

Make your mark on life !

Children at Oxhill are given opportunities to respond to the world with marks and symbols, exploring experimenting and playing.

Discovering that one thing can stand for another, creating and experimenting with their own symbols and marks and recognising that others may use marks differently.

The children are given a variety of different mediums with which to write or mark-make. They are encouraged to make books, represent their life experiences, their family, to try to write for themselves. There is a specific mark-making area with the equipment such as tape, hole punch etc, and mark- making is also encouraged in other areas, such as role-play and the garden, so the children can write lists for shopping etc. Early writing is a good context for learning about letter names and sounds, often starting with the letters most important to the child in her or his name. Children are helped to learn to use a tripod grip through the use of very small pieces of chalk and crayon, and as they start to plan correct letter formation they are shown correct direction.

Emergent writing and book-making as a context for development and learning in the EYFS

Emergent writing and book-making helps children's **personal, social and emotional development** by providing opportunities for making choices, sustaining interest and involvement for increasing periods of time, and collaborating with others. Children often use drawing, mark-making and writing as a context to talk about their home and family, and books with photos can enhance children's sense of their own community, family, and personal history. As children become more able to form letters, especially to write their own names, they feel a sense of pride in achieving a complex skill.

Early writing develops their **communication, language and literacy** as they begin to use marks, circles and lines, letter-type shapes and finally correctly-formed letters to represent words and sounds. This can be supported in a range of contexts – inside and out, in the book-making area and by the blocks – and can often have a real purpose, like putting together a shopping list or putting up a sign to ask that a model should be kept, not tidied away. As children attempt to represent the sounds of words they say on paper, they are learning how letters represent sounds and can be taught the names and sounds of letters of the alphabet. When children choose to browse, share or show others books they have made, they are showing that they know that information can be recorded in print.

Emergent writing supports the development of children's **problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy** by providing opportunities to make marks to stand for numbers, and in time write some numbers correctly.

Children can also develop their **knowledge and understanding of the world**, using different tools to make marks and also using ICT for early writing and illustration.

Physical development is helped as children learn to use a range of tools to make marks, both on large and small scales, and gain increasing control and co-ordination through practice.

Children's **creative development** is supported as they experiment with making up symbols and explaining how these stand for other things, and experiment with shapes, colours and forms (e.g. enclosures, grids, etc) in their mark-making, using different media and types of paper. Children can talk about their books and emergent writing, explaining what they mean and reflecting on what they have done.