Early Years Drawing Club Writing Progression

Intent

Drawing Club provides children with meaningful opportunities to develop communication, language, imagination and early writing through high-quality texts, storytelling and play. Through drawing, talk and writing, children progressively move from giving meaning to marks to writing simple phrases and sentences independently.

This progression is aligned with:

- Statutory EYFS Framework
- Development Matters
- DfE Writing Framework: Writing in the Early Years
- Our systematic synthetic phonics programme

Drawing Club sits within our wider writing curriculum and supports children to develop both the compositional and transcriptional skills required to become successful writers.

Transcription Within Drawing Club

The DfE Writing Framework identifies two key aspects of early writing development:

- **Composition**: generating ideas and communicating meaning.
- **Transcription**: handwriting, letter formation, spelling and recording sounds in writing.

Drawing Club provides meaningful opportunities for children to apply their developing transcription skills in purposeful contexts. Alongside Drawing Club sessions, children are explicitly taught letter formation, handwriting and phonics through a structured programme.

Children are encouraged to:

- Use their growing phonic knowledge when writing.
- Segment words and record sounds independently.
- Apply taught letter formation.
- Develop increasing fluency, accuracy and stamina.
- Communicate their ideas through increasingly independent writing.

Progression of Writing Development

Stage 1: Early Marks and Meaning Making

What children may do

- Make marks, patterns and drawings linked to stories, characters and experiences.
- Give meaning to the marks they make.
- Talk about their drawings and explain their ideas.
- Use drawing as a way of communicating stories, experiences and imagination.

Adult support

- Model rich vocabulary linked to texts and experiences.
- Scribe children's ideas.
- Encourage storytelling through talk and drawing.
- Value all marks as purposeful communication.

EYFS links

- Gives meaning to the marks they make.
- Uses talk to organise and share ideas.
- Develops communication and language through storytelling and discussion.

Stage 2: Emergent Symbols and Letter Use

What children may do

- Use recognisable letters alongside drawings.
- Include letters from their own name.
- Begin to represent initial sounds in words.
- Experiment with writing for different purposes within play.
- Understand that print carries meaning.

Adult support

- Model sound-letter links.
- Encourage children to identify initial sounds.

- Support oral language linked to stories and imaginative play.
- Encourage children to explain the meaning of their marks and writing.

EYFS links

- Begins to understand that symbols and print carry meaning.
- Shows increasing awareness of letters and sounds.
- Begins to make links between spoken and written language.

Stage 3: Phonetic Writing

What children may do

- Use phonic knowledge to record sounds they can hear in words.
- Orally segment simple words before writing.
- Write labels, names and simple words linked to Drawing Club experiences.
- Produce phonetically plausible spellings.
- Begin to form recognisable letters correctly.

Examples

- drgn (dragon)
- spel (spell)
- bst (beast)

Adult support

- Model oral segmenting.
- Encourage children to use known graphemes.
- Reinforce correct letter formation.
- Celebrate independent attempts at writing.

EYFS links

- Applies growing phonic knowledge in writing.
- Begins to write words by identifying and recording sounds.
- Uses known letters to represent sounds.

Stage 4: Composition of Simple Sentences

What children may do

- Orally rehearse a sentence before writing.
- Write simple sentences linked to stories and imaginative ideas.
- Use phonic knowledge to spell simple words.
- Begin to use finger spaces.
- Begin to use capital letters and full stops with support.
- Demonstrate increasing control of letter formation and spacing.

Examples

- The dragon is big.
- I made a magic spell.
- The monster lives in a cave.

Adult support

- Scaffold oral rehearsal.
- Model sentence structure.
- Encourage rereading of writing.
- Support vocabulary development.
- Reinforce transcription skills such as handwriting and spacing.

EYFS links

- Composes a sentence orally before writing it.
- Uses developing phonic knowledge to record ideas.
- Demonstrates increased understanding of the purpose of writing.

Stage 5: Independent Writing (Towards the ELG)

What children may do

- Write independently during Drawing Club sessions.
- Sustain writing beyond a single word or sentence.
- Use known tricky words.

- Apply phonics knowledge with increasing accuracy.
- Apply taught letter formation with increasing consistency.
- Write captions, messages, descriptions and short narratives linked to their ideas.
- Show increasing confidence, stamina and independence as writers.

Adult support

- Promote independence.
- Extend vocabulary and sentence structure.
- Encourage reflection and improvement.
- Support children in applying phonics, handwriting and spelling knowledge.

EYFS links

- Uses phonic knowledge to write words and simple sentences.
- Demonstrates increasing independence and fluency.
- Communicates meaning effectively through writing.

End of Reception Expectation (Writing ELG)

By the end of Reception, children working at the expected level will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

How Drawing Club Supports Writing

Drawing Club helps children to:

- Develop a rich and varied vocabulary.
- Build imagination, creativity and storytelling skills.
- Rehearse language orally before writing.
- Apply phonics learning in meaningful contexts.
- Develop confidence, stamina and motivation as writers.

- Understand that writing has purpose, meaning and audience.
- Make strong links between speaking, drawing, reading and writing.

Children move through these stages at different rates. Progression is not always linear and children may demonstrate characteristics from more than one stage as they develop knowledge, confidence and independence as writers. This progression is therefore used as a guide to support assessment, planning and provision rather than as a fixed set of age-related expectations.