

KING INA



CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

Starting School September 2021

What can you
do to help?



***Promoting Partnership between home, school
and the community***

Contents Page

- Pages 3 - 5 - Top Tips for Starting School
- Pages 6 - 7 - Early Years Curriculum Explained
- Pages 8 - 11 - Learning to Read - Phonics
- Pages 12-14 - Numbers

What are the most important things you can do to help your child settle quickly into school?

Be Positive Yourself!

Your child will take their cues about school from you. If you are enthusiastic and positive about the school experience, then they will feel much more settled too.

If you would like to, you could buy or borrow from the library some lovely books linked to starting school. Here are some ideas:

The Colour Monster Goes to School by Anna Llenas

All You Need to Know Before You Start School Activity Book by Holly Bathie

Usborne's First Experience's Going to School by Anne Civardi

Harry and the Dinosaurs Go to School by Ian Whybrow

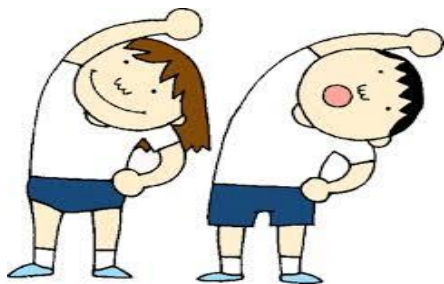
I am Too Absolutely Small for School (Charlie and Lola) by Lauren Child

Starting school is an exciting time, and one of the most important things you can do for your child is give them the independence to feel they can do things themselves.

The following suggestions will give your child a level of independence that will help them feel ready for school.

Clothing

These are some of the things that will make it easier for your child to be independent when getting changed.



Velcro shoes. Please only give your child shoes with laces if they are able to do the laces themselves.

Jumpers and cardigans: Can your child take these on and off independently and undo and do up buttons if necessary?

Trousers: Can your child undo and do up the clasp on their new school uniform trousers?

Coats. Make sure your child can secure their coat, even if it is just to press Velcro together to keep them warm initially until we can help with tricky zips. Similarly, please think about the hat, scarf and gloves your child has. Can they put them on themselves?

Maybe you could have summer holiday competitions between family members, where your child races a sibling/Mummy/Daddy/Grandma to see who can get changed into school uniform the quickest – coats and all!

Toilets and Handwashing

It sounds obvious, but your child will need to be able to get to the toilet and then deal with their trousers, shorts or dress independently. If accidents happen, we obviously help your child to change into dry clothing; but we are not able to wipe bottoms! If this is an area of weakness it might be worth practising over the holidays. Please ensure that your child has good routines and practices for handwashing and know when to wash their hands e.g. before eating, after the toilet and after sneezing/coughing.

Hot Lunches

The government provide free school dinners for all children in Reception and Key Stage One. If your child is going to have hot school lunches, please encourage them to use their knife and fork and have a go at cutting up their food themselves.

Packed Lunch

If your child is going to have a packed lunch, please try and keep it as simple as possible to open – this should include a lunch box that they are able to open themselves. It is important that children have a healthy lunch without confectionary.

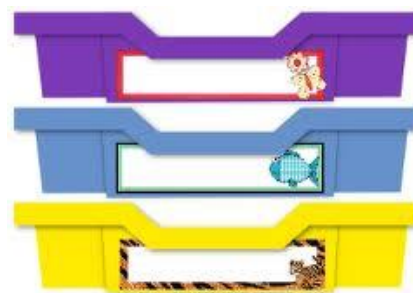


Snack

Daily free fruit is provided by the government for all children in Reception and Key Stage One, so children do not need to bring a snack to school.

Name Recognition

Can your child recognise their name? Being able to recognise just the first few letters of their name, gives your child a huge amount of independence. They find it much easier to find their drawer, peg, name card etc.



We will provide you with a name card, which will have directional arrows showing how each letter should be formed. It is essential that letters are formed correctly, as this saves lots of issues when your child is further along in their schooling. Letter formation is initially taught as lower case. I.e. abcd, not ABCD. Names should however be taught with the first letter only as a capital. E.g. James not JAMES or james.

What else can you do?



Visit the Library. The library staff in Somerton are very friendly and helpful. They will have lots of interesting books and this is a really good way to encourage a love of learning.

Shop for uniform. Even though it is much easier to shop alone, shopping together is a really good opportunity to talk about starting school. You can even see whether your child is able to put any of the uniform on themselves.



Talk about starting school. Children love to feel that they are growing up. Whenever you get the opportunity tell your child how much they have grown and that soon they'll be starting big school!

Remember to prime family and friends so that everyone is positive about starting school.

And Finally . . .

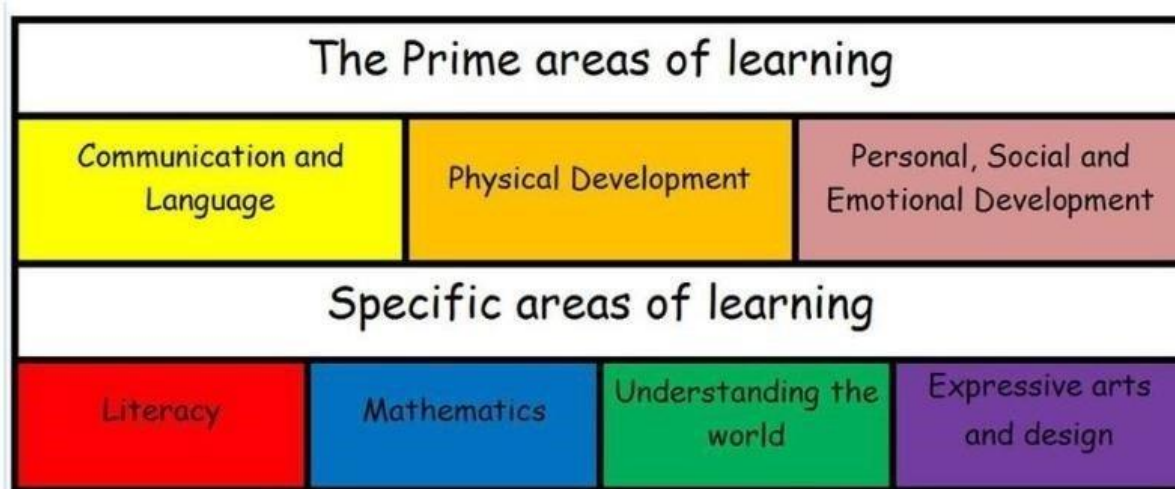
If you have any concerns, please talk to us at school. It is also worth talking to other parents, who have recently been through this experience. Starting school is a big step for you and your child; but it is exciting and your child will have fun.



What will my child learn/do during their first year at school?

Do you wonder what your child will do at school?

Have you heard of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFS), but don't really know what it means? These are the 7 areas of learning and development:



Throughout this year your child will be assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG's). The Early Learning Goals are broken down into 7 Areas; which include 3 Prime Areas of Learning, and 4 Specific Areas of Learning.

The Prime Areas of Learning are fundamental skills enabling your child to work together with his/her classmates, and then move through into supporting his/her development in all other areas.

The Specific Areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage include essential skills and knowledge for your child to participate successfully in school and learn many of the basic skills they will need.

At the end of the year your child will be recorded at one of these levels:

Emerging - working below age appropriate levels and emerging towards achieving their Early Learning Goals (ELG's)

Expected – working at age appropriate levels, and meeting their ELG's.

And Finally . . .

Characteristics of Effective Learning
Playing and exploring – engagement Finding out and exploring Playing with what they know Being willing to 'have a go'
Active learning – motivation Being involved and concentrating Keeping trying Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
Creating and thinking critically – thinking Having their own ideas Making links Choosing ways to do things

Throughout your child's first year at school, their Characteristics of Learning will also be monitored, and recorded using the following descriptors.

Your child's learning will be supported through the Early Years ethos of Playing to Learn.



Learning Through Play

Letters and Sounds

Why Teach Reading using Games?

It is vital that early reading experiences are happy and positive. The aim should be not just for children to learn to read, but to enjoy reading. Whilst games may appear to be an indirect approach, they do protect a child from a feeling of failure. By 'playing together' both parent and child are relaxed. Where a child could feel pressured in a formal teaching situation he/she will usually enjoy reading activities in a 'play' situation. This leaflet aims to give you simple ideas to try.

The Sounds of Letters

Tips for teaching your child the sounds:

- ◆ It is important for a child to learn lower case or small letters rather than capital letters at first. Most early books and games use lower case letters and your child will learn these first at school. You should use a capital letter when required, such as at the beginning of the child's name, eg. **Paul**.
- ◆ When you talk about letters to your child, remember to use the letter sounds: **a buh cuh duh e ...** rather than the alphabet names of the letters: **ay bee see dee ee** . The reason for this is that sounding out words is practically impossible if you use the alphabet names. **eg. cat, would sound like: see ay tee**
- ◆ When saying the sounds of **b, d, g, j** and **w** you will notice the 'uh' sound which follows each, for example buh, duh... You cannot say the sound without it, however, try to emphasise the main letter sound.
- ◆ Please follow this link to hear the taught pronunciation of the sounds:
- ◆ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCI2mu7URBc>

Sound Games to Play at Home...

Common Objects

Collect several objects that begin with the same sound and make a card with this letter sound on it. Make a second group of objects beginning with a different sound and a card to go with those. Discuss the sounds of the letters on the two cards with your child and shuffle the objects. Separate the cards on the floor and ask your child to put each object near the sound that it starts with. This activity can help your child to "hear" the first sound of a word.

Odd-one Out

Say a number of words, all but one of which begin with the same sound. See if your child can pick out the odd one. It can be helpful to have the corresponding objects there for the child to look at.

I-Spy

For small children the usual way of playing that starts 'I spy with my little eye something that begins with' can be too difficult. You can make this easier by providing a clue. 'I spy with my little eye something that barks and begins with d'.

Sounds Scrapbook

Write a letter at the top of each page of a scrapbook. Concentrating on a few letters at a time collect pictures of objects that begin with those letters. Do not use words where the first sound does not make its normal sound such as in giraffe, ship, cheese, thumb. Stick the pictures on the appropriate pages.

Games for Recognising Letter Shapes...

Fishing for Sounds

You will need a few cards with individual letters. Attach a paper clip to each card. Using a small stick with a string and magnet, your child fishes for letter sounds. If your child can say the sound of the letter he/she wins the card, otherwise you win it.

Sequencing the Letters in your Child's Name

Providing the individual letter cards for each letter of your child's first name can be a useful way to teach the sequence of letters. Remember you will need to write a capital for the first letter and lower case for the rest.

If you want to print out the cards using a word processor use a font which has **ɑ**, not

a. Show your child how to make the name first, before shuffling the cards for him/her to have a try. For a very long name work with the first few and build up a letter at a time.

'What does it start with?' Box

You will need:

- ◆ A box
- ◆ Several items each beginning with a different sound and corresponding letter cards



This game is similar to the common objects game on the previous page, but the emphasis now is on recognising the sounds the letters make. Ask your child to choose an object from the box, to think what its first sound is (remember it is the sound you are looking for rather than the alphabet name) and then to match the object with the relevant card.

Sand Tray or Finger Paints

Children enjoy writing letters with their fingers in a tray of sand or with finger paints. These ways provide good opportunities to teach correct letter formation.



These next suggestions are to be used once your child has started reading books at school – NOT BEFORE.

Sentence Games

This activity is quite useful when your child has been given an early reading book. Quite often parents say "He's not reading the book. He's remembering the story off by heart". This can happen. Some children become over-dependent on the picture clues and do not look for clues from the words:

Making Sentences

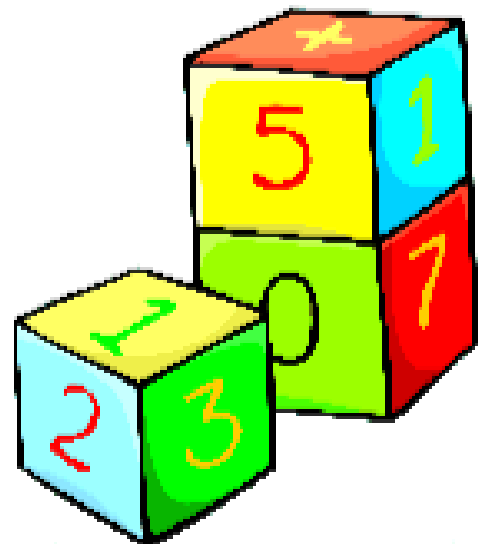
Read the book with your child so he/she is familiar with the story. Then simply use the first sentence from the reading book and copy it out on a strip of paper. Either write it out or if you use a word processor use a font such as Century Gothic (font size 36 at least). Leave a double space in between each word. Now cut up the sentence into the individual words. For example:



Ask your child to make the sentence, "This is a dog.", using the individual words. At first you will probably need to help. When he/she has made the sentence ask your child to read it to you and encourage him/her to point to each word with a finger.

Retain interest by only spending a few minutes a day on the activity. If your child makes a mistake do not say "That's wrong" immediately, because negative comments discourage. Ask your child to read the sentence and mistakes will often be self-corrected. If not, you can give clues such as, "What sound does **dog** start with?" If your child is still unable to read it, say positive comments such as "What a good try. You got all these right and only this part wrong. Well done." Then show your child the correct order.

We recommend working on a maximum of five sentences on each reading book.



Learning Through Play

Numbers

Introduction

Numbers can provide a lot of entertainment for small children. They first become aware of the sounds of numbers, then they begin to understand what they mean. Finally, they need to recognise them when they are written down.

There are **four main skills** that children need to develop before they can count. Follow the links to see these explained and how you can help.

1. Recognition of the sounds of the numbers.
2. The understanding of one-to-one correspondence.
3. The understanding of "How many are there?"
4. The number of objects is the same however they are arranged.

The next stage is for your child to recognise numbers as symbols which can taught by playing number recognition games.

Once children recognise numbers they will want to start writing them themselves. To help encourage them to form their numbers correctly, use our number formation guide. (found at the back of this leaflet)

Skill 1

Children need to learn the sounds of the numbers 'one, two, three...'.

Children can start to recognise the sound of numbers from an early age if they hear number songs and rhymes and hear people counting. Some examples of rhymes are:

- ❖ [Five currant buns in the baker's shop](#)
- ❖ [1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Once I caught a fish alive](#)
- ❖ [Five fat sausages frying in a pan](#)
- ❖ [1 potato, 2 potato, 3 potato, 4](#)

Books and stories that include numbers can help too. At story time make a point of counting the characters and the key items in the pictures. Some examples of books are:

- ❖ [Goldilocks and the Three Bears](#)
- ❖ [The Three Billy Goats Gruff](#)
- ❖ [The Very Hungry Caterpillar](#)
- ❖ [The Three Little Pigs](#)

These will give reinforcement to the sound of counting and with it the fact that numbers relate to different amounts. Children will then start to notice numbers in speech and begin to develop an understanding of how they are used.

The children may even be able to count by reciting the numbers from 1 - 10, but this has little meaning at this stage. It is a good idea to point out numbers that appear in everyday contexts such as on a clock, a telephone, on doors and money. This will help children to understand that numbers have a practical use, as well helping them to recognise written numbers.

Skill 2

Before learning to count a child needs to understand 'one to one correspondence'. This means being able to match one object to one other object or person.

You can practise 'one to one correspondence' in all sorts of different contexts. Laying the table is a good idea. Alternatively, you can do this in a play situation as indicated below.

Dough Cakes

Make some dough cakes and ask your child to give one to each of their soft toys. Use very small numbers at first.

Skill 3

Children need to understand what is meant by 'How many are there?'.

Counting

As you count objects together touch each one. This helps children to understand they are counting one thing at a time. Also, only count up to three at first and do not progress until your child can do this successfully. Gradually add one more number at a time. Counting opportunities arise with everyday objects such as cutlery or biscuits. Ask your child to guess how many objects there are before counting them together. It is important to build confidence through positive comments.

Counting Game/Throwing games

Games which involve throwing a number of objects, such as rolled up socks, in a waste paper bin or cardboard box can give good counting practice.



Counting trays

Use paper plates for this activity. Write a number on the plate. Provide a pile of dried pasta or bricks and show your child how to count the appropriate number onto each plate before he or she has a try. Underline 6 and 9 to avoid confusion.

Counting everyday objects

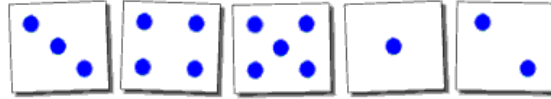
You will find many daily opportunities to count aloud together. Cooking is a wonderful way to introduce a child to practical maths and extend vocabulary. You can count baking cases, spoons of sugar or chocolate button decorations. Later you can use buns for simple addition and subtraction sums.

Skill 4

The number of objects is the same however they are arranged.

Ordering Numbers

Make some cards with numbers on one side and the corresponding number of spots on the reverse. Lay the cards out with the **spotted** sides upwards and ask your child to put them in order.



It is important that he or she can recognise the number of objects **however they are arranged**. Using the cards theme, you can represent some numbers with different patterns of spots. Ask your child to match the cards with the same number of spots. Take the opportunity also, to arrange everyday items in different formations, for your child to count.

Estimating

Developing the ability to estimate is also a useful skill. Asking a child to guess how many items are on a tray will help to develop this. Always count them out together afterwards, so that the child can see how close he or she was.

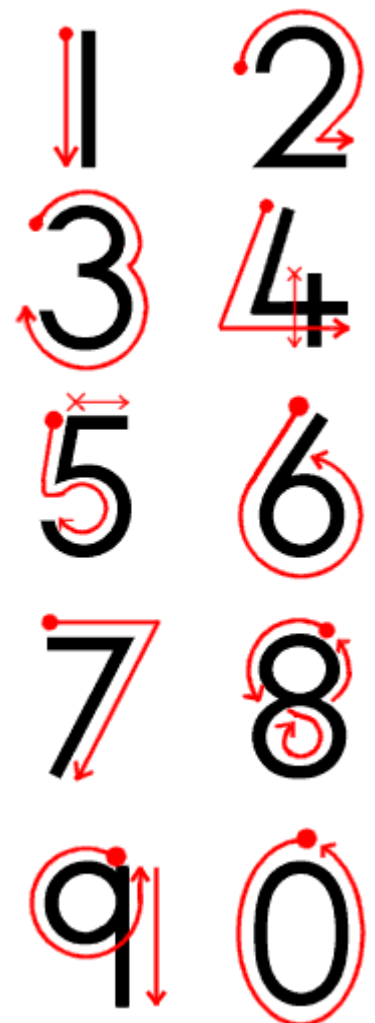
Recognising the Symbols

A fun way to help recognition of numbers is to select a few number cards. Take one from the pile without letting your child see it. Ask him or her to guess which one you have as you gradually expose the number from behind a screen (eg. a book). If your child guesses wrongly explain what the number is. Introduce a few numbers at first and build up slowly.

Number Formation Guide

Encourage your child to form numbers in the standard way. Bad habits are difficult to break, so following our simple guide can help to prevent problems at a later stage

Spots indicate the starting position of the pencil. The pencil should remain on the paper, following the arrows. For the numbers four and five, the pencil must be raised before completing the second part of each number. **Crosses** indicate the second starting positions.



This tracker helps you and your child prepare for school.

The Road To School

Everyone starts school with different abilities - your teacher will help you progress at your own level.

Speaking & literacy

- I like to read stories & look at picture books
- I am able to talk about myself, my needs & feelings
- I am practising recognising my name when it's written down

Listening & understanding

- I am able to sit still and listen for a short while
- I can follow instructions
- I understand the need to follow rules

Writing skills

- I like tracing patterns & colouring in
- I enjoy making marks
- I am practising holding a pencil

Sharing & turn taking

- I can share toys & take turns
- I like playing games with others
- I like interacting with other children

Interest in the world & new activities

- I enjoy learning about the world around me
- I am interested in exploring new activities or environments
- I like asking questions

Counting skills

- I enjoy practising counting objects
- I like saying number rhymes & playing counting games
- I can recognise some numbers when they are written down

Going to the toilet

- I can go to the toilet on my own, wipe myself properly & flush
- I can wash and dry my hands without any help

What are you looking forward to the most?
Is there anything you're unsure of?

Routines

- I have practised putting on my uniform & getting ready to leave on time
- I have a good bedtime routine so I'm not feeling tired for school
- I'm learning to eat at the times I will on school days

Eating

- I can use a knife & fork
- I can open my packed lunch on my own
- I am confident at opening wrappers & packaging

Self-care

- I know when to wash my hands
- I can wipe my nose
- I can ask for help if I don't feel well

Getting dressed & undressed on my own

- I can button & unbutton my shirt & use a zip
- I can put my own shoes & socks on
- I can change into my PE kit & put my coat on

Independence

- I am happy to be away from my mummy, daddy or my main carer
- I can put my belongings & look after my things
- I am happy to tidy my belongings & look after my things
- I am feeling confident about starting school

School bus

Remember - learning is not a competition, children learn at different rates. For more ideas to help prepare your child for school, talk to your childcare practitioner.