**Ideas to improve fine motor skills.**

All of the following activities help develop your child’s fine motor skills which are the skills we need to hold and write with a pencil.

* Large chalks to ‘play’ with outside on walls, footpaths etc. They encourage the correct writing grip and also strengthen the muscles. These can be found commonly in ‘pound’ shops and are quite cheap.
* Marla or plasticine – better than play dough as it is tougher. Warm it up on a radiator for a few minutes beforehand. Rolling, stretching, pulling and in particular pinching are all very beneficial.
* Cutting is quite difficult for small children so the more practice they have the better. With supervision give your child an old newspaper or magazine and ask them to cut out pictures or shapes.
* You can also draw a line on a page with curves, squiggles, straight bits and corners and get your child to cut them out. Make sure if your child is left handed that they have a left handed scissors.
* Colouring – lots and lots of this. Dot to dot puzzles are also very good.
* Make a pretend clothes line at home and ask your child to hang up their teddy’s or doll’s clothes on it. Clothes pegs encourage the child to develop the correct writing grip.
* Ziplock bags are also good for developing fine motor skills.
* There may be many games that you have at home that also develop these skills such as ‘Hama’ beads, threading beads, Lego, duplo, stickle bricks etc. Bear this in mind when purchasing toys for your child in the future.