



## **Meadowcroft Community Infant School**

### **Transition to Reception Booklet**

A book of ideas, to help make the transition to Reception as smooth as possible.

This booklet gives many, many practical ideas to help your child over the next few months. There are suggestions for you and your child to try, involving all the areas of learning in the Early Year's Foundation Stage: Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Understanding the World; Mathematics; Communication and Language; Literacy; Expressive Arts and Design.

None of these ideas or suggestions are compulsory and we certainly don't suggest you try them all! Pick out a few that fit in with your lifestyle and adapt others to suit you and your child.

Most of all, make it FUN and enjoy the next few months with your child before they start school on a full time basis.

## Mathematics

The following list of activities incorporate counting, recognising numbers, sorting, mathematical language and memory skills.

Being able to count in order is an excellent start to number skills, but to count with any meaning they need to understand what numbers stand for.

- Number One (1). This can be discussed all the time by asking "How many?" in a variety of ways. For example, how many suns in the sky? How many cakes on the table? How many red lorries can you see? Etc. Ask these sorts of question as often as you can, indoors and outdoors.
- Number Two (2). This can be explored in similar ways. Play games involving two, or set out toys in sets of two. Play 'teddy bears' picnic' with two bears. Encourage your child to give out plates, cups, spoons, etc in sets of two, counting as they do it. Be prepared to repeat this type of activity! Your child will enjoy the game and repetition is a vital part of early learning. Look at pictures of animals and count two ears, two eyes, two feet etc. Also get your child to look at you, or themselves in a mirror, and count two eyes etc.



- Number Three (3). Look for, and create, sets of three around you. Look at three spots on a dice or on dominoes. Make sets of three cars, dolls and books. Read stories and sing songs/rhymes such as 'The Three Bears', 'Three Little Pigs', 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' and 'Three Blind Mice'.

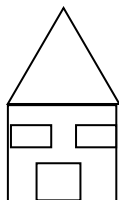


- Number Four (4). There are many examples of four in everyday life: four legs on a chair, or table; four legs on a dog, cat or farm animal. Help your child make a book out of A4 paper about four legs. They can cut out pictures out of magazines (old Argos catalogues are a good resource), showing things with four legs. At the bottom of each page, write 'four (4) legs on a (table)'etc. Read the book often with your child, asking such questions as 'How many legs? Can you hold up four fingers? Can you draw four dots?'
- Number Five (5). Look at number five in everyday life, such as five fingers on hands and five toes on feet. Sing songs such as 'five little ducks went swimming one day', 'five little speckled frogs', '1,2,3,4,5, once I caught a fish alive' or 'this little pig went to market' (words to all these can be found on back page).
- Number Six (6). To help learn six, look at six on a die or dominoes. Arrange items in sets of six - toys, sweets, marbles etc. Draw pictures of ladybirds and beetles and get your child to add six legs (and on the ladybird, they could add six spots), counting as they go.



## Other ideas

- Colouring by numbers will help your child to reinforce their ability to recognise numerals in a fun way. You could make up your own simple drawings (house, car, butterfly, flower etc) and use a simple key for them to follow to colour the picture, like the example below, adding the correct colour by the word, so they know number 1 is Red, or write the word in that colour.



1. Red
2. Blue
3. Green
4. Yellow
5. Brown



- Read the story 'The Hungry Caterpillar' by Eric Carle. Most libraries will have a copy. This book provides early counting experiences in a fun context. Day by day, the caterpillar eats 1 apple, 2 pears, 3 plums...(until he gets a tummy ache!)

This is a good story for a variety of reasons; counting and number recognition; knowledge about eating too much and the consequences; knowledge about life cycles and how the caterpillar turns into a butterfly. You could make a collage (or book) of the story to help your child recognise the numbers represented by collections of objects. You could make your own version (especially if you have a pet) like 'The hungry rabbit' or 'The greedy cat'.



- Look at numbers on door, cars, buses, shops, calendars, and telephones - anywhere they appear in the environment. Talk about them as you see them, encouraging your child to hold up the appropriate number of fingers for numbers 1

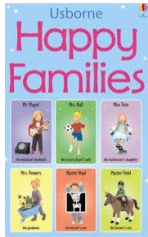
- 10 to check that they understand what the numbers stand for in practical terms.

- Practise writing shopping lists together - for example, your child can write the quantity of apples needed on the list. Then, at the shop, let your child count out that number of apples.
- Draw pictures and ask your child to add objects to it, for example, draw a cake, say 'Katie is two, can you draw two candles on her cake?' Can you write the number two on the cake?
- Mould numerals out of modelling clay or dough (play dough recipe on back page).
- Make number biscuits - plastic cutters of numbers from toyshops are cheap. Alternatively, roll biscuit dough into thin 'sausages' and curl them into number shapes.
- 'Finger write' numerals in the air, in sand, crumbly compost or earth, sugar, salt or flour in a baking tray.
- As you lay the table, get your child to help you and count out the right number of cups, plates, forks etc. Can your child make sure there is enough of each item for

everybody? The same for a 'pretend' teddy bears picnic, or can they help you pack enough of everything for a 'real' picnic.

### Sorting

- Your child needs practise sorting things. Firstly into different kinds of things and then to progress onto sorting things of the same type according to colour, size etc.
- Many everyday activities will help your child in sorting. When encouraging your child to tidy up, try saying 'Can you put all your *soft* toys away first' or '. All your toys with wheels' etc. 'Can you help sort the washing? Can you sort out 3 piles, Mummy's clothes, Daddy's clothes and your clothes?



- Use ice cream containers to sort a variety of things, shells, buttons, socks, etc according to different criteria such as size or colour.
- Playing cards and happy families etc could be sorted by colour or number.

### More and Less

- It would be useful to familiarise your child with the vocabulary of 'more', 'less', 'larger', 'smaller', 'taller', 'shorter', 'bigger'.
- You can help your child to understand this vocabulary during everyday life - when you are at the shops, talk about bigger and smaller bags, boxes, jars, potatoes etc.
- At home, when you are serving a meal, talk about who needs larger portions (the grown-ups, because they are bigger and need lots of energy!)?
- Talk about flowers in the garden, that roses are bigger than daisies. Discuss piles of toys - are there more cars than animals, or less trains than track?
- Draw pictures of flowers/trees, cars/buses etc making sure there are more of one than the other, then ask your child which has more and which has less.
- Different ways of making five - Ask your child to select five animals/cars etc. Count to five together. Move the cars into two groups and say 'one car and four cars'. Explain to your child that there are still five cars. Count the four cars and say 'one more makes five'. Emphasise the point that four and one together makes five. Put the cars in a pile again and count them. Ask your child to make two different piles with the cars. Repeat this until you have created all the combinations to five that you can think of (5-0, 4-1, 3-2, 2-3, 1-4, 0-5).



## Memory skills

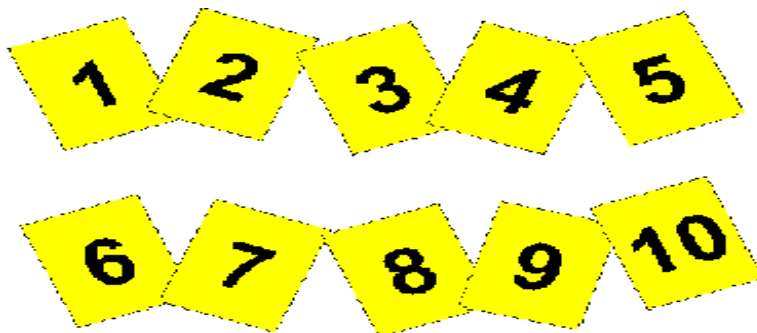
- 'Finding the difference' is an important skill for learning maths. It practises the skills needed for recognising differences between numbers of objects, which in turn will lead on to subtraction.
- Draw two very simple pictures, but add three or four extra details to one of the pictures. Then ask your child if they can 'find the difference' between the two pictures.
- 'Matching pairs' card games are very good for memory skills as they have to remember what they turn over and where, to get their 'pairs'.
- 'Kim's game' is another good memory game. This is easy to do at home. Take a tray and put three or four objects on it (for example car, teddy, brick, spoon) then ask your child to close their eyes, no cheating! whilst you remove an object, they then have to try and remember what was on the tray and work out what is missing.
- Passing a simple message from one adult to another 'Go and tell Dad/Nanny .....!'



## Extra ideas



- Any board game involving dice will help your child practise counting. They will not even realise they are learning! Make sure as you play, you ask your child which number people have rolled. At first they will need to count the spots, but with practise they will recognise them instantly. Ask them to help people count the number of spaces they need to move along the board.
- You could make 'flashcards' of numerals, starting with 1 - 5, (when they seem to have mastered these you could extend to 6 - 10). Put a number on one side and the appropriate number of dots on the other. Show your child a number and they draw the correct number of dots on a piece of paper. They can check their answer by turning over the card. You can play it the opposite way by showing the dots and trying to write the correct numeral, but this is harder.
- Write numeral 1 - 10 on card or paper and number your stairs, so every time you and your child go upstairs, counting them as you go, your child is seeing the correct numeral.

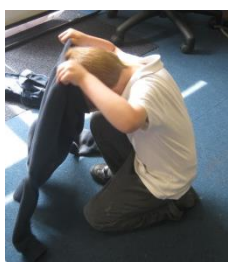


## Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Here are just a few ideas to help your child become more independent, as they prepare for Reception class.



- **It would help your child** if they could become proficient at dressing and undressing themselves, as they will have two PE lessons per week, where they will need to change into their PE kit and back into their uniform afterwards.



**They also need to practice:**

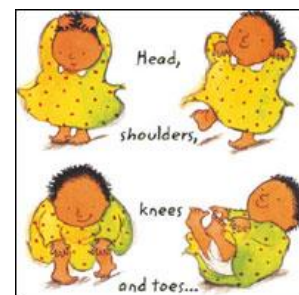
- Using the toilet independently, including wiping themselves after using the toilet and then washing and drying their hands.
- Eating using a knife, fork and spoon and make a good attempt at cutting up their own food.
- Putting on and taking off coats and shoes, doing zips, buttons and poppers with minimal help.

VELCRO shoes and plimsolls are essential for uniform and PE!!

## Physical Development

Physical development includes large movement as well as more manipulative smaller movement.

- Encourage your child to dance freely to music, whether it is on the television, radio or CD player. You could play 'Musical Statues' or 'Simon Says' and when the music stops say 'Stand on one leg' or 'Touch your toes/elbow/ankle' etc. 'Heads, shoulders, knees and toes' is another good one to do, helping them move but also where parts of their body are.



- 'Follow my leader' is another game to try, where they follow you to start and copy your actions and then you can swap and follow them! which normally provides a few laughs!
- Try and include different ways of moving 'Can you move sideways like a crab?' 'Can you shuffle/roll/crawl/skip/slide/hop?' etc.
- Use all the possible language you can and encourage your child to repeat the words.
- Encourage your child to move slowly, quickly, forwards, backwards.
- Visit the park where they can have the freedom to try larger equipment in a safe environment. Jumping off things and landing correctly, (on two feet and bend their knees) is a good skill to learn. Also climbing through tunnels, down poles, over bridges etc.



- If you are climbing stairs, whether at home or out and about, encourage your child to use alternate feet.
- Helping in the garden with weeding, planting (sprinkling seeds) etc is good for their finer motor skills.
- Cars and a garage, trains and a track, provide good opportunities for your child to use finer movements to encounter smaller and more complicated spaces.
- Threading beads and cotton reels, dressing dolls/teddies are also excellent.
- Cutting paper/card/material for collage/sticking activity is very useful as cutting is a very difficult art to master.

- Using a knife, fork, chopsticks, spoon etc. to eat with.
- Throw and catch a ball with your child, using small and large balls.
- Give them a bat/racket/stick/cardboard tube and encourage them to tap the ball slowly and carefully around some obstacles (cones/stones/shoes etc)
- If they have a scooter or tricycle, encourage 'scooting' and 'pedalling'.
- 'Skittles' is a good activity for 'hand/eye' coordination. You can buy them quite inexpensively or have fun making them with your child (old lemonade bottles are ideal - You could just stick some numbers on or cover them in old wallpaper first). They work well with some sand, earth or water in the bottom to stop them blowing over.



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## Understanding the World

In this area of learning, children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in science, design and technology, history, geography and information and communication technology (ICT).

Children therefore need the chance to explore, observe, solve problems, predict things, make decisions and discuss with others.



- They learn necessary skills by using a range of tools, for example computers, magnifying glasses, gardening tools, scissors, hole puncher, screwdriver etc.
- Open ended questions are important in helping your child think things through, for example, "How can we...?", "What would happen here if we...?", "Can you find a way to...?", "What else can we try?", "Why would you go there?", "What do they use this for?", "How does it work?", "What does it do?".
- Get your child to describe something they find in the garden or park, like a conker and the prickly shell it comes in. Encourage words like smooth, shiny, prickly, rough. Getting them to observe the item and then draw it is a useful skill.
- Use lots of descriptive language with your child, whether you're at home, shops or the park.

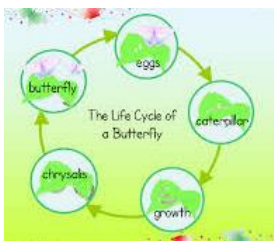


- When your child is helping around the home (in the kitchen or DIY), discuss safety and hygiene.

- Cooking is a great activity. From cakes, drinks, smoothies, jelly, to pies, bread and pizzas. All these use different ingredients and use different scientific methods. A good opportunity to discuss hot/cold, melting, liquids and solids. Water to ice and melting back to water again is fascinating for them (making your own lollies is perfect for this).



- Discuss regular events like your daily routine and the difference between school days and weekends, is there a difference and why?
- Talk about gradual change like a plant growing, or themselves growing. Look at photos of when they were a baby, toddler and now. What could they do then and what can they do now? See if they can put the photos in sequence. Grow something like mustard and cress seeds (which grow really quickly) or the top from a carrot (slice top off and put in a lid with a small amount of water). How fast do they grow? What do they need to grow?



- Discuss life cycles of frogs, butterflies, chicks etc

- Look at toys that you played with as a child and even toys that your parents played with! Use language like 'yesterday', 'old', 'past', 'now', 'then', etc.
- **ICT**. Helping your child to become aware of technology around them and how it all works. For example, washing machines, ovens, microwaves, kettles, telephones, computers, lights, street lights, remote controls (telly/CD), remote control toys, tape player, pedestrian crossings, cars etc.
- When you're out walking/in the car/on the bus, look at shapes and sizes of windows, buildings, signs, etc. Help them use the appropriate language like: park, town, village, countryside, road, path, railway, house, flats, market, temple, church, synagogue, etc.
- Also encourage the use of words to describe opinion like: busy, noisy, quiet, attractive, ugly, litter, tidy, pollution etc.

## Expressive Arts and Design

Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding. This area includes art, music, dance, dressing up and imaginative play.

- A lot of areas overlap, and you will find the ideas in the physical section and singing number rhymes in the maths section, also fit into this section.



### 1. Communication and Language

### 2. Literacy

These areas of learning include communication, speaking and listening in different situations and for different purposes, being read a wide range of books and writing for a variety of purposes.

- Everyday situations such as getting dressed, shopping, walking/driving to school provide lots of opportunity for conversation and to extend the use of language.

- Your surroundings offer natural opportunities to look at and learn about printed language, such as on food packaging, road signs and labels.
- Using stories with repeated refrains like 'You can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread man!' and other favourite stories like 'Goldilocks and the three bears' give your child plenty of opportunity for speaking.
- When reading a story, ask your child to predict what's going to happen next. Also can they find the initial of their name on the page.
- Visit your local library, to choose books and to listen to 'storytime'.
- Talk about books for example, page, cover, author, illustrations, print etc
- Encourage your child to recall words they see frequently like; exit, bus stop, open, own name, friends and family names, etc.



- Help your child hold a pencil correctly and have paper and pens around for them to use.
- Help your child practise writing their name. Using a yellow (or any light colour) felt tip, write their name, using a capital first letter and then small letters (lowercase). Your child can then write over the top with a pencil or darker colour pen. Also doing dot-to-dot for their name helps them to write it. When they become proficient at this, let them try on their own.
- Dot-to-dot books generally are very good practise for controlled pencil use.
- Drawing lines for them on paper is a great help, as this helps them realise which letters go above the line and which below, for example 'Jacky', the 'k' going above the line and the 'y' going below the line.
- Say the name and the sound of the letters in their name. Can they find these letters in other books, magazines, on cars, etc
- When they can easily hear the sound of their name (S for Sarah), try 'I spy something beginning with the sound S'. This is especially good in cars and on buses.

- Make letter cards of their name, can they put them in the right order.
- Similar to the colour by number idea (in the maths section), you can draw simple pictures and 'colour by letter' - only use the letters of their name to start with.
- Let them practise their name and pencil skills with chalk and paintbrushes, you don't even need a blackboard or paints. Let them use chalk and paintbrushes with pots of water, the patio, garden path, etc. The water dries instantly and they think this is great fun and the chalk washes away and eventually wears away. It's a really good exercise for large motor skills.



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- 'Matching pairs' is a good game to play, this time with letters. You can make this yourself.
- Say the alphabet (or sing the alphabet song) a few times a day. Start by saying it together, then take it in turn to say the letters or miss out letters for your child to fill in as you go.
- Read the alphabet just as often, and point to each letter as you say it. Then ask your child to point to the letters and only say the letter they point to. This will help them to associate a letter name or a letter sound to a written letter.
- Have an alphabet frieze in their bedroom, or the kitchen (home made or shop bought).
- Apart from the capital letter at the beginning of their name, your child needs to use small letters (lowercase) for writing. But they do need to recognise both, be familiar with both, and realise they have the same name and sound.
- Magnetic letters are a good thing to have, usually on the fridge. Letting them play with them and become familiar with them and find the letters of their name.
- 'Alphabet spaghetti' and 'Alphabites' are an occasional fun way to spell their name!
- Once they are comfortable with the letters in their name and know some of the names and sounds, make an alphabet book. Start with which page their name goes on, where 'Mummy' goes etc and add words every now and again and begin to build a special resource personal to your child.

## Number Rhymes

1. Five little ducks went swimming one day,  
Over the hill and far away,  
Mother duck said 'Quack, quack, quack, quack,  
But only four ducks came swimming back.

Repeat for 4, 3, 2, 1 little ducks. Last verse:  
No little ducks went swimming one day.....  
....then five little ducks came swimming back.

2. Five little speckled frogs,  
Sat on a speckled log eating the most delicious grubs, yum yum,  
One jumped into the pool,  
where it was nice and cool,  
now there were only four little speckled frogs, glub, glub.

Repeat for 4, 3, 2, 1, 0 speckled frogs.

3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, once I caught a fish alive,  
6, 7, 8, 9, 10, then I let it go again,  
Why did you let it go?  
Because it bit my finger so,  
Which finger did it bite?  
This little finger on my right.

4. (counting toes as you go, or fingers)  
This little piggy went to market,  
This little piggy stayed at home,  
This little piggy had roast beef,  
This little piggy had none  
And this little piggy cried 'wee, wee, wee' all the way home.

### Playdough Recipe - traditional

2 cups of plain flour  
1 cups of salt  
4 teaspoons of cream of tartar  
2 tablespoons of cooking oil  
2 cups of water  
few drops of food colouring

Mix ingredients all together.  
Boil the mixture in a saucepan until it comes  
away clean from the sides.  
Take out of saucepan and leave for a while  
to cool.  
Knead for a little while.

This mixture will keep in an airtight  
container for 4-6 weeks.

### Playdough Recipe - microwave

2 cups of plain flour  
1 cup of salt  
2 teaspoons of cream of tartar  
2 tablespoons of cooking oil  
2 cups of water  
Few drops of food colouring

Mix ingredients all together,  
in a microwaveable bowl.  
Cover with clingfilm and pierce several times.  
Cook on medium heat, for a total of 5 mins, **1 minute  
at a time and stir each time.**  
Leave to cool for a while and knead slightly.

This mixture will keep in an airtight  
container for 4-6 weeks.