

Activities to develop Fine Motor Control – Key Stage 1

Good Fine Motor Control (FMC) is essential for the development of a number of life skills, including handwriting. In order to develop good FMC, children need to develop and strengthen all the muscles in their hands and fingers.

There are a number of simple activities children can do in order to help these muscles develop, some of which are listed below – all are easy and involve items that will be around the house in most situations.

Some activities you could try are:

Use an old egg box and some tweezers to move items (Cheerios, pasta, pomp poms, small toys etc.) from a plate into the egg box sections.



Squeezing clothes pegs – put as many clothes pegs as you can onto a hanger, or help hang the washing out on the dryer or washing line!



Doing up your own, or younger siblings, buttons and zips.



Scissors – when used correctly, scissors are excellent for developing the tripod grip (the correct way to hold a pen or pencil, using the thumb and 2 fingers). You could make collages with pictures cut out from old magazines, newspapers, junk mail leaflets etc. I am also including some cutting skills sheets you may want to try.



If you have paint brushes at home (decorating ones are good too), experiment with painting using different sized brushes. If you have a garden, just water on a fence can be great for creating temporary pictures and is brilliant for muscle development.



Tracing pictures, dot to dots, colouring sheets and using stencils are all also great for developing FMC. Some are included, which you may want to use.



Throwing and catching balls of different sizes – start big and gradually get smaller. Set a challenge – can you throw and catch 10/20 times without dropping? When you can, move to a smaller ball! Exercises can be great for muscle development to help FMC, you could try vertical press ups against a wall or crab walking.



Lego is fantastic! You can build using your imagination – set a challenge to build using a certain number of bricks, only a certain size of bricks, to make a shelter for a favourite film / book character. You could also work on instruction following, by building your own model (which your child cannot see) and giving instructions – *Put a small blue piece on top of the flat green piece* etc. At the end, see if their model looks like yours!



Turn a colander upside down and post raw spaghetti or pipe cleaners if you have them through the holes. Can you put a piece in each hole and not break any?



Put a ball of Blu-Tac / play dough on the table and stick a piece of spaghetti into it. If you have a die, roll it, and put that many Cheerios onto the spaghetti. Why not turn it into a game and have a stick of spaghetti each? Who can have the most Cheerios on their piece after 1 minute?



If you have some, try making a chain of paper clips by linking them together – this is a tricky one!



Put elastic bands or hair bobbles around an empty kitchen towel tube one at a time. When they are all on, roll them down the tube and take them off from the other end.



If you have threading beads, these are fantastic for hand muscle development – they're not just an activity for pre-schoolers!



If you have stickers, use them to make pictures. Make sure children are peeling the stickers themselves, this is great for FMC development.

