

Developing Fine motor skills



At the Whiteoak Academies

Why prioritise Physical Development?

- Being physically active not only strengthens muscles and develops the heart and lungs, it also supports the development of the brain.
- Physical development also develops shoulder stability, hand strength, and coordination – important for later movement skills including writing.
- Large muscle control develops before fine motor control, so children need lots of opportunities to make big movements with their arms before they can develop the fine motor control needed for holding a pencil.
- Writing requires a combination of fine motor control and hand eye coordination skills. These are developed both indoors and outdoors in our daily provision and PE sessions.

What does physical development look like at the Whiteoak Academies?

- Twice weekly PE sessions
- Daily funky finger activities
- Dough Disco
- Letter formation daily in phonic sessions
- Forest school sessions
- Access to outdoor gross motor provision daily
- Gross and fine motor interventions for those children who may need extra support



It is all about the Pivot!

Your child's individual 'pivot' will let you know their developmental stage in mark making. There is an intrinsic link between pivot and grip.



Palmar Grasp

Stage 1 – Shoulder Pivot



Incomplete tripods

Stage 2 – Elbow Pivot



Tripod Grip

Stage 3 – Wrist Pivot



Finger Football



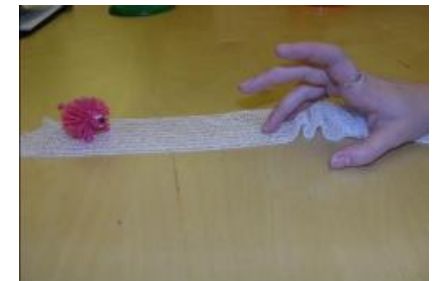
All you need is two pieces of paper and some sticky tape. Ask your child to roll up one piece of paper and then fold to create a goal. Then scrunch up the other piece of paper to create the football. Now let the game begin! When flicking the paper ball the child can use their index finger and thumb, or their middle finger & thumb. The footballs can be made smaller as fine motor skills improve



Crawling critters



For this you need a length of material /string/bandage and a pom pom/pretend bug. Below are images to show the two ways this activity can be used. The aim of the game is to catch the critter by pulling on the bandage. Keep an eye your child's wrist, it should be staying as still as possible. If the child is confident with their dominant hand, they can then try with their non-dominant hand. You can place small toys i.e. cars, animals etc. on the end of the fabric and get your child to treat it as a race, seeing how quickly they can gather in the fabric.



Pegs

When using pegs...

- encourage your child to keep their fingers strong (don't collapse at the joints if possible)
- encourage them to tuck their 3rd, 4th and 5th fingers into the palm of their hands (you can give them something to hold if they don't naturally do this - or you could try holding a few pegs together and moving them up to the thumb/index finger)
- try different types of pegs (if you have them) as they will have different resistance



Threading

Threading is a fantastic activity to develop fine motor control.

- Encourage your child to create a pasta necklace or tower using pasta/spaghetti and string. If they find this tricky at first, start with a wider type of pasta. Over time your child's hand eye co-ordination will develop further and they will be able to tackle different types of pasta!



DIY Dough!

Play dough is very simple to make and often, with things that are already hiding in your kitchen cupboards. Get your child involved as kneading the sticky dough works all three of their arm pivots as well as a sensory experience. The link below shares a very simple recipe.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/homemade-playdough/z4tdd6f>



Play dough



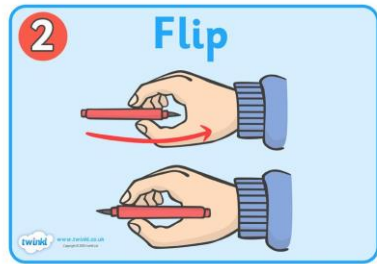
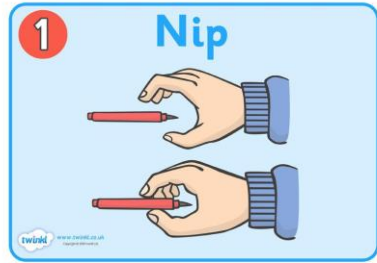
Top Tip!

When the play dough begins to harden roll into balls and use as a base for spaghetti. Challenge your child to thread as many cheerios as they can. This is a great challenge for their coordination.



When we are ready to hold a pencil

Try the flip trick



This is how we teach the children to pick up their pencil. It ensures they begin with the correct grip to support them with mark making and writing.



Top Tip!

If your child is finding pencil grip a little tricky, get them to hold a pom-pom/screwed up paper/piece of sponge under their little and ring finger. This will keep these fingers out of the way to support a tripod grip.

