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Literacy Policy

Approved by	
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Introduction

This document is about how we help children learn to read and write. Reading and writing are closely linked. Learning to read and to write are the most difficult tasks children have to learn. For them to be successful now and later on we have to offer them the right experiences and teaching. We discussed, as a staff group, the many aspects of teaching reading and writing. We looked at the research that has been carried out into the best ways of teaching young children to read and write. This document outlines the approaches we have discussed together at Lea Nursery School.

Teaching a child to read and write is very complex. **We value each child as an individual accepting their individual needs, and rates of development.** Many different approaches are needed if the child is to become a successful reader and writer. This document will be useful to staff, parents and visitors.

If you would like to explore this research yourself, you will find a list of sources in the back of this document.

Reading and writing develop together and in parallel

Reading and writing are closely interwoven. They require slightly different sets of skills, but as the skills of reading develop and strengthen, so do the skills of writing. So think of them together. The process of making sense of those black marks on the page, and beginning to make your own marks on paper that other people can read starts early. It starts with talk. It is talk that helps literacy skills develop and provides the raw material for written communication.

Children start school with a vocabulary which has been learned mainly from their family and the literacy environment at home, as well as from their experiences with the wider world. A child's spoken vocabulary will be much larger than their reading or their written vocabularies at first. They will use words they have heard and understand in their everyday life. They will gradually acquire the beginnings of a reading or writing vocabulary from their immediate surroundings, their family and friends. There are so many words in the world – for a young child, they must be both useful and connected to a memorable experience. **Having a low vocabulary will trap children in disadvantage.**

“When the daily number of words for each group of children was projected across four years, the four year-old child from the professional family will have heard 45 million words, the working-class child 26 million, and the welfare child only 13 million.”

Hart and Risley

Children mainly use words their parents and other adults use with them in conversation, and develop larger vocabularies when their parents use more words (Hart and Risley, 1995). When they start school, relatively high performing children know an average estimated vocabulary of 7100 words. In contrast, relatively poor performing pupils know 3000 words, acquiring only one word compared to the three words per day acquired by children with the largest vocabularies. This gap widens as children get older. And the wider the gap, the harder it is to bridge. (Hart and Risley, 1995)

The fundamental instincts of good parents, whatever their social class, are usually correct.

“The word gap among those children has nothing to do with how much those parents love them. They all love their children and want the best for them, but some parents have a better idea of what needs to be said and done to reach that best. They know the child needs to hear words repeatedly in meaningful sentences and questions, and they know that plunking a two-year-old down in front of a television set for three hours at a time is more harmful than meaningful.”

Jim Trelease

Vocabulary is a strong indicator of reading success (Biemiller, 2003). It was established in the 1970s that children's declining reading comprehension compared to more able peers from age 8 onwards largely resulted from a lack of vocabulary knowledge (Becker, 1977), and that this was primarily caused by a lack of learning opportunities, not a lack of natural ability. Chall et al. (1990) also found that disadvantaged students showed declining reading comprehension as their narrow vocabulary limited what they could understand from texts.

We give all children the opportunities to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to each other, to listen carefully and to practice and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to provide a consistent approach to the support and teaching of children's early reading and writing. The objective is that through the consistent and effective implementation of this policy, all children will make significant progress.

The Statutory Curriculum

Communication and Language is a "prime" area of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Literacy – reading and writing – is one of the seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Speaking and listening are the foundations of reading and writing.

Personal, social and emotional development is a "prime" area of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Self-confidence and self-esteem develops when children's interests and abilities are recognised and planned for. They will be willing to 'have a go' when they are supported and encouraged through positive relationships with practitioners. This is enhanced with good communication and dialogue between the setting and families. At Lea Nursery we aim to create an environment where it is "safe" to make mistakes, to share thoughts and ideas, explore different options, and work collaboratively.

The **EYFS 2012** states that "*Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.*" Opportunities for early reading and writing should be "real" and available everywhere - notebooks, whiteboards and pens, shopping lists, print in the environment and so on.

Children need to see adults reading and writing in their everyday lives. They need adults to draw their attention to important print, for example in the street and in shops.

Effective Teaching of Literacy at Lea Nursery Includes:

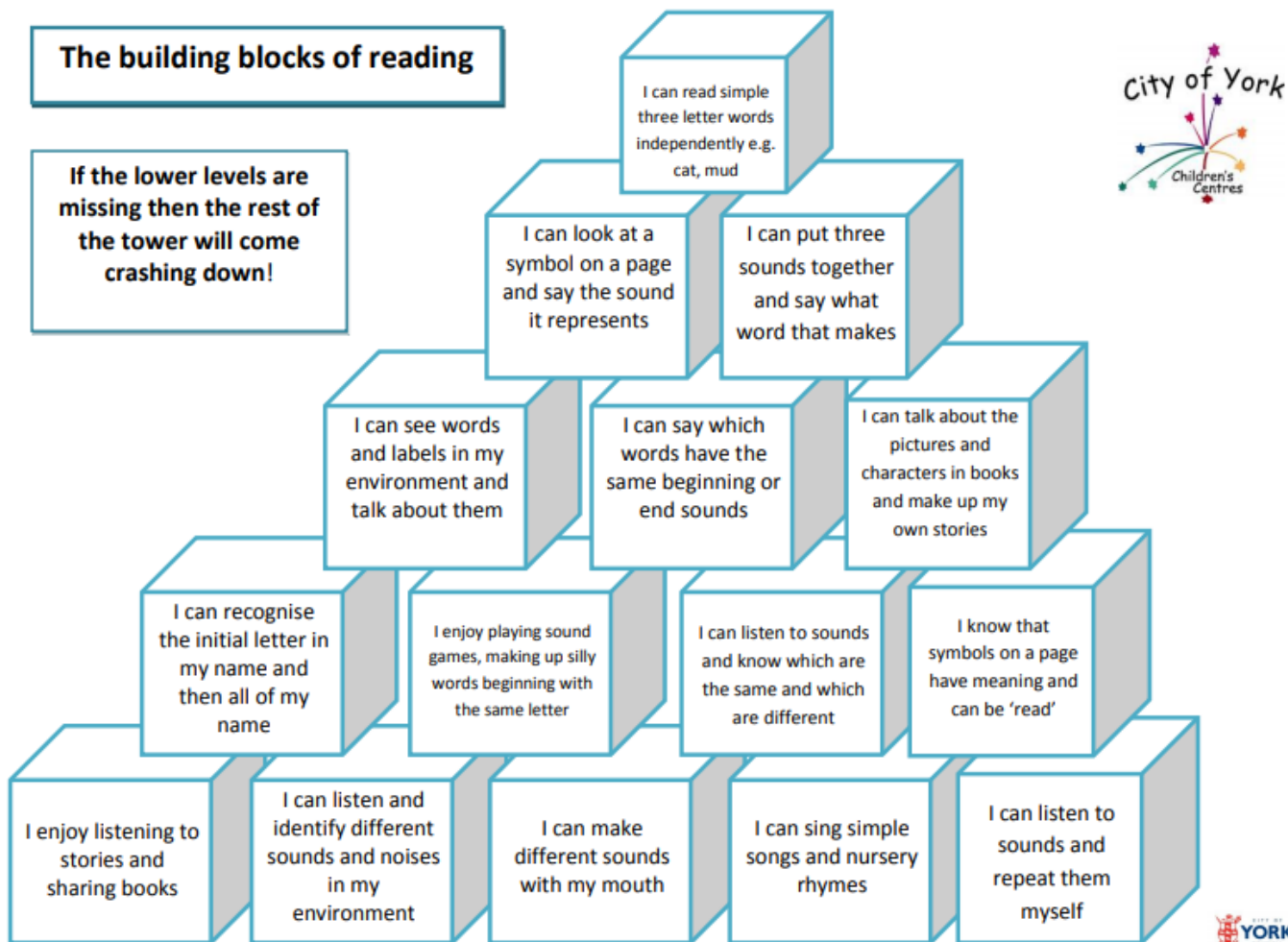
- Catering for different learning styles (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic).
- Participating in play where children are given the opportunities to imagine and to recreate experiences, and communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a range of expressive forms, such as body movement, art, dance and songs. As they play they will practise doing and saying things that they are not yet able to do. They can capture their actions in drawing, painting, thoughts and ideas, writing, or the use of a digital camera/video. Through this they learn that pictures and words are symbols for meaning.
- The use of literacy in every part of their curriculum. Children's learning is not compartmentalised and they require freedom to make connections between experiences and ideas that are related to any aspect of their life in nursery at home or in the wider environment.
- Staff valuing children's talk and encouraging them to communicate with each other and adults wherever possible.
- Observing and listening to children to better understand their interests and provide opportunities/resources for child-initiated learning.
- Direct teaching of early reading and writing, provided that all the activities above are freely available. It is important that the teaching matches the child's level of development, and that it is well-paced and engaging.
- Involving parents in understanding the importance of early literacy through parent workshops, newsletters and many more activities of this type.

Staff Will Support Early Reading And Writing By:

- Regularly monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the teaching of reading and writing.
- Complete ongoing analysis to identify any differences in attainment between groups.
- Maintaining children's Record of Achievement folders, making regular recorded observations and setting challenging and appropriate next steps.
- Evaluating regularly in order to plan effectively and follow children's interests.

Reading

Learning to read is a process that has its basis in listening to stories and sounds and sharing books and songs. The following illustrates the building blocks that need to be in place before children learn to read independently.



Children read everywhere!



What We Do...

- Provide time and relaxed opportunities for children to develop spoken language through sustained conversations between children and adults, both one-to-one and in small groups and between the children themselves. We allow children time to initiate conversations, respect their thinking time and silences, and help them develop the interaction.
- Plan an environment that is rich in signs, symbols, notices, numbers, words, rhymes, books, pictures, music and songs that take into account children's different interests, understandings, home backgrounds and cultures.
- Ensure that children have access to a wide range of high quality reading materials – books, poems, electronic books and other written materials – to ignite their interest. We allow plenty of time for children to browse and share these resources with adults and other children.
- Ensure that reading materials are accessible, owned and loved by children.
- Use core books to plan for children's interests.
- Value non-fiction books.
- Have enthusiastic staff who share their excitement of books with children.
- Have books available in all areas of the classroom; including children's own Record of Achievement folders.
- Staff showing children that what they say can be written and read.
- Staff acting as role models, sharing books with the children daily and demonstrating the use of language for reading and communicating.
- Having a group time each day where children are encouraged to listen and share rhymes, songs, poems, mimes and books.
- Provide displays with extensive labelling.
- Encourage children to register by finding their own name card each day as well as registering using different media such as iPads.
- Encourage participation in wide variety of games.
- Encouraging children to join in with repeated refrains of books and stories.
- When reading individually or in small groups of 2 or 3 with children who are experienced with books, focus on developing their breadth of knowledge - use dialogic approaches to explore the narrative in more depth or think aloud about a wider range of vocabulary for some of the key events in the story.
- Encourage children to retell familiar stories using props or picture cues, thinking about how they can get the listener's attention.
- Develop children's phonological awareness, particularly through rhyme and alliteration, and their knowledge of the alphabet.
- Provide story props and story sacks to enhance children's experience of books.
- Provide books that reflect cultural diversity, have different scripts and non-stereotypical images.
- Provide a range of reading materials (magazines, comics, recipes, catalogues, menus etc.) to stimulate children's interest and enthusiasm to act as readers.
- Extend stories through role play, book based games, puppets and by writing own versions of stories with children.
- Give a high priority to encouraging all children to be regular users of the library facilities or to use their local library.
- Provide opportunities for children to learn 'reading behaviours', for example, the recognition that print conveys meaning, the left to right directionality of English text, the purpose of punctuation.
- Ensure that children know how to use books and how to treat them with care.
- Help children develop an understanding of familiar stories and begin to develop confidence to behave as a reader.
- Encourage children to develop an understanding of the structure and language of stories.
- Help children develop familiarity with significant words such as their own name, friends/family name etc. (Moving on to developing a sight vocabulary of a range of words).
- Develop children's understanding the concept of a 'word' and that it is made up of component letters.
- Develop children's knowledge of letter shape and name.
- Provide activities to help develop a sense of rhythm.

Modelling Directionality

This is a skill which can be shown and taught to children who enjoy books and handle them with pleasure. It should be taught once the child is ready, when she or he:

- Shows interest in illustrations and print in books and print in the environment.
- Recognises familiar words and signs such as own name and advertising logos.
- Looks at books independently.
- Handles books carefully.
- Knows information can be relayed in the form of print.
- Holds books the correct way up and turns pages

Understanding the directionality of print also depends on the child understanding the concept of one written word standing for one spoken word, the mathematical understanding of one to one correspondence. You can tell when a child is ready, because:

- When counting a group of objects, the child will co-ordinate saying the number name, with taking the counters one by one.
- The child will understand that the number of counters is the same, however you organise them (e.g. laid out in short line, spread out in a longer line).

The following activities/experiences and opportunities can be used to teach children about the directionality of print:

- “I’m going to read it with my finger”, modelling left to right directionality of text.
- In the initial stages of focussing on this, select books/texts where the text is consistently laid out (e.g. if the text is always below the picture, then the “top left” of the text will always be in the same place).

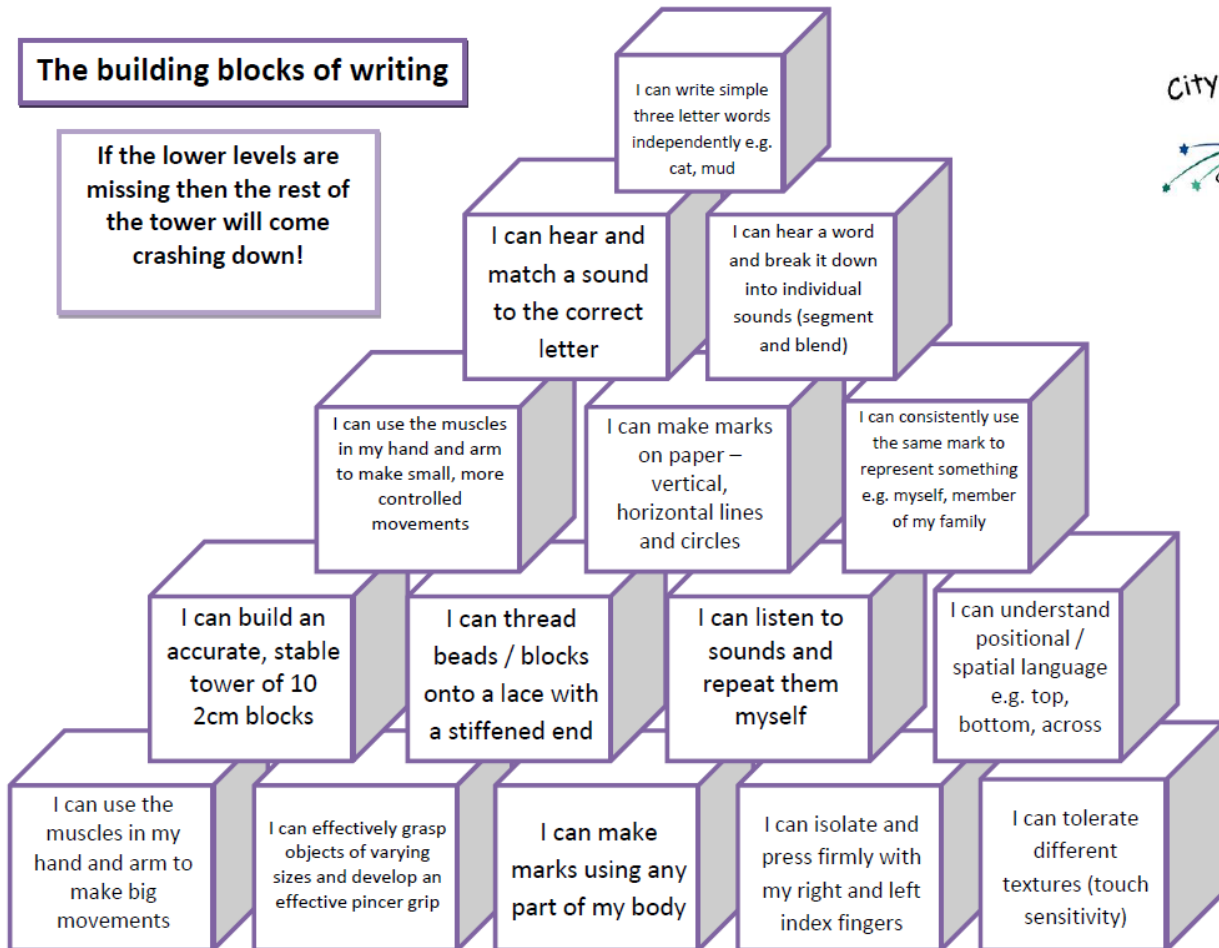
What Parents Can Do...

Parents can work in partnership with Lea Nursery staff by:

- Talking constantly to your child. Communication and language is the basis of learning to read.
- Making reading a positive and fun experience. Read with your child every day. In the beginning this might mean just looking at the pictures in the books and talking about them. Over time your child will start to enjoy the story more.
- Help your child find his/her name to self-register each day.
- Regularly borrowing library books with your child.
- Pointing out all of the print in the environment such as stop signs, shop names and road names.
- Playing games like “I spy”.
- Singing songs and rhymes with your child.

Writing

Children's early mark-making and writing do not develop in isolation. Physical development is an important part of this, and has been recognised as a prime area in the revised EYFS. The fine/gross motor physical skills that children need for mark-making and writing can be supported by a wide variety of interesting and challenging opportunities. The following illustrates the building blocks that need to be in place before children learn to write independently.



Children write everywhere!



Here are some examples of “real” writing:

- Aiza covered the whole paper and said, ‘I’m writing.’
- ‘What an interesting drawing,’ the practitioner said as she joined Ibrahim at the easel. ‘That’s my dad, and that’s our flat,’ Ibrahim replied. ‘And that’s me standing outside.’
- Samuel makes a mark on his dad’s birthday card and says, ‘That says Samuel.’
- Mariam is playing in the café and writes customers’ orders on her notepad. She tells the chef, ‘They want pizzas.’
- Hasnain writes, ‘I went to see fireworks and had to park in the road’ (I went to see fireworks and had to park in the road).
- Jim writes captions for the photographs in his album, with some help from the practitioner with words he did not know.

Writing and the Indoor Curriculum

The following represent examples of activities that develop children’s skill and control using muscles that are necessary to become writers.

- Messy and malleable play – i.e. corn-flour and water, sand, shaving foam provided in a flat-bottomed container, so children can feel the bottom and move their hands and fingers through the materials. These experiences appeal because of the rich, sensory element and may also link to children’s current interests, for example ‘making magic potions and spells’ using soap flakes, food colouring and water.
- A well-organised range of paper, card, pencils, crayons and felt-tips in each room, which children can find easily and use independently.
- Notebooks, address books, old diaries, magazines, forms to fill-in from the post office, in role-play areas together with telephones, walkie-talkies, and pretend microphones to encourage talk and conversations.
- Clipboards and pencils available near construction and block-play, so children can draw or record their constructions, write a list for the ‘builder’s yard’ etc.
- ICT – for example the whiteboard for drawing and mark-making, interactive stories, children’s names/first letter of their name written big.
- The arts also provide lots of possibilities for children to engage in mark-making – i.e. paint, brushes, runny glue, collage, clay and sculpture, together with small tools.
- Indoor displays of children’s writing and drawings with captions and print, and examples of children’s home languages as well as English.

Writing and the Outdoor Curriculum

Outdoors provides different but complementary opportunities for mark-making, particularly large scale. Simply moving an activity better done indoors to the outdoor environment is not effective. The outdoors, used for writing, should connect with the important aspect of supporting children’s physical development. The following represent examples of activities that develop children’s skill and control using muscles that are necessary to become writers.

- Puddles and paint brushes, sticks or leaves, small branches, bubbles in water.
- Mud and other malleable materials, coloured ice-cubes for painting on paper/fabric on a warm day etc.
- Paint on the ground or on large sheets of paper, either on the floor or upright against a wall or fence.
- Sand – children will mark-make with their hands, fingers and feet, and a variety of small tools, i.e. rakes, spades etc.
- Large paint-rollers, chalk and mops with water or paint, plant sprays.
- Pattern rubbing, taking images through paper of different textures and equipment outside.
- A well-resourced writing and mark-making area: large magnetic board with whiteboard pens, and magnetic letters, envelopes, paper for letter writing and a post-box. Children can be encouraged to access these resources to support their self-chosen play.
- A selection of small resource bags, with pencils, notebooks, torches etc. that link to children’s interests in superheroes/popular culture themes. This also makes an important link to children’s home cultures, TV programmes, comics and books.
- Throwing sponges at paper or fabric, footprints and handprints, paintbrushes tied to the end of bamboo poles.
- A large blackboard outdoors with chalks can be utilised for games or mark-making.

What we do...

To support children's early writing at Lea Nursery we will encourage children to:

- Enjoy exploring mark-making in a range of contexts.
- Provide opportunities for children's mark making to be regularly valued and celebrated.
- Know that writing conveys meaning and is a way of communicating.
- Respond to children's early attempts at writing.
- Use writing for different purposes and audiences.
- Begin to form recognisable letters particularly those of personal significance.
- Develop confidence to write their own name and other familiar names and words.
- Be aware that different spoken languages are represented in print and in a variety of different scripts.
- Use their knowledge of letter name/sound to make attempts to write words.

Staff will:

- Plan opportunities that enable the development of gross motor control of the arm, shoulder and developing fine motor skills.
- Provide opportunities to develop hand/eye co-ordination.
- Plan an environment that is rich in signs, symbols, numbers, and words.
- Provide a range of fun and meaningful opportunities for children to mark make/write (e.g. drawing, role-play, ball games etc.) in different areas of the learning environment
- Model writing for children.
- Ensure that a range of scripts and languages are included in 'writing' activities and in the classroom environment.
- Value children's mark-making and call it 'writing'
- Appreciate that young children may have anxieties about writing – particularly if they have not developed fine motor control and that we need to encourage them to want to write but should not force them to do so.
- Appreciate that young children may not have a dominant hand and should not be made to choose one.
- Children will take emotional cues from adults, so adults need to be on hand to show their interest and encourage and support children's attempts at mark-making and writing.
- Model writing for a purpose, how to hold a pen correctly and show interest and delight when a child shows them their writing. It may also provide the opportunity to ask some open questions 'I wonder what you've written?'
- Take opportunities to model reading print in the environment, drawing children's attention to print, car number plates, the first letter of a child's name and other things that begin with the same letter. They will suggest finding things out through using books, the library, writing a letter or using the internet etc.
- Children need positive adults with a 'can do' attitude who join-in sensitively with their play and support their early mark-making through real opportunities. For example: involving children in helping to write a sign to say 'please leave our building here' or planning a real shopping trip and writing 'a shopping list' for the fruit they are going to buy. They may be involved in sending a letter to someone special. Notepads for lists, paper and envelopes are then provided for children to develop these ideas in their play.
- Give 'high-status' to writing, by showing how they use writing themselves, provide displays to celebrate children's mark-making/emergent writing. Children can be involved in writing captions and comments with photographs.
- Children will enjoy spending time with adults who they know, supported by a key-person approach, to act as mark-making and writing 'champions'. For example an adult spending time in the writing area or role-play space and introducing something new to a theme the children are interested in.
- Include planning displays that invite interactions, so using captions creatively, for example 'when is your birthday?' or 'come and draw a picture here...?' and also scribing for children what they want to say. These might be simple comments or signs, or longer, imaginative stories that link to their role-play.
- Use special outings or visits to support mark-making, creating displays for example, a trip to the local park with parents and invite children and parents to think of and write their own captions.

- Be aware of and plan for a real audience to write for. For example using opportunities like mummy's birthday to write a special card. This will be supported by the close links between parents and staff.
- Plan and maintain an enticing and enabling environment, rich in print, with quality story books and nonfiction.
- Create home-made books together, with adults and children writing together.
- Encourage children to take part in shared writing and drawing experiences. Older children will act as role-models for younger children, as will older brothers and sisters.
- Recognise and acknowledge schema (particular pattern in their play.) For example, a child interested in things that go round and round, may enjoy mark-making using spinning tops, small toy cars (with the wheels) or using paint rollers or hoops through paint or water. They may also enjoy using jam-jar lids for printing or paint in the bottom of a salad spinner.
- Plan for role-play through small-world, puppets, and imaginative play. Adults who model 'pretend' – will support children's growing understanding that a wooden block can be a phone, that one thing stands for another. As children begin to play symbolically, they begin to understand that marks on paper are writing and have meaning.
- Provide photo prompts of children engaged in writing with simple captions. These can encourage and model how to use a particular resource, how to join in with mark-making in a particular area.
- Involve parents through sharing information about how children develop as writers, celebrating languages and planning displays, and planning workshops will support children's writing.
- Provide opportunities for free-flow writing with children and adults, with adults enjoying writing together with children.
- Observe, assess and plan mark-making opportunities that link to children's interests and stages of development. For example children who have not yet developed a pencil grip, but hold pencils in their whole hand and are passionate about Ben Ten may enjoy chunky crayons/shaving brushes with green and black paint on large sheets of paper outdoors.
- Encourage children to become aware of authors by visiting their local libraries and having visiting authors coming in to the classroom.

Developing Early Writing

Adults play an important part in children learning to write.

From emergent writing to the first stages of independent writing there are signs to look for... The stages are described in the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum as:

- Sometimes gives meaning to marks as they draw and paint.
- Ascribes meanings to marks that they see in different places.
- Gives meaning to marks they make as they draw, write and paint.
- Begins to break the flow of speech into words.
- Draws lines and circles using gross motor movements.
- Uses one-handed tools and equipment, e.g. makes snips in paper with child scissors.
- 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.

Adults should model writing by writing aloud. For example thinking aloud and saying the processes you are going through. Writing should be linked to a real context. For example it is probably best to avoid writing the days of the week or shared writing about the weather – because the words are generally long, and difficult.

A better example is if it's a child's birthday, you could have a pre-written frame saying "Happy Birthday to" and then think out loud: "What sound can I hear in Ruby's name? What letter will I need first? Etc."

When you need to write a note or a caption for an individual child - articulate the word very carefully. Make sure that the first sound can be heard and also other sounds within the word. Use phrases like "Can you hear?" - "What do you think?" - "How could we write?"

If you are planning a trip to the shop, in a small group (2 or 3 children) ask them to tell you what we need to buy, for the shopping list. Make sure they can see you write. Say the words out loud as you write them. In the shop, read the list with the children, pointing to the words. Point out words on the products as you buy them. This approach

enables children to see the practical uses of print, and enables them to see that you write left to right, top to bottom. If the list is then displayed, and if there are notebooks for writing shopping lists in role play, then children can extend and deepen what they have learnt in their play. The same approach can be used when making books with children, using photos or children's drawings. Nursery-made books can provide a stock of texts for children to enjoy.

Our teaching focus is always lower-case letters (with the exception of proper nouns e.g. children's names) though we recognise and celebrate whatever letters children write in nursery.

Teaching Name Writing

This takes place in the context of a continual focus on developing children's fine and large motor skills. It is important to move slowly – we cannot expect the child to learn writing their name all in one. Instead, use scaffolded approaches – e.g. spend time teaching the child how to form the first letter, then the adult writes out the rest of the name. Once this is secure, move to two letters, etc.

Support the child by modelling three ways of remembering:

1. Movement – the adult shows the movement (sand tray, big paint brushes, etc.). It may be appropriate to sensitively to hold a child's hand and guide him/her. Other children will prefer to copy. Paint brushes dipped in water used on a blackboard produce "disappearing letters" so that the child can practise more times.
2. Words – the adult describes the motion, e.g. "down and around"
3. Visual – the adult writes the letter, and may ask the child to write it

Other strategies:

- Write the child's name with magnetic letters, jumble them up and rearrange (use scaffolded approaches - some children will be helped by being "talked through" this, e.g. to choose the first letter they need, etc. As they become more autonomous, the scaffolding is reduced).
- Write big, ask the child to trace with finger, saying each letter as tracing.
- Use a paint brush and water to make a disappearing name.

What Parents Can Do...

Parents can work in partnership with Lea Nursery staff by:

- Ensuring your child has lots of opportunities to draw, write, cut, thread beads and use resources like play dough that encourage the development of fine motor control.
- Never forcing your child to write.
- Linking writing to real contexts such as making shopping lists or writing in a birthday card.
- Encourage and praise all drawing and any marks that your child makes even if they don't look perfect to you. As long as your child enjoys drawing and keeps practising he/she will improve.
- Teaching your child to write his/her name using a capital first letter but all of the other letters in lower case. (For example Ali not ALI or Omar not OMAR)

Phonics

The Importance of Speech Sounds

From a very early stage, children develop an awareness of the different sounds in our spoken language. They learn to use their voices to make contact with you and to let people know what they need and how they are feeling. As children grow older they begin to understand more about the sounds of our language and they are able to join in with rhymes, songs and stories by clapping, stamping and skipping. This is an important stage as the children's ears are learning to tune into all the different sounds around them. Playing with sounds and tuning children's ears into sounds will develop phonological awareness that is the ability to discriminate different sounds. Over time, this will help children develop an understanding that words are made up of different sounds (phonemes) and they will be able to hear the different sounds in a word. Gradually they will learn to match sounds to letters (graphemes). This is phonic knowledge. They use this knowledge when they are reading and writing.

Linking Sounds and Letters

Engaging young children in interesting and worthwhile pre-reading activities paves the way for the great majority to make a good start on systematic phonic work by the age of five (Rose report 2006) Research shows that children often falter in their development of reading when they need to discriminate and blend sounds.

At Lea Nursery, we believe it is essential that children develop the aural and visual skills as the building blocks that they will require to become successful readers and writers

At Lea Nursery we use the governments "Letters and Sounds" programme and mainly, although not exclusively phase 1.

Being able to listen and speak to others is critical to the success of Phase 1 Phonics. Parents can support in the following ways:

- Encourage children to listen to others and talk to each other.
- Model good listening (make eye contact, comment on what is said and ask questions when your child talks.)
- Provide good models of spoken language to help children enlarge their vocabulary and learn.

There are 7 Aspects of Phase 1 Phonics.

The following describes the 7 aspects of phase 1 phonics with examples of what adults can do to support children in developing an understanding of this aspect.

Aspect 1: General sound discrimination- environmental sounds (Tuning into sounds.)

- Adults asking "What's that noise?"
- Let children explore the sounds they can make by making noises themselves.
- Sound lotto games.
- Describe and find it: "This animal has horns, 4 legs and a tail."

Aspect 2: General sound discrimination- instrumental sounds

- Playing 'which instrument?'
- Asking children to copy each other (making loud and soft sounds) with two of the same instruments.
- Which instrument sound the most like a mouse? Which instrument sound the most like an elephant?
- Playing ring games like "Hot potato pass it on, pass it on, pass it on..."

Aspect 3: General sound discrimination- body percussion

- Follow the sound (clapping games.)
- Adults introduce vocabulary that helps them to discriminate between and contrast sounds. (Slow, fast, quiet, loud, long, short.)

Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme (recognition of a pattern of specific sounds.)

- Rhyming books.
- Learning songs and rhymes.
- Encourage children to listen to the beat.
- Clapping out syllables.
- Playing games like “I know a word that rhymes with cat, you can put it on your head. The word is...”

Aspect 5: Alliteration (recognition of individual sounds.)

- Playing “I spy games.”
- Play with words “David’s dangerous dinosaur”, “Naughty Nikki’s nose.”

Aspect 6: Voice sounds (sound discrimination and blending.)

- Making sounds with your voice. (Hiss like a snake, buzz like a bumble bee, be a clock etc.)
- Get children to add sounds to stories they know.

Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting.

- Playing games like “I spy with my little eye a d-o-g.”

We will also encourage children to start to:

- Recognise individual letter sounds, particularly those relating to their own name and other words that are important to them.
- Have an awareness of letters in the environment.
- Have experience of letter play and examples of letters/writing e.g. name cards available.

Phase 2 Phonics

The letter sounds are taught in the following order:

Set 1	s / a / t / p
Set 2	i / n / m / d
Set 3	g / o / c / k
Set 4	ck / e / u / r
Set 5	h / b / f, ff / l, ll / ss

There is more guidance on letters, sounds, and sounds in words in Letters and Sounds (Phase One Aspect 7 - oral blending and segmenting with children whilst sensitively modelling grapheme phoneme correspondence, as appropriate for the child’s development and understanding).

Guidance on sounds

It is important that sounds are taught correctly as this supports with both reading and writing. The following letters should be pronounced as illustrated:

‘a’ as in apple

'e' as in egg

'i' as in insect

'o' as in orange

'u' as in umbrella.

'c' and 'g' are both initially the soft sounds (cat and girl).

Some sounds are described as being "stretchy" (ssssss) and some are bouncy (d..d..d..d..d).

We try very hard not to add on 'uh' at the end of sounds so that "w" is "w" not "wuh". This helps with blending so that b-a-t is said with the correct sounds not "buh - a - tuh". All the letters are known by the sounds. So "m" is known as "mmm" not as "em".

References and Further Reading

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