


Starting school




The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is for children aged 0-5. Therefore, the reception year in school continues with the same curriculum as the children's current Early Years Settings. As a local group the all Early Years Settings all work very closely together. This allows us to continue your child's learning journey as they move from their current setting into school.

The EYFS curriculum is split into two sections.

- ★ Prime Areas - These areas are the main focus for your child as you prepare them for school. It is also the main focus for your child's early educators at pre-school and nursery. The Prime Areas are Personal Social Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development
- ★ Specific Areas - Reading, Writing, Number, Shape, Space and Measure, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts

The Prime Areas underpin learning in all the other areas. Therefore, without strong social & emotional skills, good communication and language and well developed physical skills, your child will find it difficult to develop skills across the other areas. To help your child develop and prepare them emotionally for starting school there are a number of ways you can help them.



Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL)

The CoEL focus on how each child learns, rather than what they learn. Underpinning the CoEL is the understanding that during their earliest years, children form attitudes about learning that will last a lifetime. Children who receive the right sort of support and encouragement will be creative, and adventurous learners throughout their lives.

- ★ Playing and exploring links very closely to children's ability to "pretend" and to engage in pretend experiences. This may be alone or as they grow they begin to develop these ideas in cooperation with others. Therefore, encouraging your child to use their imagination and play with toys helps to develop your child's ability to learn and develop.
- ★ Children need to be 'willing to have a go'. Children who exhibit this characteristic start up activities and have ideas. They seek out things to challenge them and are keen to show they "can do" things independently. Linked to this is the characteristic of keep on trying. This involves demonstrating persistence when difficulties arise. Children show a positive attitude and will not be put off by difficulties or challenges. We can encourage this characteristic by allowing children the opportunity to do things for themselves.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Engagement <i>Playing and Exploring</i>	Motivation Active Learning	
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Being involved and concentrating

- Focusing fully on their activity for a period of time
- Showing high levels of energy, repetition
- Not easily distracted
- Paying attention to detail

Keeping on trying

- Showing persistence when challenged
- Showing a belief that every effort will be rewarded
- Showing a willingness to try a different approach when one fails
- Showing enthusiasm when they are successful

Being proud of how they have managed something or how well they did

- Showing a sense of achievement
- Showing a willingness to try a different approach when one fails
- Showing a willingness to try a different approach when one fails

Growth Mindset

Throughout our schools we focus on developing a growth mindset, which is based on the work of Carol Dweck. In school we use growth mindset to develop resilience and persistence to develop our children into lifelong learners. This also helps to support our children's wellbeing and mental health as they grow. Developing resilience is vital for our children to become successful learners and adults.

GROWTH MINDSET.
 GROW, LEARN, LEAD.
 I CAN ACHIEVE ANYTHING.
 I CAN LEARN FROM MY MISTAKES.
 I CAN BEAT MYSELF.
 I GET BETTER.


We do this by reinforcing the following reminders,

- ★ "We don't say "I can't do this"; we say, "I can't do this yet"
- ★ "We learn new things as often as we can"
- ★ "We are not scared of mistakes of failure because we learn from them"
- ★ "We take risks in order to improve our learning"

Encouraging children to think in this way supports them to learn new things and to have a positive attitude to all new learning opportunities. We encourage our children to learn through making mistakes and to develop independence by trying things for themselves, in a safe and stimulating environment.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- ★ Help your child to make friends and mix with a range of other children by arranging playdates, attending groups and pre-school sessions. This will help your child to develop the skills to make new friends. Starting school is a fantastic opportunity for you child to mix and make new friends across their new class. By encouraging them now to have lots of different friends you will help them develop essential skills to be able to develop friendships, listen to others, share ideas and interact with new people.
- ★ Help your child to develop their play with their toys to enhance their ability to maintain attention and concentration.
- ★ Encourage development of imagination, storytelling and creativity in their play when you play with your child.
- ★ Encourage your child to build confidence by asking for help when it is needed or choosing what to play with.



Communication and Language

Communication and language skills are essential for the children to succeed in school. There is lots you can do to support your child.

- ★ Help your child to listen carefully and follow instructions. This is an essential skill to help them cope with new routines and expectations at school. Encourage them to listen to simple instructions, then develop this so there are two parts to an instruction. For example, when getting ready to go out ask your child to get their coat and shoes and put them on.
- ★ Encourage your child to become responsible for looking after their things. For example, putting their shoes away or making sure they have their coat on when you are going out.
- ★ Listen for sounds in the environment and play listening games so they begin to listen carefully. This will also help support early phonic development.
- ★ Model imaginative and creative language when you are playing with them.
- ★ Ask questions and encourage your child to answer them.

Communication and Language

- ★ Develop your children's speech and language through conversations encouraging correct pronunciation of words.
- ★ Talk through activities and ask them to tell you about their day to encourage the skills to sequence events.
- ★ If you are concerned about your child's speech then please speak to their Key Worker, so they can discuss this with you. The EYF5 curriculum requires our children to verbalise their ideas to demonstrate their learning. Therefore, it is important we support our children to develop strong communication skills.



Physical Development

This is another key area to develop as your child moves towards starting school.

Dressing themselves -

Help your child by starting to get them to dress themselves. Encourage them by placing their clothes on a chair and start talking through the process as you dress them. Then move onto your child doing it themselves. We know it can take a very long time for children to dress themselves, so it's easier to do it for them. But this is such an important way for you to prepare them for school. Your child will feel more confident about changing for P.E. lessons if they are developing these essential skills.



Physical Development

- ★ Helping your child to be toilet trained is important as your child starts school, as it makes them more confident in the new setting. Also encourage them to wash their hands after going to the toilet as this will help with personal hygiene.
- ★ Work towards doing up zips on coats and putting shoes on independently.
- ★ Developing physical skills such as running, jumping, throwing and catching, moving carefully and becoming aware of the space around them all helps to enhance their development.
- ★ Fine motor skills will help your child with writing. Help them by singing finger rhymes, painting, using play dough, cutting, drawing and mark making. All these activities have a massive impact on early writing development.



Literacy

'Einstein stated that if you want your children to be intelligent read them fairy tales.'

Sharing stories are essential for academic success and having the right approach to learning. Children can develop language, concentration, attention to details, storytelling, imagination and creativity all through books. To support early reading skills, make sure your child holds the book correctly, turns pages carefully and learns to look after books. Use your finger when you are reading to show them the direction of the text. If you have time to do only one thing with your child then reading and sharing books will benefit them massively.



Literacy

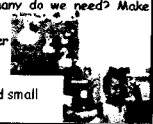
- ★ Listening to and singing nursery rhymes will help to develop rhythm, alliteration and rhyme.
 - ★ Help your children to recognise their names, as this will help them to look after their belongings in school.
 - ★ Encourage your child to make marks and draw to develop skills for writing.
- By reading stories, singing nursery rhymes, listening for sounds in the environment and developing fine motor skills you are encouraging early literacy skills, which are vital to their success as they move through Early Years.



Mathematics

To develop numeracy skills with your child it is important to:

- ★ Sing number rhymes and add actions
- ★ Encourage your child to recognise numbers and say number name
- ★ Count groups of items as you add or take away objects
- ★ Share number stories
- ★ Provide different size pots at bath time for your child to fill up and empty to develop an understanding of capacity
- ★ Look for numbers or shapes in your home or when you are walking. Say shape names such as triangle, circle, rectangle and square
- ★ Cooking is a great way to introduce problem solving - how many do we need? Make patterns, weigh the ingredients and share the food
- ★ Count objects and match to numerals to develop a sense of number
- ★ Look for numbers in the environment when you are out
- ★ Play board games
- ★ Talk about the size of objects to develop language such as big and small



Technology

We all know that technology has opened a world of possibilities and discovery. It makes the world accessible at our fingertips. However, we need to balance this with the potential harm it has on our children's development. Try and balance the time children spend using technology equipment with the important skills of playing and communicating with friends.



Practical tips

- ★ When you buy uniform items make sure the children can get the clothes and shoes on and off, so try to avoid shirts with buttons and laces.
- ★ Name everything - including shoes. Children take their socks and shoes off at school more than you think.

As you get closer to starting school you can prepare your child by showing them that it is exciting and nothing to worry about. Even if you are anxious, try not to show the children, so they don't associate starting school with something to worry about. Make it something you are both looking forward to and enjoy all the stages - getting your letter, going to the school the first time, buying the uniform. It should be an exciting, fun and enjoyable process for all of you.

- ★ Share stories about starting school.
- ★ Use the transition events organised by the school to help your child to feel comfortable in their new environment.

As Early Years practitioners the most important part of our job is developing a love of learning. We want all of our children to enjoy learning and develop excitement about education. Our children start school very young, so we ensure our teaching is delivered through practical, playful, hands on experiences.

You will help your child to have the best start to their education by developing the skills listed in this handout. Starting school is an exciting adventure, which will open the door to a world of opportunities as they move through their school years.



Useful Websites

Use the following websites to find out more about the Early Years Foundation Stage and how you can support your child as they prepare to start school.

- <https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/>
- http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/262297/npdw_toptips_ey.pdf
- <http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/>
- <https://www.pacey.org.uk/working-in-childcare/spotlight-on/being-school-ready/#readyforschool>
- <https://www.childcare.co.uk/information/school-readiness>

