

Fine Motor Control and Pre-writing skill Progression

(The connection between the hands and the brain is one of the last connections to be fully developed, this usually happens at around the age of seven. So activities need to be done to develop this connection and make it quicker.)

ELG Physical Development (Fine motor skills)

Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.

Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery.

Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing



Nursery steps have been added to show experiences and skills the children should have already experienced and mastered. This can also be used for children working below age related expectations.

Nursery

Building blocks

to build up strength in hands and develop dexterity

Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors. Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils. Start to eat independently and learning how to use a knife and fork. Show a preference for a dominant hand. To do their own zip

- Teach squiggle sessions with ribbons, fabric wavers or similar to music, then move onto pens or crayons using fist grip.
- Movement with squiggle then crayons goes left to right, up and down and then around in circles.
- *Dough disco builds up strength as the dough is rolled into a sausage shape and ball, squeezed, flattened and pressed.*

Building Blocks to develop the pincer grip

- Using tweezers or tongs to pick up objects.
- Using the pincer grip to pick up small items like buttons.
- Using straws and pipe cleaners to thread through holes

To develop proprioception (Knowing how much pressure is needed.)

- Printing activities and pressing onto paint in a plastic wallet to make patterns and shapes.

Reception

Building blocks to develop control and sharpen dexterity

Develop their small motor skills so that they can use a range of tools competently, safely and confidently. Suggested tools: pencils for drawing and writing, paintbrushes, scissors, knives, forks and spoons.

- *Handwriting sessions follow on from squiggle, they are taught in groups...*
forming the anti-clockwise letters c a o dg q
Moving on to the tall letters l h t k
Letters that go over m n b e r
Letters that sit on the line with descenders p j y q g
Letters that go underneath u v w ...
- *Dough disco to control each finger at a time pressing one or two of them into the dough and keeping the rest away. Give each finger a name to make this easier, Tommy thumb, Peter pointer, Toby tall, Ruby ring, Baby small. Each finger to touch the thumb to build dexterity*

Building Blocks to develop the pincer grip

- *Using clothes pegs and tweezers in activities and games*
- *Using pincer grip to pick up even smaller items like sequins.*

To develop proprioception (Knowing how much pressure is needed.)

- *Using hole punches to learn how much pressure is needed*

- To use water and objects such as cotton buds and water to write over chalk on boards.

Continuous provision:

- Opportunity daily to access fine motor control
- Resources to practice control, pressure and pincer grip.
- Opportunities for children to play and explore, using construction materials.
- Children given weekly challenges to practise skills
- Provide familiar resources in order for children to practise skills and correct own mistakes
- Use tools such as garlic presses with dough to build up strength.
- Build with big construction materials such as Duplo bricks.
- Shape sorting boxes to complete and inset puzzles
- Activities to hammer golf tees into pumpkins or clay.
- Hammering pins into cork boards to make patterns/pictures.
- Threading large beads, cotton reels onto straight objects like spaghetti (this also develops left to right sequence.)
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- Dressing up clothes available to practise fine motor skills
- Dolls and toys to dress in order to practise fine motor skills
- Dough table available to build up muscle strength and pressure

Continuous provision:

- As nursery
- Build with construction materials such as Lego.
- Playing with peg boards
- Complete jigsaw puzzles, gradually with smaller pieces.
- Balance activities e.g. marbles onto golf tees.
- Push straws into own milk carton.
- Ripping straw wrapper
- Dexterity and pincer grip developed using a variety of activities such as peg boards, nuts and bolts, paper clips onto paper or fabric etc.
- Threading smaller beads onto string and laces.
- Opportunities to practise fine motor skills with age appropriate resources e.g. Smaller beads to thread, smaller items to be picked up with the tweezers

Role of adult:







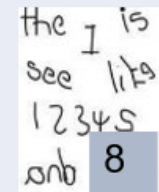
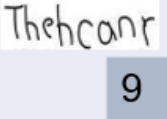

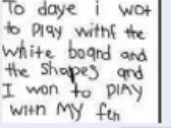
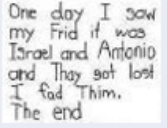
- Teach skills and support children to achieve them.
- Have a set time each day for dough disco, Early Years Emily has some Nursery dough disco videos which are good and squiggle
- Have a set time to model and ensure children complete fine motor control activities
- Children are taught letter formation *with a variety of tools e.g. fairy wands, lightsabre's, big paint brushes in water, finer in paint, sand or flour*

Role of adult:

- *As nursery*
- *Have finger gym activities modelled and taught each day. At AR this is done first thing in the morning, on a group rotation*
- *Time set aside each day for dough disco / squiggle follow own programme with occasional videos from Spread the Happiness*
- *Later on in the year the children move on from dough disco and squiggle to more formal handwriting sessions*
- *Handwriting letter formation taught to fit in with phonics scheme.*
- *Extra sessions teach children on a one to one to form the letters in their name correctly.*
- *Handwriting sessions follow a sequence of progress, they are taught in groups...*
 - forming the anti-clockwise letters c a o dg q*
 - Moving on to the tall letters l h t k*
 - Letters that go over m n b e r*
 - Letters that sit on the line with descenders p j y q g*
 - Letters that go underneath u v w ...*
- *Intervention groups are taught for children who are still not ready for writing with a pencil and instead they practise letter formation in a variety of ways*
- *Drawing and painting skills are taught using step by step techniques.*
- *Pencil and paintbrush is modelled with the pincer grip.*

Literacy

The stages of writing development For reference

16-26 months	22-36 months	30-50 months	40-60 months
 <p>This is the period when young children are just figuring out that their movements result in the lines and scribbles they see on the page. These scribbles are usually the result of large movements from the shoulder, with the crayon or marker held in the child's fist. There is joy in creating art at all ages, but at this stage especially, many children relish the feedback they are getting from their senses: the way the crayon feels, the smell of the paint, the squishy-ness of the clay.</p>	 <p>As children develop better control over the muscles in their hands and fingers, their scribbles begin to change and become more controlled. Toddlers may make repeated marks on the page — open circles, diagonal, curved, horizontal or vertical lines. Over time, children make the transition to holding the crayon or marker between their thumb and pointer finger.</p>  <p>We now see random letters and letter strings.</p> 	 <p>Children have had experience with letters and print for several years now and are beginning to use letters in their own writing. Usually children start by experimenting with the letters in their own names, as these are most familiar to them. They also make "pretend letters" by copying familiar letter shapes, and will often assume that their created letter must be real because it looks like other letters they have seen.</p>  <p>We now see letter strings, letter groups and print from the environment.</p> 	 <p>We now see children beginning to experiment with sounds and the initial sounds of words represented.</p>  <p>Then more consonant sounds are represented. We then see inventive spelling including vowels.</p>  <p>Finally we have transitional writing with better attempts and spelling and some use of punctuation.</p> 

Physical Development

The stages of grip development For reference

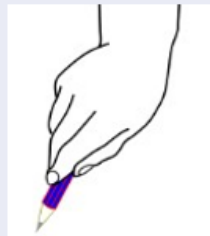
16-26 months



Fisted Grasp and

Fist grip. Children younger than one year old typically reach for and hold items with their entire fist. When using a pencil or crayon, a young child will hold the item in their closed fist with their little finger closest to the paper and thumb on top.

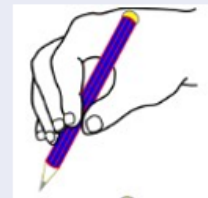
22-36 months



Palmer Grasp and

Four-finger grip. As children gain fine motor control, they typically progress from using a fist grip to a four-fingered grip. With a four-fingered grip, a child uses all four fingers together to hold an object against his thumb. This grip gives a child greater control when holding small items.

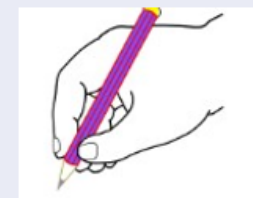
30-50 months



Five finger Grasp and

Pincer grip. Once children develop strong fine motor skills, a true pincer grip emerges. With this grip, a child uses only his thumb and index finger to hold and manipulate small objects. With a pincer grip, a child can easily twist dials, turn the pages of a book, open and close a zip, and use crayons or pencils with precision.

40-60 months



Tripod Grasp (Three finger)

Most children reach a mature three-finger grip by age 5 or 6. In this hand grip, a utensil is held between thumb, index and middle fingers. They might have tense fingers at first and continue to use wrist movements as they did with the five-finger grip, but they will eventually gain more fine motor control and will start to use finger movements to make shapes and letters.