

Writing and Drawing

Pressure

Some children struggle to recognise if they are holding their pencil too tighter or loosely or if they are using too much or too little force on pencil to the paper.

- **Very dark writing – hard pencil pressure**
 - Sometimes some children use too much pressure - this provides them with additional sensory feedback as to how the pencil is moving on the paper
 - Encourage a hand warm up activity prior to writing. This increases sensory awareness of the hands (*see warm up activities*)
 - Encourage “ghost writing” by writing a word very lightly on the paper and then erasing it without leaving marks
 - Place a piece of carbon paper underneath their work and encourage them that you do not want the writing to come through onto the underlying paper. The child may need to practise this first with writing shapes and then with letters

- **Very light writing – soft pencil pressure.**
 - These children typically do not have sufficient finger dexterity or may have a weak grasp. They may also have reduced sensory awareness of their hands
 - Encourage a hand warm up activity prior to writing. This increases sensory awareness of the hands (*see warm up activities*)
 - To stop the pencil or pen from slipping, start with using triangular pencils, larger pencils or crayons and pencil grips over the pencil. You could wrap a rubber band around the pencil about one inch from the point/nib. The child can place their fingers on the rubber band to reduce slippage
 - Encourage them to rub a crayon hard on large paper to cover a picture
 - Activities that develop overall upper limb and shoulder strength are also important. These activities could include: - Weight bearing activities on the arms, such as wheelbarrow walking, animal walks, climbing up a climbing frame or pushing activities (keep the arms straight) - writing on a vertical surface, such as the chalkboard, whiteboard or wall for part of the day