

## **Ways to help your child at home:**

### Reading and Phonics

Each week your child will bring home two books:

1. Phonics Books – Encourage your child to read their phonics book at least three times a week.
2. Recommended Reads – These are for you to read to your child.

One of the most important things you can do with your child at home is read.

By the end of Reception most children are able to read and understand simple sentences. This supports children with more independent work in Year 1.

You can read anything and everything. Read stories to them, encourage them to read suitable books themselves, practise reading instructions, signs and posters. Show your child the joy of reading and discuss what you have read together. Ask questions about the stories they have enjoyed and see if they can retell the story in their own words.

At school, your child will have a daily phonics lesson to help teach them the sounds that make up words. Phonics is taught in short, focused sessions and then embedded into other areas of learning. In Reception, the initial focus is on the individual sounds of the letters. Once they have a good understanding of individual letter sounds, children move on to the sounds that groups of letters make (these are called digraphs and trigraphs; for example, qu, ch, and sh). Phonics is divided into phases; these are groups of sounds and words that children learn in a certain order. Your child may very well know what phase they're working on at school (by the end of Reception most children will have completed phases 2-4).

### Writing

By the end of Reception, most children will be able to use phonics knowledge to write simple words and sentences. In school, they take part in lots of different activities designed to improve fine motor control and finger strength and would also practise forming "letter families" of letters correctly to write simple words. Activities such as playing with playdough, colouring and threading are great for developing finger strength and control.

Please use the letter formation guide on our phonics page to help your child with their writing.

## Maths

Being able to recognise, count and accurately order numbers 0-20 (and beyond if your child is more capable) will be of huge benefit to your child. A secure knowledge of numbers and counting will support them with mathematical problem-solving, not only in Year 1 but throughout school. Numbers are all around us, so it is easy to incorporate number recognition and counting into daily life: try going on a number hunt, counting how many Lego bricks are in a tower and playing board games.

There are so many opportunities to work on number skills though play and daily life. Ask your child to tell you which number comes before 10 or after 16, and so on. Or why not make your own number line to 20 on Post-Its or pieces of paper and ask your child to help write the numbers and add the correct number of pictures?

At home, allow children to explore problems practically and have objects such as counters or blocks available to help. (This concrete approach to maths is a key part of maths mastery teaching.)

Ask your child to help with activities such sharing out some strawberries fairly, cutting a pizza in half or doubling a given amount of sweets. Challenge your child to find one more / less than a given number or to make a tower with one or two more or fewer blocks.

In addition to number work, in Reception maths children look at shape, space and measures, thinking about sizes and quantities, time, money, measuring and patterns.

They compare quantities and measures of objects and learn to use measurement terms like longer, shorter, more, fewer, tallest and shortest.

These aspects of maths can be explored in very practical ways.

Look for shapes in the house or environment, discuss what times of day you do certain things like going to bed or have breakfast, compare who has more/fewer grapes, look at the containers you have around the house and experiment to find out which container holds the most. Sort coins using size and shape and discuss value. Make patterns in pictures and see if your child can spot any around the house or in the garden.