Mark Making Matters

"very young children who are given rich opportunities to explore making marks within an encouraging emotional environment will become confident and competent communicators, both orally and on paper..."

The National Strategies Early Years, (2008); Mark Making Matters: Young children making meaning in all areas of learning and development

Enabling Environments

Provide a range of interesting mark making surfaces indoors and outdoors

• a variety of sizes/colour/shape of card/paper

• plastic lids

• black/whiteboards (fixed and portable)

• transparent sheets/perpex

· tracing paper

• a variety of types of paper(lined/squared/dotted/plain)

textured paper

- fabric

- shower curtains

- large rolls of paper

- wrapping paper

- a range of different heights and angles

Provide a range of interesting mark making tools (think outside the box)

thick/thin pencils

• thick/thin crayons

· coloured pencils/pens

• highlighters

oil pastels

chalk

• candels

sponges/rollers figurines)

- lolly sticks

- a variety of brushes of different sizes/coarseness

- cotton buds/reels

- natural materials (sticks, leaves, sprigs, pine cones)

- feathers

- old cards

• variety of paint brushes and paints (poster/water/powder)- kitchen utensils (mashers, chopsticks, cookie cutter)

- cars/trucks

- small world characters (dinosaurs, animals,

Additional resources to promote mark making and writing across the playroom

a variety of notebooks/pads

assortment of envelopes/stamps

• diaries/calendars/address books

· an assortment of greeting cards

postcards

invitations

• hole punch

• staplers/paper clips

scissors

string/wool/ribbon

- labels/post-its

-clipboards

- glues sticks

- sellotape/masking tape

- folders

- rulers

- post box

- stampers

- clay tools

- examples of environmental print *

^{*} Provide materials/examples which reflect a cultural spread, so that children see symbols and marks with which they are familiar, e.g. Chinese script on a shopping bag.

Promoting Mark Making Throughout Your Playroom



- Paper large rolls and sheets to support planning and designing
- Range of pens and pencil
- Clipboards
- Plans and diagrams
- Noticeboard
- DIY catalogues
- Order forms
- Notebooks



- Variety of substances - cornflour, nonallergenic shaving foam, crazy soap, dough, clay
- A range of cutting tools
- A range of natural materials for impriniting - stones, sticks, leaves, pine cones, pasta



□Twigs

- ☐Range of plastic grouting tools Lolly sticks
- \square Feathers
- ☐Buckets of water and a range of tools, including paint-brushes, rollers, artists' brushes, sponges and dish mops
- □Colouring or glitter to add to water
- □Collections of containers for squirting or pouring
- ☐Garden hose and clear plastic tubing



- □Pots of pens and pencils
- □Diary or calendar
- **□**Calculator
- □Notebook
- ☐Sticky notes and sticky labels
- □Forms and junk mail
- □Variety of paper, envelopes, postcards and greetings cards
- □Noticeboard
- □Phones mobile and landline and phone book/address book

Home corner/Role play



- □Overhead projector variety of transparent, translucent and opaque objects in a variety of colours; transparency paper and overhead or drywipe pens
- □Photographs speech bubbles, think bubbles, captions, living books, speaking books
- □iPad apps



- ☐Buckets of water and a range of tools (paint brushes, rollers, sponges, mops)
- □Chunky chalks
- ☐Blackboards and whiteboards
- □Large rolls of paper
- ☐Shower curtains/fabric sheet
- □Clipboards
- □Portable writing toolkit filled with resources such as sticky notes, masking tape, selection of pens and pencils, selection of paper and envelopes
- ☐Mud kitchen utensils
- □Natural materials stones, sticks, pine cones etc
- □ Maps
- □Spray painting water spray

The Responsive Adult: Our role in promoting children's mark making

The adult needs to...

From birth to

- Encourage the child to explore.
- · Give the child lots of opportunities to develop their large muscle control including crawling, rolling, wriggling.
- Join in with the child's activity model movements and actions.
- Show an interest in the random marks and patterns the child makes.
- Provide a range of safe toys that can be gripped easily by small hands.

From approx. 8 to 20 months

- •Show interest in the child's mark making, supported by appreciative and encouraging comments.
- Talk about the movements and patterns they make.
- Encourage large and fine motor movements through different activities

From 1approx. 6 to 26 months

- Give opportunities for the child to see adults writing.
- Provide a range of mark making materials and talk about the marks made.
- Play with the child, imitate his/her marks and model other ways of making marks.
- Provide a range of other fine manipulative activities.

From approx. 22 to

- •Point out the child's name, and draw attention to other print in the environment.
- Show interest in the child's mark making, supported by appreciative and encouraging comments,
- \bullet Play with the child, imitating his/her marks and model other ways of making marks

36 months

- Model writing and read it back to the child.
- Show how to use various writing materials.
- Talk together about what the child and adult have drawn/written.
- Let the child see adults writing for a particular purpose, such as memos, labels, messages and so on.
- Show interest in all child's mark making attempts. for example, make a point of reading instructions for games, construction toys, recipes and so on.
- Demonstrate writing for a purpose through letters, shopping lists, labels for displays and so on.
- Draw the child's attention to his/her name on displays, registers or groups and encourage him/her to write mark/name on paintings.
 Encourage a comfortable and effective writing grip.
 - Talk about the difference between pictures and text

From approx. 30 -

50 months

- Draw attention to the text when reading a story, demonstrating left to right and top to bottom.
- Talk about the way print works, for example word then a space.
- Draw attention to the names of other children.
- \bullet Encourage a comfortable and effective writing grip.
- Encourage correct letter formation.
- Encourage the child to talk about his/her writing and read it to an adult.
- In shared reading, draw the child's attention to features of text such as direction and repeated words or refrains; big books are particularly useful for this.
- dentify letters of the child's name in shared reading and continue to value the child's attempts to write his/her own name; compare these with their name card, identifying similarities and differences.
- Model writing for different purposes and read back where appropriate.
- Build up sentences of individual words with a group of children, or individual child.
- Help the child to make lists of familiar words.
- Encourage phonetically plausible attempts at writing words.

From approx. 60+

From approx. 40 – 60 months

- Have alphabet strips available.
- Provide a small table word bank.

 I lead to a small line with the work also grown to a sinfa you.
- Use modelling with the whole group to reinforce letter formation.
- Identify individual and small words within words.
- Help children write down sounds in the order they hear them, to support phoneme grapheme correspondence.
- Offer opportunities to write for different purposes.
- Provide message boards, post boxes and pigeonholes and model how to use them.