

Learning Through Play

PLAY is a child's way of learning - it is hard work but fun, and helps them to explore and understand themselves, others and the world around them.

At this setting, your child will experience play-based activities to help him/her develop. If you are able to become involved in helping your child, we know it can make a big difference to their learning. Here are just a few ways in which you could help your child at home.



Childhood is not just preparing for later life, it is a precious time to be enjoyed, experienced and valued for itself.

Communication, Language & Literacy

Speaking & Listening

- Go on a listening walk - when you get home try to remember all the sounds you heard.
- Play sound lotto - you could make your own by taping the sounds on your sound walk!
- Make your own musical instruments - make loud/soft, fast/slow sounds.
- Listen to a wide range of music with your child - how does it make you feel?
- Clap, stamp, tap different rhythms when singing or make up your own.
- Read or say poems, songs, nursery rhymes and rhyming stories as often as possible.
- Emphasise alliteration in songs and stories (e.g. Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper) and make up your own.

Mark Making

Mark making in the early stages is closely linked to physical development.

- Activities such as digging, painting outdoors with water and a large brush, sweeping and swishing a scarf through the air will help develop large motor movement.
- Hanging out the washing, playing with pegs, using a peg board, picking up grains of rice with fingers or tweezers will help to develop the "pincer" grip needed for writing.
- It is a good idea at this stage to use **lower case** letters when you write for your child, introducing capitals only for names.

Reading

Children love to share a book with an adult, and it helps them to want to learn to read.

- As you share a book, let your child hold the book, look at the pictures and help turn the pages.
- Point to the words and run a finger under the print as you read.
- Encourage your child to ask questions and talk about the pictures.
- Encourage your child to predict what might happen next or to retell the story.



Problem Solving, Reasoning & Numeracy

A few ideas!

- Getting dressed can be a problem solving activity for a child - there's more than one way of doing it!
- Let your child sort the washing - plain/patterned, different colours, things that pull on/have fastenings. Compare things of like shape - biggest/smallest, longer/shorter.
- Ask your child to sort the socks into pairs - how many socks/pairs? What other things come in pairs?
- Encourage your child to help you cook - measuring with spoons, cups or scales will help their understanding of differing quantities. Ask questions - which feels heavier, the egg or the cup of flour?
- Making sandwiches offers tremendous potential for exploring shape!
- Encourage your child to help you lay the table, making sure there are enough items for everyone! Talk about the position of the various items on the table in relation to each other.
- When you go out, make collections of e.g. shells, pebbles, fir cones etc. At home, use them for sorting, making patterns etc.
- Look for shapes and numbers when you are out and about too.
- All children love playing with water! Filling and emptying containers gives them early ideas about capacity. Ask questions - how many cups did you use to fill the teapot? Which holds more, the bottle or the jug?