



Dear Parent/Carer,

These activities will help you to support your child's fine motor development through play based activities at home.

They will:

- develop strength
- improve dexterity
- show you some wrist exercises
- give you ideas how to develop writing based skills without a pencil
- make your child more aware of their fingers



# Developing Strength

## Baking activities



*Squashing and squeezing can give little hands a good workout!*

- Squeeze cookie dough into shapes and roll it out again. Use both hands together to help develop using each side of the body at the same time. (bilateral coordination)
- A homemade icing bag being squeezed to decorate the cookies will develop hand strength. Knot a small plastic bag and snip a small piece off the corner – the smaller the snip, the harder your child needs to squeeze.

## Crumpling paper with both hands



*This is a great activity to help children increase their hand strength.*

***Using both hands together in this activity also boosts bilateral coordination skills.***

- Crumple up paper and use it for target practice. Have a pretend snowball fight! Count how many you can get in the bin.
- Sit alongside a rope as shown and throw over the line helps your child learn how to cross the midline of their body.
- Cut out some shapes and then crumple the scrap paper into a tight ball before aiming and throwing it in the bin.





# Increasing Dexterity 1

## Walking the Ball



*Using a large plastic ball like the one in the photo makes this easier, but smaller tennis balls or pet balls work just as well.*

- Using the fingers, “walk” the ball up one leg, across the tummy and down the other leg. Walking the ball DOWN is much harder than walking up!

## Talking Fingers (Moving the Tripod Fingers Together)



*Try to tuck the little finger and ring finger away. Put a little piece of paper under those fingers to train them to stay there.*

- Encourage your child to open and close the tripod fingers a few times to get the hang of the movement needed.
- Join in with your child and make your fingers “talk” to each other like puppets!

## Clothes Peg Activities



*Draw a single dot on one side of the clothes peg for the thumb, and two dots on the other side for the fingers.*

- Use the clothes pegs to pick up and move small objects.
- Make “cages” for zoo animals and dinosaurs with clothes pegs on an egg-box lid. Use a clothes peg to pick up pieces of crumpled paper to “feed” his animals.



## Increasing Dexterity 2

### Sponge Painting



*Messy, but fun!*

- Use small pieces of sponge. Hold the sponge with the tripod fingers and splat paint all over the paper.

### Spray bottles and squirt toys



*Perfect for in the garden or at bath time*

- Use a small spray bottle to water the garden or spray the windows with the whole hand can. Use your tripod fingers makes the job a little trickier!
- See how far you can squirt the water!

### Tripod walking ball



*Great activity to get a lazy thumb to start working!*

- Try walking the ball up one leg, across the tummy and down the other **only using the tripod fingers**. This one is a real challenge.





# Wrist Exercises

## Finger Skittles



### How to get ready to play

- Practice “flicking” the middle finger out, like in the first picture.
- Rest the wrist on the floor, with the ball of scrunched up paper as close to the middle finger as possible. *Don't rest all of the arm, just the wrist.*

### Time to play!



- 3,2,1 flick! Aim paper balls at a goal or bowl.
- Flick ping pong balls at a pile of leaves
- Flick a plastic ball at stacked number cans.

*This is a tiring position for little hands with tight muscles, so don't play this game for too long.*



## Developing Writing Based Skills (without a pencil)

### Graffiti!



*Graffiti appeals to most children!*

- Use fat pavement chalk on a concrete wall or a pavement and scrub it off with a scrubbing brush and water on a warm day.

### Mirror Writing



*Whiteboard markers usually wipe off mirrors easily with a **DRY** cloth but test your mirror first!*

- Mirror, mirror on the wall...Use a whiteboard marker to draw on a mirror. A whiteboard marker is fatter than a pencil and easier to control.

### Sand Writing



*Using a stick to write in the sand is appealing to most children!*

You could write in the sandpit at the park outside, or use a small tray of sand indoors.

### Shaving Cream



*Ok, this one is really messy, but loads of fun.  
Put your child in the shower cubicle with a handful of shaving cream to smear and write in.*

**Caution:** shaving cream can irritate children's skin, so use one for sensitive skin and don't let your kids get it all over their bodies.





## Touch Perception

Touch perception activities are designed to boost your child's awareness, of what the fingers are doing. They need to be able to identify objects using only touch, no sight.

They may not be able to feel exactly what their fingers are doing, and as a result may be clumsy with their hands.

You can use a variety of objects from around the home:



### How to Play:

Put one set of the toys/shapes in the bag, and place the other set on the table for the child to look at.

**Level 1:** The child puts both hands in the bag, picks up an object it, feels it, Identifies it and pulls it out to check only AFTER identifying it.

If correct, the child can “keep” it, but if incorrect, you get to “keep” it.

The winner is the one with the most at the end!

*If your child struggles, you can help by giving clues to ‘feel’ for:*

*Is it round like a ball? Has it got 4 legs? Has it got a long tail or a short tail?*

**Level 2:** Ask the child to find a specific object (eg find the fork, find the hippo). This is usually much harder as the child has to discard objects that it cannot be based on what they touch. Deciding on the one that feels right is really tricky!

If you would like some support playing these games or just want to talk some more about why we play these games please see Mrs Ganner who works in Reception when we return to school.

If you enjoy these games and would like to send us photos of your child playing them please email them to

[transition@ravensbury.manchester.sch.uk](mailto:transition@ravensbury.manchester.sch.uk)