



# Sea Mills Primary School



## Writing at Home

At Sea Mills Primary we believe in working in partnership with our parents to provide the best possible care and education for our children.

Please talk to a member of staff if you would like ideas about working with your child at home or any information about what is taught in nursery or school.

Many of our children are learning a language other than English as their first language. Parents should continue to help them become confident at speaking their home language - they will then find it easier to learn to speak English.

## Writing at Home - how can I help?

The most important thing you can do is share your writing with your child. Children need to know that writing can be enjoyable and useful.

This may be:

- Filling in forms
- Writing a letter or a card
- Scribbling a quick note on the calendar
- Writing a shopping list



Talk about why you are writing: e.g. to order clothes from a catalogue, to wish someone happy birthday, to remind yourself you are going to the dentist, to remember what you need from the shops etc.

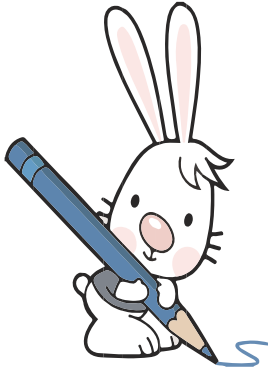
Most children naturally like to copy what grown-ups do and will enjoy to write their own lists and notes.

## What do I need?

Children do not need lots of expensive equipment. You may want to collect the following in a shoe box or plastic storage tub:

- Different pens, pencils, crayons, felt tips
- Lots of paper - plain, coloured, lined
- Junk mail, forms, old diaries
- Envelopes and used stamps
- Folded / stapled paper books for stories
- A magic slate
- Scissors, glue, tape





## Scribbles - Mark-making

It takes children quite a while to gain control over pencils and pens. They will need lots of practise until they can form lines, curves and squiggles that will eventually grow into drawings and writing. Activities such as painting, building blocks and playing with playdough are good exercises for little fingers as they develop the strength and co-ordination needed to write.

Remember - babies babble before they talk - children scribble before they write. Scribble is written babble!

## What about spelling?

Don't worry about spelling to start with as that will come in time. At first 'having a go' and enjoying writing are much more important.

## Letter formation

Again, don't worry about this to start with. Once your child is starting to have a go at writing their name, draw attention to the red dots on their name cards and gently encourage them to form the letters in their name.

We form letters in a particular way so that when children are older they can write comfortably and neatly. The handwriting mat shows how we teach letter formation at school. It will take lots of practice (and a few years!) to get the hang of every letter.



## Children need grown-ups who...

- Stick their writing on the fridge door, even if it looks like scribble!
- Listen to them and value their ideas
- Read them lots of stories
- Let them write their own messages on grandad's birthday card
- Look at their name card with them
- Don't hurry them!
- Talk to their teacher about how they are doing and encourage them to bring in their writing from home



## Children need grown-ups to say things like...

- "Wow! What a good writer you are!"
- "I'm writing a list of what we need from the supermarket."
- "Carly, your name starts with a lovely big curly C!"
- "Let's write a story."
- "Tell me about what you've done ..."



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