

Today we celebrated European Day of Languages; we looked at the world as a globe and talked about how different languages are spoken around the world. We have learnt to say hello in several languages spoken by children in Nursery this year. We will continue to focus on activities to celebrate different languages throughout the year in different ways. The theme across the school this year is Traditional tales but if any children have a simple book in another language we could share this week, or a link to a favourite children's song in another language we would love to share it.

We did not manage to start portraits last week as we made a diversion forward to thoughts of Christmas cards. The children have created a design that we will send off to a company who will make an example card and a list of items that you might want to purchase with your child's design, for example mugs or keyrings. There is no obligation for you to buy. The sample card should be ready to send home to you by November at the latest. We have emphasised to the children Christmas is still a long time away!

The children have been increasingly interested in the changes of season and signs of Autumn. They have already started to enjoy finding acorns and conkers. So this week we hope to enjoy an Autumn Walk looking for signs of Autumn and gathering lots of leaves and seeds for our Autumn Tray. Next week we will also talk about Harvest and of course the fair!

We want to help the children to observe, make comments and ask questions about the world around them. For your information the box below shows learning outcomes the children are working towards connected with the world around them.

Best wishes



Ellie Green & Kelly McIlroy

Understanding the World

- Use all their senses in hands-on exploration of natural materials.
- Explore collections of materials with similar and/or different properties.
- Talk about what they see, using a wide vocabulary.
- Begin to make sense of their own life-story and family's history.
- Show interest in different occupations.
- Explore how things work.
- Plant seeds and care for growing plants.
- Understand the key features of the life cycle of a plant and an animal.
- Begin to understand the need to respect and care for the natural environment and all living things.
- Explore and talk about different forces they can feel
- Talk about the differences between materials and changes they notice.
- Continue to develop positive attitudes about the differences between people



Writing Names/Letters

When will my child be ready and how do I help them?



Increasingly children are starting to recognise their names. We will continue to work on this. Some children are starting to want to write their names. Below I have included some information below about what to expect from the children in terms of starting to learn to write their names.

There are many skills required for using a pencil efficiently. Before children can even hold a writing tool they need to develop the skills that are required. Children need to build their postural strength, so they can sit up at a desk. They need to play push/pull games or hang from monkey bars to develop shoulder and upper arm strength and stability, so they can hold their arm steady whilst they write. They also need to strengthen their wrists through painting on an easel or using a rolling pin, so they can stabilise their wrists whilst writing. Using trigger spray bottles or hole punches is a good way to develop hand grip strength so they have the strength to maintain the arch of the palm whilst writing. Using finger puppets or singing finger songs helps to encourage independent finger movement so that their fingers can move dynamically and independently in a tripod grasp. We can encourage use of pincer grip by threading small beads, using pegs or pinching play dough. It is important to continue doing these activities whilst a child is developing their pencil grip.

Quite a few of the children have shown they are able to hold a thick pencil or crayon fairly solidly in a writing position which is great. By three, many children will start to draw lines and start to master the up-and-down movement required to make a 'V' that is a little trickier and requires more dexterity than making a straight line. They also start making circular strokes, and some will be able to write a few letters — or squiggles that look a lot like letters. A few will start writing their first name — or a few letters of it — around or just past their third birthday. Many do not though, and that is okay. Do not feel pressured to push your child to learn to write; wait until they are really interested and excited about it. However, for those who are starting to show they are keen to write their names we will start to work on formation with them.

As pre-schoolers get more adept at using crayons and pencils, they'll start making more elaborate and accurate drawings. Most will be able to write their first name before they enter Reception, especially as we start to learn about letters and the sounds through the year. Sometime before their fifth birthday, most children can make horizontal lines, copy a circle and a square, and draw simple representations of people.

For children who are keen to write their names it is best to help them write in lower case apart from the initial letter, explaining the use of the capital along the lines of 'Your name is special, the first letter is a capital letter because it is the start of a special word'.

It is a learned skill to understand that there are upper and lowercase letters that go together, and that uppercase is only appropriate sometimes. This is something the children will learn as they learn more about letters.