



**Headmistress: Mrs Z. Sylvester**

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Dear Parents

### **Fine Motor Skills**

Fine motor skills are those that involve a refined use of the small muscles which control the hand, fingers and thumb. With the development of these skills, a child is able to complete important tasks such as writing, feeding themselves, buttoning and zipping. These abilities gradually develop through experience and exposure to a variety of toys, materials and even foods.

Fine motor skill development is important. Little hands need to develop dexterity and strength. As parents, you can help this process by encouraging children to play, explore and interact with a variety of items. Toys, clothing fasteners, safe scissors and play dough all facilitate fine motor development. Even doing age appropriate tasks in the kitchen are great ways to help build fine motor skills.

Play activities and manipulation skills will actually help your child to hold and use a pencil or felt tip pen. The ability to do so is the first step in learning to colour, draw and ultimately write.

#### **Some activities you may like to try at home include:**

**Finger Feeding-** Let your child finger feed as much as possible. Picking up food with his or her fingers will help them develop a pincer grasp (thumb and first finger together), which is a necessary precursor to holding a pencil.

**Play with Small Items-** Children should be encouraged to stack blocks, string beads, puzzles and play threading games. Children should not be left alone when playing with beads as they may be a choking hazard.

**Play with Play Dough-** One of the very best ways to build hand strength is to play with play dough, play foam or a similar non-toxic and malleable substance. Think resistance!

**Finger Painting-** Be sure to encourage finger painting, either with paint or shaving cream.

**Puzzles-** Simple jigsaw puzzles can help children learn about manipulating objects through turning, placing and flipping pieces.

**Two-Handed Tasks-** Any activity that encourages your child to coordinate both hands together is a great tool for development. An example is rolling a ball of play dough into a long “snake” and then cutting it with a plastic knife.

**Buttoning and Tying-** Practice buttoning and unbuttoning, zipping, hooking fasteners or tying helps to build strength and dexterity. Large child-appropriate practice boards that help facilitate these activities are available in most toy stores.

**Practice with Clothes Pegs-** Have your child hang pictures, colouring pages or clothes on a clothesline with spring loaded clothes pegs. This activity builds pincer strength.

**Colouring-**When your child shows interest in colouring, be sure to provide small crayons that fit his or her little hands.

Look for opportunities throughout the day for your child to manipulate small items, push and pull with their hands and fingers and practice small movements. Being aware of these opportunities is the first step in helping your child develop fine motor skills.

If you have any area of concern regarding fine motor control, please speak to your child’s teacher and have fun practising those skills at home.

### **The Hall School 4+ or 5+ options**

If you have your son’s name down for The Hall School for entry in September 2018 or 2019, you will be making the choice of entry point for him, around the middle of November. I am very happy to have a discussion with any parent that is unsure, at this stage, and would like some guidance. I would also advise that this is discussed with your child’s class teacher at Parent’s Evening next week. If you would like to speak to me, an appointment can be arranged through Arpuna or Clare in the office, or I can be reached on: [zsylvester@broadhurstschool.com](mailto:zsylvester@broadhurstschool.com)

### **Class 6 News**

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new comers into Class 6. We have now completed our first topic ‘Me, Myself and I’. This is always an excellent topic to start with as it encourages the children to become strong, independent and ready for the year ahead. All the children have settled in very well and are adapting to the longer day. As the year progresses, the children will encounter many new experiences and challenges. Their individual needs will be responded to with much support given. Please do not hesitate to come to me with any concerns that you might have as I, along with Miss Kadhim, am always willing to help in any way that we can.

### **Miss Scanlon**



Yours sincerely

**Mrs Sylvester**  
Headmistress

**Proprietor:**  
**Mr. B. J. Berkery**