

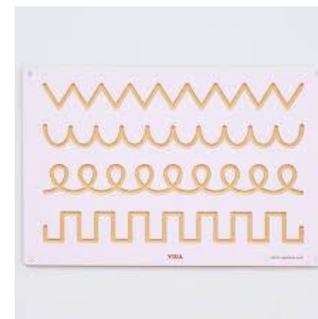
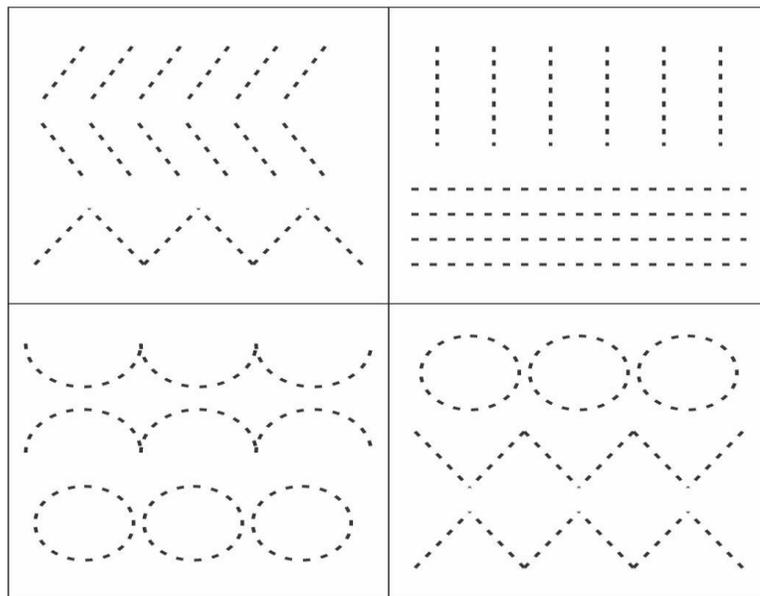
At around four years old, children begin to write their first words. Their own name is usually the first of all. This is partly because it has huge meaning for them and also because adults tend to point out and write children's names, especially at Hazeldene!

Provide lots of praise and encouragement as your child writes. From now on, encourage your child to 'sign' their drawings and add their name onto the bottom of cards. It is also very beneficial if you scribe for your child when they have drawn a picture. As they tell you about the items, you can label the nouns or add a short sentence, be sure to tell them each word as you write

You might also like to try mark making outdoors by getting out some chalks. Patios, walls, paths in the park and even pavements are fantastic for helping children to learn to control their movements and the chalk won't leave any permanent damage. Also, buckets of water and paintbrushes are great up against a fence.

For happy early mark-making:

- be ready to join in the drawing and painting by letting your child see you writing
- write notes and letters to your child or write letters to family members or friends you haven't seen for a while
- avoid 'teaching' and 'correcting' children.



Please send us photos of your children's mark making @HazeldeneFamC

- Children develop the hand skills needed to hold and control a pencil as they make everyday movements around the house rather than with paper and a pen.



Look out for other everyday opportunities such as putting on clothing, doing their own buttons, pairing socks pouring out drinks, drying cups and baking, as these also help children's hands to develop.



As well as everyday skills, children may also enjoy playing games that develop fine motor skills, such as jigsaws, building bricks or threading chunky beads onto laces.



Children learn by observing others. When was the last time your child saw you writing? More often than not we use technology, our mobile phones or our laptops. Children need to learn the importance of writing and drawing. Take time to sit down with your child and write a shopping list, ask for their input before placing your order online. Perhaps you could write a letter or send a postcard to a family member or a friend you haven't seen for a long time.