



Pre-Prep School

Top Tips for Parents

English and Maths

Helping your child with their Reading and Writing

Left to Right Tracking

It is important that your child is able to visually track smoothly across the page from left to right. Ask your child to highlight a targeted letter in a newspaper from a given starting point, moving across the page from left to right. Try asking your child to point to words for you to read when you read a story to them.

Motor Skills

There are many activities we can suggest to help with improving both gross and fine motor skills, please ask if you would like to know more.

Handwriting - Froggy Fingers!

For children to correctly form their letters it is important that they develop an effective pencil grip. We encourage the children to use a tripod grip as demonstrated!

- The pencil is held between your thumb and index finger.
- It can be moved backwards and forwards using your 'froggy legs'.
- Now the second finger goes behind the pencil to give the frog a 'log' to sit on.
- The last two fingers are then tucked away.



It is very difficult to change a poor grip so please help your child to use the tripod grip they are using a pencil or colouring pen and speak to your child's teacher

Larger barrelled pencils can help and the Stabilo Easy pencils also help to reinforce this grip.

Individual Letters

All letters, except d and e, start at the top. We have included a sheet to illustrate how the letters are formed. Finger painting, air writing, using their finger to draw the letters in a plate of rice/flour/sprinkles etc and making letters in play dough can all help to reinforce correct letter formation.

Reading

We teach the name and sounds of the letters in the way that an animal has a name and it makes a sound eg: a cow says moo, the letter s says ssssss. Please talk about the names and sounds of letters with your child and help them to identify the sounds



within words that are familiar to them. It is important to use the pure sounds 'mmm' not 'muh'. The following is a link to a video demonstrating these sounds -

http://www.phonicbooks.co.uk/teaching_parent.php?type=V

Blending is the process of running sounds together to make words eg: c-a-t becomes cat. The children will develop this skill for reading regular words. Using magnetic letters, alphabet cubes etc to make simple words will help with this skill.

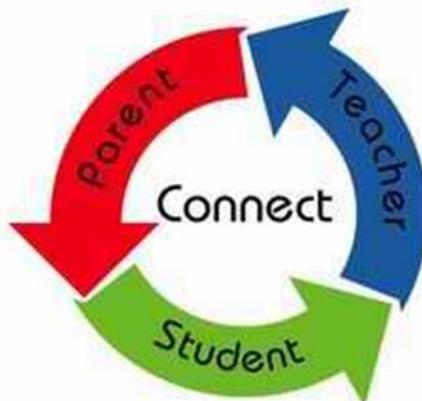


Ask your child to see how many 'sandwich' words (consonant – vowel – consonant) they can make in two minutes. Making and then reading real and nonsense words is great practice. Asking how many words they can think of that rhyme with a target word such as 'top' or 'dog' can be fun – again nonsense words can be used.

Many high frequency words we use in English are irregular and the children will need to recognise these by sight. Word searches and highlighting games can help with this. Please display the basic words on the fridge in the kitchen or in your child's bedroom and read them through regularly and quiz your child on them. Writing these words on cards and playing games like snap and bingo also helps. When you come across these words in your child's reading encourage them to 'look and say' these words rather than sounding them out.

Please help us to develop your child's love of books and stories. Read with them as much as possible, listen to story CDs and have fun making up stories with them whenever you can. It is important that your child sees you reading and enjoying books too.

Lastly, please have your child's hearing and eyesight checked regularly and let us know if you have any concerns.



Helping your child with Maths

The 4 Operations:

During Reception and KS1 we look at familiarising children with the vocabulary associated with all the four operations and using this in a variety of questions and practical work. We start to teach the children how to record this work using number sentences from Reception, moving onto laying out and showing the working for two and three-step problems in Year 2.

Multiplication and division is introduced on a more practical level with doubling and halving, as well as sharing out a set of objects. This is then built up to learning the times tables and how these two operations are opposite processes.

The children are introduced to a variety of methods to use the four operations, starting with counting on fingers and using counters in Reception. This then builds up to counting on and back using numberlines and hundred squares, as well as beginning to use the partitioning method for addition and subtraction in Year 2.

All work is revisited, reinforced and extended every year.

Practical Maths at home:

Use every opportunity to use mathematical language whenever you can!

Telling the time

Talking about the days of the week and allowing children to see and use calendars can be fantastic in developing their understanding of the concept of time. Even discussing their daily routine and what different clubs and activities they do on certain days at the youngest age can help. Also giving children the opportunity to see and use clocks at home, especially if they have a different coloured minute hand can be fantastic.



Measuring

Cooking at home is a great way to include children in understanding measuring mass and capacity as it allows learning for a purpose. Also, investigating the height of family members and even having a growth chart which is revisited can help to embed key vocabulary.

Money

In today's world, children are not always exposed to using and handling coins when paying in a shop as we tend to use contactless payments and chip and pin. In order to promote the understanding of values and costs, allowing them to use and pay for items in shops with coins is a great help. If children have pocket money, let them earn it with coins and give them time to count it up! Have a spare coin jar and ask them to help you sort and count money at various times, using it to buy a treat once the total value is known!



Numbers

Whenever you can, visual examples of numbers in the natural environment, in the home and out and about really helps to clarify the concepts of numbers. Talking about what numbers mean and what they look like is very beneficial so that children can explain their understanding. When faced with real-life Maths problems, ask your child to think of ways to solve the problem using a variety of mathematical language.



Homework

When working with your child with their Maths homework in Year 1 and 2, allow them to do their own work. If you find they are struggling or are confused, do support them, but please let their teacher know there has been an issue. If their work comes back to school all correct, issues may be hidden from your child's teacher.

Games to Improve Auditory Skills

- How many words can you think of to rhyme with
- I spy (using initial blends or final sounds)
- Listen to stories on a CD along with following the words in a book
- Following a series of instructions (start with a series of 2 then 3 etc)
- Memory Games
 - I went to the market and I bought
 - I went on holiday and in my suitcase I packed a
- Word Hunt – Can you think of 5 words with a given criteria
 - Beginning with br, gr, st, sh etc
 - Ending in -ock, -ash, -and etc
- Draw pictures and include items with given sounds
 - Draw a seaside picture with 3 'sh' and 3 'ch' things



Games to Improve Visual Skills

- Matching games eg: pairs, snap
- Spot the Difference puzzles
- Dot to Dot pictures
- Pattern completion/repetition
- Letter tracking - using old large print books choose a letter and track along the lines from left to right highlighting all of the chosen letters
- Lotto
- Dominoes
- Jigsaws
- Copying pegboard designs
- Word searches
- Patterns – lay a few objects out in a line for a short time, cover them and see if they can copy the pattern correctly. This works well if you start with smarties but gradually make the pattern more complicated!

