supported and challenged to develop their early writing knowledge and skills based on practitioners formative assessments

Curriculum Intent, 3-4 year olds

There are 2 strands to our writing curriculum

- Physical skills for writing
- Authorial skills or composition

These strands are intertwined in the mark making and writing activities and experiences planned for the children

The importance of drawing in learning to write in the early years

Children need to develop intricate hand-eye co-ordination to be able to write and form letters. It takes a significant period of time for children to develop the necessary skills. It begins with the gross motor skills around the shoulders, elbows, wrists and fingers. The child's fine motor skills develop concurrently as they refine intentional intricate movements of their hands, fingers and thumbs. At WLNSRHC we believe that drawing is essential to writing. It facilitates fine motor development (physical skills) but it is also a form of communication and representation of thought in its own right (authorial skills). Consequently drawing is given high prominence in the development of children's writing.

Physical skills for writing

Early Stages

- Children enjoy making marks
- Children make marks in different media with their hands and fingers e.g. gloop, paint, oats
- Children make marks with different equipment e.g. paintbrushes of different thicknesses, chubby crayons, felt tips
- Children are able to thread e.g. beads on a lace
- Children are able to manipulate inset jigsaws and simple jigsaws
- Children are developing their pincer grip e.g. putting pegs in peg boards, picking up small objects
- Children hold a writing implement in a palmer grip
- Children begin to develop a hand preference for writing
- Children mark make on a large scale
- Children make circular movements in their drawing
- Children make linear movements in their drawing
- Children demonstrate a simple visual memory e.g. can match objects, are able to sort

Progression through the year

- Children have a hand preference for mark making and writing
- Children develop a tripod pencil grip
- Children mark make and write on a large scale and begin to do so on a small scale
- Children are able to manipulate small objects competently e.g. fixing small construction pieces together, jigsaws (6+ pieces), sewing
- Children make gross motor movements with their arms
 - circular and in an anticlockwise direction
 - linear that move from top to bottom

- bouncing which go overarm
- bouncing which go underarm
- Children make fine motor movements in their mark making
 - circular and in an anticlockwise direction
 - linear that move from top to bottom
 - bouncing which go over the curve
 - bouncing which go under the curve
- Children begin to look at shape and pictures of jigsaws to put them together
- Children develop their visual memory so they recall an object that is out of sight e.g. Kim's game, pairs game
- Children draw recognisable pictures
- Children write a string of shapes
- Children begin to include some recognisable letters in their writing
- Children show an interest in their written name and the letters in their name
- Children begin to write their name, using their name card as a prompt
- Children write their name on pictures and paintings

By the end of nursery

- Children can mark make and write on a smaller scale
- Children can manipulate small jigsaws (24+ pieces)
- Children look closely at the picture and shape when they are completing jigsaws
- Children develop a more complex visual memory when objects are out of sight e.g. Kim's game and pairs game with more objects/pieces
- Children will draw pictures of increasing detail
- Children's writing travels left to right on most occasions
- Children write their name, forming most letters correctly
- Children write their name without using their name card as a prompt
- Children use more letter shapes in their writing
- Children form letters correctly the majority of the time
- Children begin to use their phonic knowledge when writing
- Children begin to write simple CVC words, drawing on their phonic knowledge
- Children are interested in different writing scripts

Authorial skills or composition

Early Stages

- Children enjoy making marks
- Children show an interest in print in their environment and in books and other texts
- Children begin to show an interest in watching an adult writing
- Children will show their mark making to an interested adult
- Children are beginning to describe features in their mark making

Progression through the year

- Children mark make, draw and write alongside an adult who is also engaged in the activity
- Children become aware of the difference between drawing and writing
- Children give meaning to their marks
- Children have a purpose in mind for their mark making and writing e.g. writing a note to give someone, writing 'no entry' to stop people coming in to an area
- Children may talk to themselves about what they are doing as they draw or write
- Children are able to talk about their picture
- Children are able to read back what they have written
- Children incorporate mark making and writing in their imaginative play e.g. writing lists, instructions, letters
- Children are interested in adult's writing and will acted out situations of adult writing e.g. taking a register
- Children engage in storytelling where the adult is the scribe
- Children draw pictures that tell a story

By the end of nursery

- Children are confident to mark make, draw and write
- Children are able to talk about their picture at length
- Children begin to write independently without adult modelling
- Children begin to record their ideas and stories through their own writing
- Children use writing independently throughout their play
- Children will create extended text with an adult e.g. stories, descriptions, directions
- Children enjoy their composition being shared with an audience

Curriculum implementation

We teach children early writing skills through carefully planned activities and environment and effective adult interactions in both that facilitate the children's learning. Planning for activities and the environment is based on assessments of children's levels of development and is differentiated for their more individualised needs.

At WLNSRHC we plan a language and print rich environment which motivates children to engage with literacy provision through

- A broad range of mark making equipment for indoors and outdoors, that incorporates the interests of all children with consideration given to how to engage different groups e.g. boys, SEND

- Use of print throughout the environment which is read to the children and adults refer to in order to support learning e.g. labels, words in different scripts that reflect the children's cultures, challenge words, descriptive words, fiction books, factual books, nursery rhyme cards, catalogues, comics, magazine, IWB, tablets, PC.
- Use of print throughout the environment that reflects the different languages of the children
- Interesting mark making areas that cater for all children's interests.
- Mark making provision throughout the continuous provision.
- Equipment to develop GMS around the shoulders, arms and wrists, for outdoors and indoors.
- Equipment to develop FMS, indoors and outdoors, plus a finger gym area with weekly challenges.
- Use of display to celebrate children's mark making, drawing and writing.
- Using multiple surfaces for writing indifferent planes

At WLNSRHC we plan activities that motivate, support and challenge children's writing development through

- Adults modelling writing throughout nursery
- Adults scribing for children and reading it back to them
- Helicopter stories, which enhance children's creativity and develops their knowledge of how stories are constructed
- Making books with children and sharing them with a wider audience
- Use of group times for 'Letters and Sound' activities
- Adults supporting children's immediate interests and learning by guiding them to writing opportunities and resources
- Planning for individual children's learning needs in writing through the In The Moment Planning process
- Use of displays
- Movement activities e.g. ribbon sticks
- Dough disco
- Finger gym challenges
- Large scale painting outdoors with water or paint

Curriculum impact

The impact of the writing curriculum is assessed and monitored for individual children, key person groups and nursery cohorts.

- Practitioners assess children's learning dynamically and will respond in that moment to enhance the children's learning

- They will adapt their interactions to support or challenge children' learning
- They will add or direct children to resources that will develop or deepen the child's learning
- Practitioners will observe children during child led or adult directed activities and assess their level of development in writing. Assessments will be used to
 - Plan next steps for individual children
 - Plan activities that will further develop children' learning
 - Plan continuous provision and enhancements to continuous provision that will further develop children's learning
- Key Persons will record children's learning and share it with parents through the In The Moment Planning process, children's records, IConnect and Target Tracker
- Children's writing assessments will be used
 - To identify learning needs of individual children, groups of children and cohorts of children
 - To plan learning for individual children and groups of children
- Children's writing assessments will be used in conjunction with teaching and learning observations (by peers, team leaders, headteacher or external bodies)
 - To monitor the impact of key person's teaching of writing
 - To monitor the impact of specific writing projects
 - To identify areas of CPD for individuals or groups of staff
 - To moderate writing assessments across staff
 - To plan future improvements to teaching of mark making and writing

Special Educational Needs and Disability

We aim to cater for the individual learning need of every child, recognising the need for specialised provision to ensure access to all aspects of literacy and writing. Many children with SEND attending WLNSRHC have speech and language difficulties. The initial focus for children is to develop effective communication and language. activities and the environment for the children are planned using the Lancashire ATP document; Lancashire SEN progression document and advice from external agencies e.g. SALT, Early Years Inclusion Teachers. Specific targets are identified in children's Targeted Learning Plans to develop their speech, language and communication in preparation for early writing.

All children are supported to access the writing curriculum at their level of development through an appropriate environment, resources and adult interaction. We recognise that mark making, drawing and writing can support a child's PSED and CAL development.

Early Years Pupil Premium

Additional support is provided for children who are eligible for early years pupil premium. The support is based on the Education Endowment Fund assessment of the impact of different strategies in the early years. We focus on developing the children's wellbeing and involvement to build resilience and self-regulation. Next we prioritise communication and language skills, once secure we focus on developing children's literacy. The children will also be involved in experiences to develop their cultural capital e.g. forest school, visits to the library, shops, areas of local interest. The aim is to give children a broader range of experiences to link to their learning, to talk about, to incorporate writing and drawing opportunities and to promote creativity.

Children with English as an Additional Language

For children with EAL, as with all children, developing their speech, language and communication is a priority on which their literacy skills will be built. The children are supported to develop their knowledge and use of English through sensitive play based activities using physical and visual cues. Children are assisted to understand the routines and activities within the setting through visual timetables, which remain consistent – for the majority – to provide security.

- Different languages and scripts are displayed around the nursery that reflect the diverse cultures of children attending or that might be expected to attend.
- Children's languages, written script and culture are represented in the environment and resources
- Books and literature are carefully selected, including dual language books and books that give visual cues, promoting naming and that are rhythmic and repetitive
- Drawing is used as a shared form of communication that promotes FMS needed for writing and provides visual cues to English words that are spoken and at a later stage are written
- Translation apps are used to promote communication and demonstrate the link between speech and writing
- Staff work closely with parents, using translators or apps to develop an understanding of the children's backgrounds and interests, which is implemented into children's specific targets
- Children are assessed at the beginning and the end of the year according to DfE guidelines on development of fluency in English