

## Be chatterboxes!

Children love to talk and it's so good for them too! In fact, talking **with** your child is one of the most powerful activities you can do. Take turns to speak and listen to each other. Use a wide range of vocabulary and try to use the new words you have discovered when reading together. Talk about everything: how your food tastes, experiences you can remember, what you can see in the world around you. All of this talk helps children to explore and understand language and can have a really positive impact on their writing.

## Be storytellers!

Watch this short video from Oxford Owl to learn about how to develop storytelling skills with your child.

<https://youtu.be/F8k93yIkBPA>



## Talking for Writing

Encourage your child to talk about, or say out loud, what they are going to write. This helps them to prepare for writing.

What are you going to write about?

Can you say the sentence aloud before you write it down?

Can you read aloud what you have written?

## Handwriting

In Year 1, your child will continue to master using a pencil and to form basic letter shapes. This includes:

- sitting correctly and using the right grip
- forming lowercase and capital letters correctly, starting each letter in the right place
- forming the digits 0–9
- leaving a clear finger space between words.



Sit at a desk



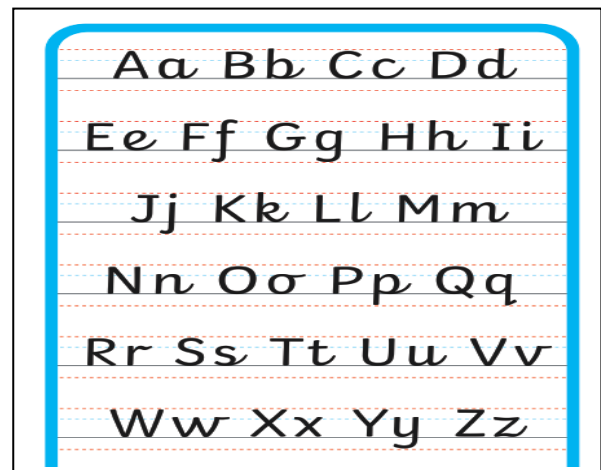
Put both feet on the floor



Left hand paper position



Right hand paper position



## How can I motivate my child to write?

- Make sure your child knows their work doesn't have to be perfect first time. They can go back and make improvements later.
- At this age, your child's hands can tire easily during writing. Give them regular breaks and ensure that the pen or pencil they are using is the right size for them.

## Writing checklist:

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Can your child use full stops, question marks and some exclamation marks to punctuate sentences?

### Are spellings phonetically plausible?

Not every word needs to be spelt correctly. 'Phonetically plausible' means that the word can be identified easily, even if it is not accurate. e.g. 'luv' instead of 'love'.

Can your child write a simple sentence and join in with another sentence, using the word 'and'?

Can your child's sentence be read by themselves and by others?

Can your child use capital letters to begin names/days of the week/places?

### Can your child spell these tricky words?

the, a, do, to, today, of, said, says, are, was, is, his, has, I, you, your, they, be, he, me, she, we, no, go, so, do, by, my, here, there, their, where, were, love, come, some, one, once, ask, friend, school, put, push, pull, full, house, our, have, like, little, what, when, out, Mr, Mrs, oh, called, looked, asked, people, could.

### Can your child tell you what these words are/mean?

Letter	one of the symbols of the alphabet
Capital letter/ Uppercase letter	one of the letters of the alphabet used at the beginning of a name or sentence
Lowercase letter	any letter that is not a capital letter
Singular	referring to one person or thing
Plural	more than one
Punctuation	the marks, such as, full stops, question marks, commas and exclamation marks, used in writing, to clarify meaning.

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# Other ways you can make a big difference

## Developing gross motor skills:

**Visit your local playground.** Playgrounds are all different and require different skills, so visit several in your area. While you are there, you can practice different skills such as climbing, balancing or teach your child how to swing by themselves. Learning to ride a bike without stabilisers is fabulous for gross motor skills.

**Play ball.** Using both small and large balls, you and your child can focus on developing and improving throwing, catching and kicking skills.



## Developing fine motor skills:

**Playdough.** Encourage your child to squeeze, stretch, pinch and roll “snakes” or “worms” with the play clay. Challenge your child to add small details.

**Cutting.** Encourage your child to cut out shapes from paper carefully.

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/kids/resources/ot-activityinformation-sheets/scissor-skills/>

**Good gross and fine motor skills help your child to write!**

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## Important Information

- Check if your child is holding their pencil correctly. Use the image below as a guide.



- Spellings go out every week Monday and we complete a spelling quiz each Friday. Look at our website for different spelling strategies to support your child- [www.st-finbars.co.uk/spelling-toolkit/](http://www.st-finbars.co.uk/spelling-toolkit/)
- Cold and Hot tasks - At the start of each topic, the children complete a cold assessment, which is an independent write, using the features they think are used in the genre of writing they will learn about. At the end of the topic, the children will complete a hot task to show what they have learnt throughout the topic.
- Assessments -The teacher will use independent pieces of writing to assess your child's writing throughout the year.