

# Developing Early Writing Skills



Bracknell Forest  
Community Learning  
Team

Community Learning at  
Bracknell Open Learning Centre

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Bringing learning to life

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Bracknell Forest  
Family Learning  
Team

Working with families in the  
community in partnership with  
schools and children's centres



Anika Watson

Bracknell Forest  
Community Learning

Bracknell Forest Council

**Our Commitment**

We are committed to promoting learning for all and we welcome adult learners regardless of age, gender, race, disability, belief, sexual orientation, background or learning difficulty.

You have the right to feel safe where you learn, and your safety is extremely important to us. This leaflet gives you key information and various contact numbers to use if you, or someone you know, are at risk.

**1. Fire Regulations**

Please familiarise yourself with the health and safety procedures and fire exits for the venue before your session begins.

**On hearing the Fire alarm:**

- Leave the building by the nearest fire exit
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings
- Assemble at the appointed place where your tutor will take the register
- Remain at the assembly point until advised otherwise.

**2. Accident**

If you have an accident, injury or near miss while on the premises, please notify a member of staff. We will arrange any necessary assistance and ask you to complete an incident report form.

**3. Safeguarding**

Our staff undertake Safeguarding training and understand the importance of safeguarding children and adults at risk from abuse.

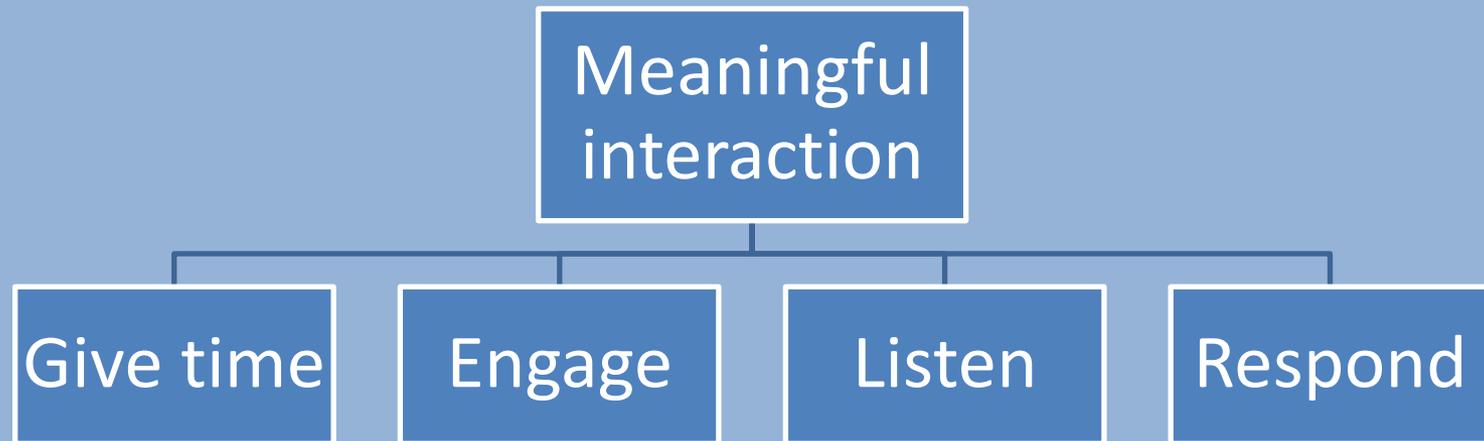
Abuse is when someone does something to another person that damages their quality of life or puts them at risk of harm. Abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, financial or discriminatory.

If you suspect that a child or adult is at risk of being abused or neglected, you should either:

- 1) Inform your tutor or another available member of staff
- 2) Telephone the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Children Team on 01344 354014/ Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Adults Team on 01344 351900
- 3) The council Out of Hours Team are available on 01344 766443 or Thames Valley Police on 101 (or 999 in an emergency)

You can also call these numbers if you are the person being abused.

“Nothing matters more than stopping, listening and responding positively to young children” – Julie Fisher, Improving Interactions in Early Years.



Interactions are profoundly important for supporting and extending children's learning. Regular meaningful interactions can help develop children's skills in thinking, reasoning, explaining, persuading and language development.

# Unique Child

Your child may  
do it differently,  
we embrace and  
welcome all  
differences.

“ No brain is the same; no brain is the best. Each brain finds its own special way”, psychiatrist Edward Hallowell.

# Outline for the session

Information about the curriculum,  
how writing is taught in school and  
how you can help at home

Activity with the children (approx  
45 mins, which is the length of a  
lesson)

The children return to class

Summary and evaluation

# Early Years Foundation Stage

- The early years foundation stage (EYFS) sets standards for the learning, development and care of your child from birth to 5 years old.
- All schools and Ofsted-registered early years providers must follow the EYFS, including childminders, preschools, nurseries and school Reception classes.
- Teachers/providers will continually monitor your child's progress using the EYFS Early Learning Goals – and use this information to help plan what your child needs to learn next.
- From September 2021 there will be a baseline assessment of all children within the first 6 weeks of starting school (Reception/FS2 classes) – takes about 15 minutes and covers literacy, language, communication and early maths. The process is verbal and supportive – not a test!!

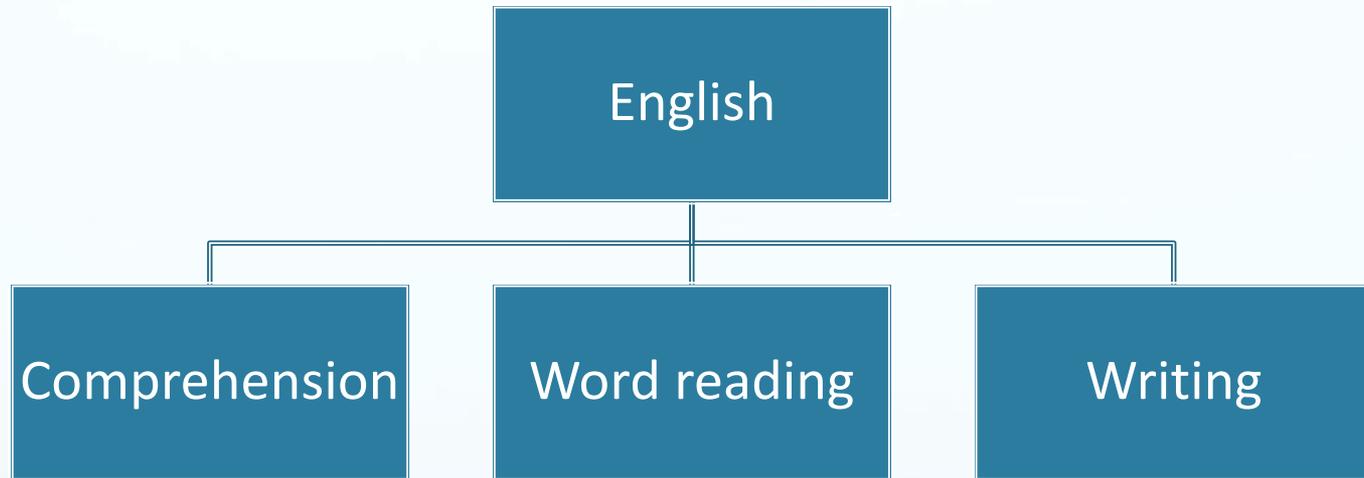
More EYFS info [here](#)

# Areas of Learning

Your child will mostly be taught through games and play. The areas of learning are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development
- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

# Early Learning Goals



# In this workshop we will look at:

- The challenge for early writers
- Gross and fine motor skills
- How young children's writing develops
- How to encourage your child to write for fun

# Why is writing so hard for my child?

Try this: fill in a form with the hand you don't normally use- using cursive script!



- The **muscles** in a child's hand need to be **strong** in order to grip the pencil and form letters well.
- It takes a **lot of practice** to **fix** the movement and direction of forming each letter shape in the **motor memory**.

- It requires a lot of concentration and good hand-eye coordination
- Their hand and arm may begin to ache quite quickly.



# Fine Motor Skills

- Fine motor skills are the coordination of small muscle movements
- Small finger and hand movements (holding a pencil, using scissors, doing up large buttons, using a fork)
- Involve good hand-eye coordination
- Muscle strength

# Developing Fine Motor Skills

- Playdough, scissors, lacing and threading, Lego/Duplo, Hama Beads, Tap - a - Shape, tweezers to pick up rice and sequins, sorting buttons and pennies.

For children who may have weak muscle tone in their hands: scrunch up balls of newspaper in one hand, roll balls of play dough and play with stress balls.



# Gross motor skills

- Gross motor skills are movements that involve large muscle groups and are generally more broad and energetic than fine motor movements.
- Children need to develop **good posture and balance**.
- Dance, football, cycling, gripping climbing frames and building with large scale construction kits help.



# A child's journey - from scribble to writing for a purpose



# Mark making



- Understanding that print carries meaning
- Making letter-like shapes
- Using the letters in their own name to write words
- Being sure of what they have written, even if adults cannot recognise it as writing
- Writing in a line, instead of randomly on the page



# The motivation to write

- **Role models:** children like to copy us! Let them see you writing lists, letters and cards. Involve them in writing too.



# Get them writing during their play.

- Think about what your child is interested in. How can you provide opportunities for them to write as they play?

(Give notebooks, envelopes and pencils to 'builders, school teachers and policemen' etc.!)



# How could these children be encouraged to mark make?



# More ideas...

- Practise correct letter formation doing **air writing** and **'writing' on hands** and backs. Can they guess what letter you are writing?
- Play with writing in **shaving foam** on the bath tiles, using **chunky chalk** outside or large **paint brushes** and **buckets of water**.
- Write with fingers in **sand** and **corn flour and water**.

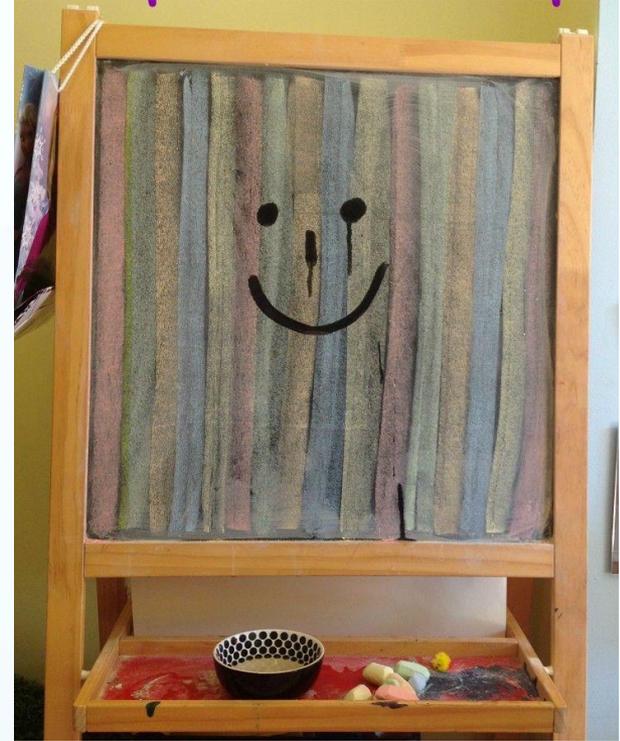


- Write **letters** and **post** them to family or friends. Children love to get letters back!
- Use **post-it notes** to leave little letters for them in their lunch box or on their pillow. They may want to write one for you too!\*

\*Always use lower case when you write for your child. (Except for capital letters for names etc.)



# Messy writing at home



# Let's try some activities



# Summary

- have a go at some of these activities at home
- develop fine motor skills
- encourage mark making and writing through play
- ensure resources are accessible to the children

# Useful websites

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grow-nups/its-not-just-scribbling-its-mark-making>

<http://therapyfunzone.net/blog/ot/fine-motor-skills/>

# Evaluation

Please fill in an evaluation form before you go. Thank you very much for your time 😊

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b01q0m3q/alphablocks-series-3-20-card>

 Bracknell Forest Council

**Family Learning Evaluation**

**Session Attended: 'Time to Read'      FS2/Reception**  
**Tutor: Anika Watson**

We hope you have enjoyed today's session - In order for us to monitor the quality of our courses, we would be grateful if you could spend a couple of minutes completing the sections below:

**Your name:** ..... **Date:** .....

**1. Glad you came?**

Did you find today's session informative and useful?      Yes/No

Did you enjoy your time in school today?      Yes/No

Did you learn something new? Please rate increase in knowledge/skills:

+0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7	+8	+9	+10
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Best bit? .....

Any challenges? .....

Is there anything we did not cover in the session that you think could have been included?  
.....

**2. Want to do more/something else? We run a variety of short courses - please circle any of interest (many are FREE)**

**Courses to support my child's learning:** Maths, Literacy, other.....

**Back to work courses:** working with children / be your own boss / retail / hospitality / customer service / food safety / health & safety / first aid

**Soft Skills:** Managing change / confidence building/ team building/ effective communication

**English / maths for adults - informal 'café style' sessions (brush up on skills/gain a qualification)**

**IT skills:** Word / Excel / Outlook / Power Point / IT for jobseekers

**Something else?** .....

**Phone number/email address:**.....

*Thank you for your time*