

Mark-Making – General Advice

Information for Parents, Teachers and Carers



Which children may need support with this?

Drawing and writing can be harder for some children. Here are some examples of children who may need support:

- Children with delayed motor skills
- Children with co-ordination or motor-planning difficulties
- Children with low muscle tone or altered muscle tone
- Children with hypermobility
- Children with reduced attention and concentration



For more information, please contact Occupational Therapy on:

For York and Selby Area: 01904 726599

For Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale Area: 01723 342357

Typical Development

1 ½ Years - Creates spontaneous scribble

2 – 2 ½ Years - Will imitate vertical and horizontal strokes first drawn by adult

3 Years - Copies a circle

4 – 4 ½ Years - Will copy a vertical and horizontal cross, right and left diagonal lines and a square

5 Years - Will copy a triangle and starts forming letters, particularly letters in their name T, H V X

6 + Years - A child draws freely and comfortably, copies a star and can really start developing their letter formation.

Helpful Hints

- Ensure your child is sat well to practice drawing and writing; with feet on the floor and a table that is not too high or too low
- With early mark-making, encourage larger strokes and movements to develop the shoulder stability and control; draw on an easel, a chalkboard, or on the pavement with chalks
- Use a multi-sensory approach to mark-making; don't feel you need to stick to crayons and paper E.g.
 - Making shapes in sand, rice, sugar, custard, yoghurt
 - Pressing magnetic letters into sand, playdough etc
 - Sticking pipe-cleaners/playdough onto cut out shapes and letters
 - Cutting and sticking shapes out of different textured paper
 - Try drawing over bumpy/textured surfaces e.g. corrugated card / reverse side of Lego™ board to increase interest and the amount of feedback felt through the arm
- If a strong hand preference has not emerged practice activities that demand one stabilising hand and one doing hand e.g. lacing boards, drawing around stencils, paper rubbings and cutting with scissors. Always present tools in front of the child and not on one side so they are making an active reaching choice.

Please note that a 'Holding a Pencil' advice sheet is also available for further information

Tell us what you think

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:

For York and Selby Area: 01904 724366

For Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale Area: 01723 342472

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