

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of seven areas of Learning and Development. All areas of Learning and Development are connected to one another and important, however there is a greater emphasis on the first three listed below.

The areas of Learning and Development are:

- **Communication and Language**
- **Physical Development**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Below are examples of what your child may be doing and how you can help them in some of these areas.

A parents guide to the Early Years Foundation Stage, 'What to expect, When? Is also available to download at;

www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2015/09/4Children_ParentsGuide_Sept_2015v4WEB1.pdf

This has further information about what to expect in Year R and how you can help your child with the learning. It also has links to organisations that may be able to help if you feel unsure about your child's development. Please come and see us too as we are able to help!

Communication, Language and Literacy

What will my child be doing?

Your child's experiences may include:

- Listening to and using language, extending their vocabulary and exploring the meanings and sounds of new words.
- Sharing a wide variety of nursery and modern rhymes, chants, action verses, poetry, stories and books.
- Sharing simple non-fiction texts.
- Exploring writing for different purposes, such as labels, lists and invitations.

- Learning to link sounds to letters, naming and sounding letters of the alphabet.
- Hearing and saying sounds in words, in the order in which they occur.
- Using a pencil to form recognisable letters.

What can you do to help?

Reading

- Show your child how to look after books.
- Make sure you are both comfortable, relaxed and want to read. Young children can get bored quickly, so little and often is best. A good ten minutes is better than a difficult half-hour.
- Help your child to join in with your reading. Let them turn pages and guess what happens next. Follow the words with your finger, point out pictures and talk together about the story.
- Use funny voices, toys and actions to make the characters come alive.
- Choosing books to read together can be fun – they can be from home, school or the library. Don't object if your child wants the same book again and again - if they keep going back to a book it is because they are getting something from it.
- Encourage your child to re-tell favourite books in their own words, or even act them out.
- Look for words in the environment. For example, at breakfast time, explore the words on cereal packets, milk and fruit juice cartons. Look in the papers or in magazines for famous faces, such as a footballer or TV star. Whilst shopping, look for signs, labels and words on packaging.

Letters and Rhymes

- Sing nursery and modern rhymes together.
- See if you can spot the first letter of your child's name when you are out and about. It could be on a car registration plate, on a street sign or even on an inspection cover in the street. Your child will soon begin to ask you to explain other letters.
- Play rhyming and sound games, such as 'I spy' - 'I spy with my little eye, something beginning with L - Light!'
- Show your child the initial letters of other members of the family and, when the post is delivered, see if he or she can work out who each item of mail is for.

- Let your child cut up headlines from old magazines and newspapers and stick the same letters on pages of a scrapbook., one page for a, one for b and so on. Can you find pictures of things that begin with that letter?

Writing

- Write birthday and Christmas cards together.
- Help your child to practise the correct letter formation as shown previously.
- Practise writing their name.

Physical Development

What will my child be doing?

- Your child's experiences may include:
- Building core strength to support a range of skills including writing.
- Experimenting with different ways of moving.
- Negotiating space successfully when playing racing and chasing games with other children.
- Travelling around, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment.
- Using simple tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control.
- Using a pencil to form recognisable letters.
- Discussing the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices in relation to food.

What can you do to help?

- Learn to change and dress independently including putting on own shoes and socks on.
- Roll, pinch, squeeze and flatten playdough.
- Practise using scissors to cut old magazines, greeting cards and newspapers to make a collage.
- Make jewellery by threading macaroni, buttons and beads.
- Build with a range of construction toys, for example, cardboard boxes, Lego or K'NEX.

- Collect small objects such as pennies and marbles for a treasure box or pick up beans with a spoon.
- Cook together, paint pictures or write and draw in the sand with your fingers.
- Enjoy energetic play, a bike ride or trip to the park, climbing, balancing, target throwing, rolling, kicking and catching.
- Make fruit kebabs or vegetable faces to help me try different types of fruit and vegetables.
- Dance together when you hear your favourite songs!

Personal, social and emotional development

What will my child be doing?

- Your child's experiences may include:
- Playing co-operatively, taking turns with others.
- Forming positive relationships and developing respect for others.
- Developing their confidence to try new activities and to speak to others about their own needs, feelings, interests and opinions.
- Understanding how to work as part of a group or class and beginning to negotiate and solve problems.

What can you do to help?

- Encourage chat and play with different friends and family, perhaps in a snug den or in a cosy space.
- Play games that promote turn-taking, sharing, cooperation and collaboration.
- Choose books or play with puppets and dolls to help your child explore their ideas about friends and friendship and to talk about their feelings.
- Draw pictures or take photographs of favourite places or activities and talk with your child about their successes, achievements, gifts and talents.

Mathematics

What will my child be doing?

Your child's experiences may include:

- Saying and using the number names in order.
- Recognising and using numerals reliably.
- Beginning to use the vocabulary associated with addition and subtraction, relating addition to combining two groups and subtraction to 'taking away'.
- Using everyday and mathematical language to describe pattern, position, measures and solid and flat shapes.
- Using their knowledge to develop ideas and to solve mathematical problems.

What can you do to help?

- Enjoy sharing number rhymes and stories together, such as 'Ten green bottles' and 'The very hungry caterpillar'.
- Play games which involve counting and matching, for example, snakes and ladders and dominoes.
- Look out for patterns and shapes on floors, wallpaper, plants, animals, buildings - anything from the arrangement of tiles in the kitchen to the markings on the cat.
- Talk about numbers in everyday contexts, for example, 'Here is one apple for mummy and one for Sam.' Count stairs as you go up and down.
- Look for numbers in the environment - on doors, car number plates, house numbers, prices, clocks and phone numbers.
- Encourage your child to match, sort, count, compare, order and measure everyday objects such as toys, teddy bears, cutlery, money and socks.
- Get your child to help with the shopping. Count items as they go into the trolley and look at the size of various packages - decide which container is bigger or smaller, taller or shorter and holds more or less.
- Bath-time is great for simple shape and volume activities - does that beaker hold more water than that plastic cup?

- Count out spoonfuls of ingredients as you cook. Let your child help you set the timer and count down to teatime!
- Measure your child's height and work out how much they've grown.
- Make models using construction kits such as lego or building blocks. Which is the tallest tower? How many bricks have you used?

Understanding of the World

What will my child be doing?

- Your child's experiences may include:
- Investigating objects and materials and their properties.
- Learning about change and patterns, similarities and differences.
- Asking about how things work and why.
- Learning about the construction process, using tools and techniques creatively and safely.
- Finding out how computers and programmable toys support their learning.
- Becoming aware of and interested in the natural world, finding out about their local area and knowing what they like and dislike about it.
- Beginning to explore their own and other people's cultures, celebrating similarities and differences.
- Finding out about past and present events relevant to their own lives or those of their family.

What can you do to help?

Encourage curiosity! Let your child investigate, ask questions and try things out, both indoors and outdoors.

- Encourage your child to use his or her senses to explore the world around them. Talk about the shapes, patterns, textures, colours, smells and similarities or differences they observe as you cook together or play alongside one another in the paddling pool!
- Enjoy using cameras, computers and CD and DVD players together.

- Enjoy celebrating with friends and family! Talk about all the birthday parties, christenings and weddings that you go to.
- Look through family photographs together. How have people changed? Talk about what your child can do now that they couldn't do when they were a baby or a toddler. What toys did nan or grandad play with when they were young?

Expressive Arts and Design

What will my child be doing?

- Singing songs and making music with their voices and a variety of percussion instruments.
- Exploring colours, textures, tools and techniques and using what they have learnt in creative and original ways.
- Introducing a storyline or narrative into their play.

What can you do to help?

- Sing or dance to your favourite songs together.
- Enjoy experimenting with paints, sticky tape, play dough and boxes.
- Pretend stories together, for example, 'we're going on a bear hunt' or 'walking through the jungle'. Dress up and pretend to be a doctor! What's going to happen to you?