

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following the parent/teacher calls last term, some parents have asked for some examples of different things that they could do at home to support their children in Nursery. Now that we are in a lockdown situation we have included some ideas that are developmentally appropriate and ones that we know the children enjoy in Nursery. As a family, you can choose to give some or all of them a go, but please be aware there are lots here so you can choose ideas that suit your home life.

Pre-handwriting skills

It is important that all children have lots of different experiences and opportunities to build muscles in their whole body prior to forming letters and numbers.

This starts with their core. Children must be active and move in lots of different ways to build strength in their stomachs, backs and shoulders. Here is a list of activities to do that build body strength.

1. Dancing
2. Yoga
3. Assault courses – climbing, crawling, hopping, jumping, balancing
4. Bikes, trikes and scooters
5. Climbing frames

<https://app.gonoodle.com/login> Go noodle is a guided dance site that families can sign up too. Search 'Guided Dances' and you will find a list of very different guided dances that the children like.

Banana, Banana, Meathall is their favourite and they also like **I've Got a Feeling** and **Dynamite**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga> Cosmic yoga is guided yoga through stories.

The children also need to build strength in their arms, wrists and fingers before they start forming letters and numbers. We do lots of activities to support this development and there are lots you can do at home to practice.

1. Using clothes pegs
2. Placing small objects in small pots
3. Threading beads, pasta or buttons
4. Doing and undoing zips, buttons, poppers
5. Playing games that have small counters, dice
6. Building using construction that needs joining (Duplo, Lego)
7. Bath toys that the children can practice filling and pouring
8. Drawing a range of different shapes, lines and patterns (see attached sheets)
9. Mark making activities – paint, chalk, pens, pencils, crayons

Mathematics

Maths is all around us and the more the children see others use maths in different ways the more confident they will be to explore it themselves. Shapes, space, measure and number are all equally important so playing games that develop language and mathematical experiences are really important.

1. Cooking or/and playing with kitchen equipment
2. Playing shops with real objects and pennies. How many pennies?
3. Building towers using empty boxes, tubes or construction bricks. Is the tower taller/shorter than them?
4. Lining up their toys by size
5. Talking about times of the day and routines

6. Use positional language when playing – on/in/under/on top of/next to/behind/in front of
7. Numbering cars using numerals or spots. Can they drive the cars in order?
8. Talking about and noticing the shapes of different objects is the basis of learning about shape. What words describe objects that they can hold and feel?
Straight/curved/bumpy/jagged/smooth/soft/squishy/hard/shiny are all words that children need to use before they can talk about shapes.
9. Sorting toys, pasta shapes, buttons, leaves etc. Why are they sorting them into groups together? Is it by colour, size, texture or shape?
10. Counting and counting out small amounts of objects. One count per object.

Pre-Reading Skills

Before children begin to read, they need to develop pre-reading skills. Sharing reading material is so important to children developing language, understanding and knowledge. Here are some pre-reading activities that will help nursery children.

1. Sharing books with adults or siblings. Children need a wide range of stories, information texts, nursery rhymes etc. so they can develop speaking, listening and understanding. Share books and ask the children to fill in the missing words. Ask them simple questions about the characters, setting, events and information. Ask them to point to parts of the picture and to make up their own stories using the pictures.
2. Model reading for different purposes at home and when you are out in different places. Children need to learn that reading is important and used all of the time.
3. Make up stories with toys and invite them to join in. Make silly or exciting things happen and involve them in the story. Ask them to make up silly voices for the characters or be different characters.
4. Draw simple pictures and make up simple stories with the children.
5. Sing songs, nursery rhymes and make silly noises with your voices so that children practice moving their whole mouths to make sounds. Brrrrrrrrrr, Woouoooooah, Shhhhhhhhhh,

Most of all play games that the children want to play and they are interested in. Talk to your children. Interactions with family members are the most important part of their development. Being included in conversations and being listened to will build up their self-confidence and make them feel happy and secure.

Thank you for your continuing support,

Miss Murray & the Nursery Team