

40-60 months - Key objectives

Physical Development	Writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows a preference for a dominant hand. Begins to use anticlockwise movement and retrace vertical lines. Begins to form recognisable letters. Uses a pencil and holds it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hears and says the initial sound in words. Can segment the sounds in simple words. Links sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet. Uses some clearly identifiable letters to communicate meaning, representing some sounds correctly and in sequence. Writes own name and other things such as labels, captions. Attempts to write short sentences in meaningful contexts.

How you can help at home

- If your child is struggling to use a 3 fingered hold for writing, ask them to hold their pencil with 2 fingers and a thumb, and then hold a tissue in the palm of their hand with their other two fingers.
- Practise writing letters using the letter formation rhymes. Make it a game – how many can they form correctly in a minute?
- Play 'I Spy' to help them to recognise initial sounds. You could then develop this to saying all sounds in the word i.e. I spy a d-o-g.
- Encourage your child to make a list, for example the shopping list for that week, a birthday list or a list of their friends or toys. Help them to hear and write every sound in the word.
- Label objects around the house with post it notes.
- Play the missing letter game to write words. Give your child 2 out of 3 sounds (i.e. d - g) and ask them to fill in the blank.
- Practise spelling the tricky words from phonics phases by chalking them on the floor and writing over them with water.
- Let your child write their own party invitations.
- Ask your child to write a sentence about their favourite princess, super hero or book character. Help them to write all sounds in the words and remind them to use finger spaces.

Remember – at this stage it is not important if the words are spelt incorrectly as long as they are using appropriate sounds i.e. kat is an acceptable spelling for cat.

Early Learning Goal - Key objectives

Physical Development	Writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

The main difference between phonetic spelling at 40-60 months and the Early Learning Goal is that children need to be writing ALL sounds in the words consistently and independently. They also need to begin applying their Phase 3 phonic sounds when writing (i.e. ai, igh, er). They should be able to read back the sentences they write.

How you can help at home

- Write a letter to a friend or relative. Encourage children to write all sounds in every word and spell their tricky words correctly. Remind them to use finger spaces. They may even be ready now to use a full stop at the end of a sentence!
- Encourage your child to begin to write more than one sentence in their home school book. As they are writing about something they have done and enjoyed this will motivate them to write more.
- Help your child to make their own book. You could use photographs or they could draw the pictures themselves. Your child can then write a story or sentences about the pictures.
- Find different purposes for your child to write – postcards from holiday, a letter to a friend, a lost pet poster etc.
- Challenge your child to spell longer words! They can use their phonics to write these phonetically. It is amazing how motivating a seemingly impossible word can be! They are likely to write eleefunt for elephant which is fine.
- The children are now ready to begin to form capital letters. You can play matching games where they write the capital letter when shown the lowercase one.

Exceeding - Key objectives

Physical Development	Writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They hold paper in position and use their preferred hand for writing, using a correct pencil grip. • They are beginning to be able to write on lines and control letter size. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children can spell phonetically regular words of more than one syllable as well as many irregular but high frequency words. • They use key features of narrative in their own writing.

The main differences between Early Learning Goal and Exceeding are spelling and the flow of writing. Children should now be writing on the lines and showing a difference between long and tall letters (i.e. p, g, y under the line). Their writing should flow and contain connectives (and, but, so) and openers (next, later on, in the afternoon). They should be spelling all tricky words correctly and beginning to spell common high frequency words correctly too (i.e. house, play).

How you can help at home

- Encourage your child to write their favourite story book or film plot independently. There should be a clear, beginning, middle and end and it should read/flow well.
- Encourage your child to describe things they see around them and then add an adjective i.e. a brown dog, a fluffy cat.
- Model using time phrases when talking to your child (i.e. next we will go to the shop and later we will visit the park).
- Encourage your child to keep a diary. This will remind them to write every day and at greater length.
- Begin to encourage your child to use capital letters as well as full stops in sentences. This does not need to be consistent at this stage.
- Practise spelling the keywords that are given to your child. This will help them to apply them in their writing.

30-50 months - Key objectives

Physical Development	Writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draws lines and circles using gross motor movements. • Holds pencil between thumb and two fingers, no longer using whole-hand grasp. • Holds pencil near point between first two fingers and thumb and uses it with good control. • Can copy some letters, e.g. letters from their name. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes gives meaning to marks as they draw and paint. • Ascribes meanings to marks that they see in different places.

How you can help at home

- Draw wiggly lines on paper for your child to follow with their finger, a pencil, a paintbrush etc.
- Let your child make marks with different equipment and in different media, i.e. a spoon in tomato sauce, a pencil on paper, a paintbrush on the floor or outdoor walls, bath crayons on the tiles, finger in sand or shaving foam.
- Help your child to develop their hand muscles by letting them use play dough, scissors, threading, balancing building blocks, pegging out the washing etc.
- Write some words for your child to trace over. Always use lowercase letters (except for the first letter of a name).
- Write words for your child to copy for example their name, family members' names and other common words such as mum and dad. Try to make sure they start at the right place though as it is often hard to correct the letter formation when it has been learnt incorrectly.
- Encourage your child to draw pictures of things they have seen around them.
- Ask your child to tell you what they have drawn or written.

Dear Parents/Carers,

Writing is a fundamental skill that your child will learn at school but should also practise at home to become confident.

Showing your child how to make marks with a variety of materials will develop into writing letters, words and then sentences.

The development of writing happens in stages and these stages will overlap. Every child will reach these stages at different times but age bands are given to help to give you a guide.

It is also important for children to be able to talk about the marks they have made and, eventually, read back their own writing.

A key skill in the development of writing is fine motor control, hand-eye co-ordination and muscle strength. These aspects, including handwriting, come under the 'Physical Development' strand of Development Matters.

We look forward to working with you to help your child become 'a writer'!

The Foundation Stage Team

Key Points to Help

Provide a suitable place for writing, let your child sit at a table or somewhere with a nice flat surface.

Provide them with a variety of materials to allow them to write – paper, pens, crayons, pencils, chalk etc.

Give your child time to write, it may take them a long time to think about what they are writing and sound it out. Be patient.

Provide key words or word mats to support them if they are struggling. Websites such as 'Twinkl' and 'Sparklebox' allow you to download word mats and letter formation sheets for free!

Talk to your child about their writing – ask them to tell you about their picture or to read their words or sentences back to you.

Try not to write for your child. It is important that they have the chance to practise the skill themselves. Also allow them to sound out words and write them independently. It is better that they have sounded out and written a word phonetically than you having told them how to spell it.

When completing home/school books please let your child write, even if for nursery this is only a squiggle. You can write underneath what they say they have written so we can interpret it.

Encourage your child to hold a pencil correctly and to form their letters starting from the correct place. Use the letter formation rhymes on the next page to help.

Be positive! Lots of praise and encouragement will build confidence and help with the enjoyment of writing.

ā b c d e f
 g h i j k l
 m n o p q
 r s t u v
 w x y z

a	Round the apple down the leaf (apple)
b	Down the laces to the heel, round the toe (Boot)
c	Curl around the caterpillar (caterpillar)
d	Round his bottom up his tall neck and down to his feet (dinosaur)
e	Lift off the top and scoop out the egg (egg)
f	Down the stem, and draw the leaves (flower)
g	Round her face down her hair and give her a curl (girl)
h	Down the head to the hooves and over his back (horse)
i	Down his body, and dot for his head (insect)
j	Down his body curl and dot (jack-in-the box)
k	Down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg (kangaroo)
l	Down the long leg (leg)
m	Down Maisie, over the mountain over the mountain (Maisie and mountains)
n	Down Nobby, over his net (football net)
o	All around the orange (orange)
p	Down his plait and around his head (pirate)
q	Round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair (queen)
r	Down his back, then curl over his arm (robot)
s	Slither down the snake (snake)
t	Down the tower across the tower (castle tower)
u	Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle (umbrella)
v	Down a wing, up a wing (vulture)
w	Down up down up (worm)
x	Down the arm and leg and repeat the other side (Exercise)
y	Down a horn up a horn and under his head (yak)
z	Zig-zag-zig (zip)

Cheadle Primary School

"We aim to be outstanding in all we do"



Supporting your child with

Writing

in

Foundation Stage