

What can we do to help children at home?

- Talk to children about everything you do together and model good speaking and listening.
- Listen carefully to what they have to say so that you can respond to them.
- Share lots of stories together and talk about them.
- Go out and about together when you can to enable them to be active and curious about the world.
- Encourage them to dress and undress, supporting them when they need it.
- Make play dates, giving opportunities for them to play with other children to learn how to share, take turns, learn about other people's needs and make their own needs known.

Physical activity

Good co-ordination and strength impacts on all areas of children's learning and development. Give opportunities for lots of climbing, riding bikes and scooters and outdoor activities.

Encourage children to dress/undress themselves.

Fine motor skills

Safe experiences with scissors, knives and forks, small objects, threading, playdough pinching, twisting and rolling help children to develop their finger muscles which will later help them to use pencils with good control. Making cakes and cooking with children provides these opportunities too.

Singing, rhyming, word and sound play

Builds the necessary skills for learning to read and write later. Develop an awareness of rhythms and patterns in language. Help children to listen and pick out every day sounds, beginning sounds and rhyming words. For example, 'Jack likes dancing in a sack'.

Sing nursery rhymes and favourite songs as much as you can – this is a fun way to develop an awareness of rhyme and language patterns.

Share stories, talk about them and act them out.

See guidance in 'Nursery Reading Record' book.

Read signs and notices in the street, in shops, on lorries, for example, to help them become aware that words have meaning. MacDonald's, Ben 10 and Toys R Us are a good place to start because they are meaningful to your child.

Encourage mark making on a large scale rather than using only pens, pencils until the child has control of large equipment. Large painting, painting on garden slabs with water and a large paint brush is a favourite!

Maths in the world around us

Spotting numbers on doors and buses, measuring during cooking, finding shapes and patterns on walls, in gardens or on wrapping paper are all meaningful ways of learning about numbers, shapes and patterns.

Exploring the world around them

Every event is a learning opportunity. Talk about shopping, encourage your child to help in the garden, find spider's webs in autumn, minibeasts in the soil, explore rain and puddles - follow their lead!

Provide messy and creative experiences other than drawing and painting.

Let children make marks in shaving foam, cornflour, chocolate powder and other everyday substances. Children learn through their senses and explore and experience smell, textures etc.

TALK! TALK! TALK! Talk to and with your child about everything you do together. Hearing how language is spoken is an important model for them.