



**Returning to
my Childminder,
Nursery or
School**

**Reading &
Mark-making**

Reading, being read to, and sharing books helps to build a child's vocabulary and understanding of the world. Research shows children with good vocabulary and communication skills make friends more easily, have fewer behavioural issues and are more likely to do well academically. At your child's childminder, school or nursery children will share books every day and have lots of opportunities to practice mark-making and early writing skills, but what you do at home has an enormous impact too. Talking to and reading with your child each day can make all the difference. These literacy skills can be supported through mark-making and early writing opportunities.

How you can help

- Encourage your child to recognise letters, sounds and words in their environments, e.g. signs, packaging, etc
- Build 'sharing' books or 'mark making' opportunities into your daily routine. Encourage short sharp bursts of these activities to sustain their involvement and interest. Reading and mark making can take a lot of mental energy and taking breaks gives children a chance to slowly build the mental stamina they need, so that soon they will be able to read and write for longer stretches of time.
- Follow your child's interest and give them a choice of the books they would like to read and the mark making they would like to do. It's OK for them to read the same book/comic/magazine/catalogue over and over again. Repetition will help younger children learn words and understand how language is structured. Following their interests is also the best way to keep them engaged and make reading fun, which will make them more likely to want to read more widely in future.
- Encourage them to 'write for a purpose' as this will make them more motivated and engaged. You could encourage them to write a shopping list or write a letter to family. Encourage writing in their play, e.g. write labels for a shop or signs for a car wash. It doesn't matter if letters or spellings are wrong, it's more important that they 'have a go' at writing and understand that it has meaning.