



# *A Great Start to School!*

A guide to preparing your child for school.



# Being Imaginative

Children learn to make sense of the world through their play! Children enjoy using their imagination to turn different objects into play items.

Ideas:

- Use dressing up clothes to role play or even empty containers - large boxes are great!
- Read stories together
- Put on music a dance along
- Create characters with playdoh (with modern technology you could even take pictures and create a cartoon)
- Provide paper and writing tools for them to mark make
- Collect your recycling and let children create models using it
- Use small world toys to create stories
- Sing nursery rhymes and songs
- Use paper and materials to create collages



# Being Active

Children's bodies are growing and developing rapidly during this time. Children like to be active, and need to keep moving to stay healthy and well. Movement helps with not only their large motor skills but also their fine motor skills preparing them ready to write.

Suggested activities:

- Active play (such as hide and seek or stuck in the mud)
- Running around
- Jumping on a trampoline
- Riding a bike
- Dancing
- Skipping rope
- Climbing (playground equipment)
- Painting using water and large paintbrushes
- Use scissors to cut paper



# Being Social

In Reception our main focus is helping the children learn how to interact with others. How to make relationships, manage their feelings and behaviours and increase their self confidence and self-awareness.

Here are some suggestions of how you can help your child become more social at home.

- Play turn taking games
- Arrange play dates with other children a similar age
- Chat about things you are doing, modelling taking turns when speaking
- When they make a wrong choice explaining why and what the correct action should be
- Asking clearly in sentences for things they want. (May I have a biscuit please?)



# Being Independent

In Reception we encourage the children to be as independent as possible. Here are some suggestions of how you can help your child become more independent at home.

- Dressing themselves.
- Toileting
- Using a knife and fork correctly
- Pouring their own drinks or cereal for breakfast
- Asking clearly in sentences for things they want.  
(May I have a biscuit please?)
- 



# Being in Routine

Routines are very important for young children. Here are some suggestions of how you can help your child settle into routine home.

- Rest and relax!

Having enough sleep and rest is very important for children as they are growing and developing all the time.

A bedtime routine might look like this:

- 6.45 pm: put on pyjamas, brush teeth, go to the toilet.

- 7.15 pm: quiet time with a book, story or quiet chat.

- 7.30 pm: goodnight and lights out

(Screens should be off an hour before bed to help children settle)

- Getting up

Getting up at the same time and sitting down to breakfast together.

Dressing, washing, brushing teeth. You could have a chart in your child's room for them to tick off jobs as they complete them.

- Eating meals together to give opportunities to chat about your day.



# Being a good Communicator

Chatting matters!

In Reception, children need to be able communicate with their peers and adults, whilst in play and focused sessions. They need to have an understanding of turn taking and listening to others. Children learn by asking questions, talking about their ideas, describing what they see and wondering out loud. When you are chatting with your child you can have fun together. The more you talk to your child and the more words they hear.

Try:

- Asking questions
- Talking about everyday experiences
- Telling jokes
- Being silly
- Playing games



## Small talk idea

Join in and get in character during your child's imaginative play! Ask them questions in character or describe what you are doing. This can give your child the opportunity to hear new words and solve problems.



## Small talk ideas

Chat with your child about what you are doing as you go about everyday activities, such as sorting the washing or making dinner.



## Small talk idea

Chat to your child whenever you can - walking along the road, on the bus, wherever! They can learn lots of new words from you.

# Being a Bookworm

Print is everywhere!

Children live in a world full of print and see messages, pictures and logos everywhere. Therefore as children begin Reception it is important that they show some understanding of reading. Recognising their favourite place to eat or the name of the supermarket are the first steps in learning to read. Your input is crucial, the more children see you read, the more they will want to read too!

Try:

- looking for road signs
- identify familiar food store signs - Asda, McDonalds
- share a bedtime story
- look at menus, magazines, comics, manuals, recipes or instructions
- take visits to the local library

## Small talk ideas

When you are out and about with your child, look at the signs, symbols, logos and words all around you. Encourage them to show you and help them to 'read' the ones they recognise!



# Being a Math-a-magician

Numbers are all around us and as children begin Reception they should be able to count, recognise and record digits and have some understanding of shape and measure whilst playing.

Try:

- spotting numbers whilst out and about
- count objects - building blocks, placemats, stairs etc
- sing counting rhymes
- share objects between two people
- identify shapes around the home and whilst out
- talk about who is the taller/shortest in their family,
- who has



## Small talk idea

Talk about numbers that can see whilst out and about. What number can you see on the door? How many sets of traffic lights can you count? How many wheels

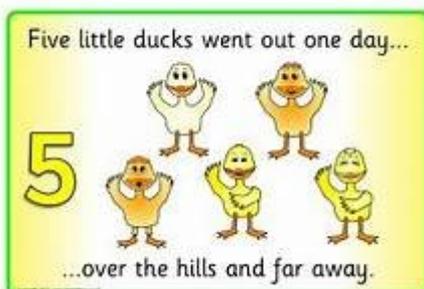
## Small talk ideas

Chat with your child about the shapes they can see whilst playing. Name them, discuss how many sides and corners it has.



## Small talk idea

Ask your child to collect 4 forks ready for the family dinner. Can they collect 5 yellow items from around the home?



# Read books about starting school

There are lots of different books you can share about school.

This can help your child feel prepared to start or return to school. A few books are listed below:

- Starting School  
by Janet and Allen Ahlberg
- Topsy and Tim Start School  
by Jean and Gareth Adamson
- Going to School  
by Anna Civardi and Stephen Cartwright
- Harry and the Dinosaurs Go To School  
by Ian Whybrow
- I Am Too Absolutely Small For School  
by Lauren Child

