



Excellence, Innovation, Respect

**Oakgrove Primary and Nursery  
Early Years Foundation Stage**

**Supporting Your Child's Learning  
At Home  
2019-2020**

Please keep this booklet in a safe place for future reference

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## **Introduction**

For some parents and carers, a child's first step in school can feel like a leap into the unknown. This is often exacerbated by the fact that most children are not reliable witnesses of their own learning, just try asking 'what did you do at school today?'. Most parents do not get full or satisfying responses.

The purpose of this booklet is twofold. On one hand we hope that by providing examples of the learning children are doing in school we can demystify what happens during the school day. The second aim is to provide examples of how you can support and extend your child's learning at home. We hope you find it of use.

If you have any questions about how to you can further help your child's learning at home please do not hesitate to talk to their teacher.

## **Activities for parents and children to enjoy doing at home together**

- Sing songs and nursery rhymes
- Talk about different shapes and items
- Read together – talk about the pictures and what is happening in the story
- Talk about numbers, colours, words and letters they see out and about
- Explore the area at different times – talk about changes and similarities
- Cook together
- Plant seeds, care for them and watch them grow together
- Extend your child's vocabulary at every opportunity
- Talk about the things they see and notice
- Explore crafts and arts together – get messy and creative!
- Learning to write their name and other words
- Practising their phonics
- Learning numbers to 20, counting up and back, one more, one less
- Make music together
- Play games together
- Sharing a hobby

## Guidance for Development in Fine Motor Skills

**Fine motor skill** (or dexterity) is the coordination of **small** muscles, in movements—usually involving the synchronisation of hands and fingers with the eyes. Children who do not have appropriate fine motor strength, are unable to hold a pencil correctly and therefore not ready to write. These children should not be hurried to pick up a pencil, instead they should be provided with the opportunities to develop their fine motor skills. Children mature and develop at different rates but at the end of the day, they all get to the same point and it is the journey that is important!

In order to develop children's fine motor skills, their gross motor skills need to be developed too. Once their gross motor movements are strong, we are able to teach the children to use their small, fine motor movements just as confidently.

On this sheet you will find some simple, open-ended ideas for practising motor skills through art, sensory play and manipulative games; as well as gross motor activities. Have fun!

### Gross motor activities

- Walk along a log
- Step across stepping-stones or paving slabs.
- Stand on one leg (look at a spot in front of you to help!)
- Jump from two feet to two-feet/ jump from a balance to two feet.
- Jump two feet to two feet around and around!
- Walk along a chalk line on the ground.
- Hold your arms out wide and be an aeroplane!
- Hopscotch
- Hoops provide a super jumping activity- in and out, in and out!
- Jumping down from a height- steps or small banks.
- Silly walks- tiptoeing, stamping, jumping, running (slow and fast), side stepping,
- Throwing stones and sticks into a river or stream.
- Jumping into a puddle or squelching through thick mud.
- Take a ball for a walk with your feet- keep it close!
- Roll down a bank.

### Fine motor activities

- Thread beads onto a pipe cleaner or string (use cellotape to stiffen the end and to act as the needle).
- Make a pasta necklace.
- Thread cheerios onto a piece of spaghetti.
- Hammer golf tees into playdough.
- Pick up and sort dried beans using child friendly tweezers or just fingers (pincer grip between thumb and fore finger).
- Practise closing and opening buttons on a coat or shirt.
- Use a variety of scoops to transfer materials such as lentils, sand or small pasta shapes into containers.
- Use chunky chinks to decorate paths or drives at home!
- Warm wool or string around different shapes cut out of cardboard.
- Weave ribbon or string in and out of fencing or bannisters.
- Create pictures with tile shapes or blocks.
- Thread pipe cleaners into the holes in a colander.

- Thread small beads onto the spaghetti.
- Finger painting
- Draw pictures or patterns in the steam on a shower screen at bath time.
- Blow bubbles and try to pop them with your fingers in the bath or outside.
- Sort small objects like stones or shells- can you use them to make patterns?
- Build something fantastic with Duplo or Lego!
- Whisk up the washing up bubbles or bubble bath, using hand whisks.
- Create letters of your name using salt dough.
- Stack some disposable cups- can you make a high castle?
- Use cotton bubs to paint a picture.
- Play and sort coloured match-sticks (available from many pound shops).
- Spooning marbles into different containers.
- Sing number songs like five little ducks went swimming one day, using the fingers to count out the numbers of ducks.
- Hanging out some socks on a small indoor washing line using pegs.
- Squeeze a peg to the beat of a favourite song.
- Use tweezers to pick up small things, like pom poms.
- Use a hole punch (many child-friendly fancy pattern hole punches are available from retailers such as Hobbycraft or The Range).
- Creating pictures using mosaic paper squares or on pegs boards.
- Plastic pipettes (available from Amazon) or turkey blasters are fantastic to transfer liquids from one container to another and to explore colour mixing.
- Lacing activities- a simple piece of paper with holes punched would work a treat!
- Weave strips of paper into a pattern.
- Sort and counting 1p and 2p coins.
- Get constructing with small marshmallows and spaghetti!
- Stack building blocks, stones or buttons- how high can you go?!

## Playdough

Playdough provides a fantastic opportunity for children to manipulate, squeeze, twist and build with it.

You can add colour, glitter and spices. Natural materials can be added to create patterns and prints.

### Make your own playdough

- 2 cups plain flour (all purpose)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup salt
- 2 tablespoons cream of tartar
- Up to 1.5 cups boiling water (adding in increments until it feels just right)
- food colouring (optional)
- few drops glycerine (optional- adds more shine!)

*The children make this themselves in the classroom. If they are involved just use warm water. You will just need to knead it for a little longer to build up the gluten and the dough's stretchiness!*

Mix the flour, salt, cream of tartar and oil in a large mixing bowl. Now add (optional) food colouring to the boiling water then into the dry ingredients. Stir continuously until it becomes a sticky, combined dough. Add the glycerine (optional) and allow it to cool down then take it out of the bowl and knead it vigorously for a couple of minutes until all of the stickiness has gone. This is the most important part of the process, so keep at it until it's the perfect consistency! If it remains a little sticky then add a touch more flour until just right.

## Guidance for Supporting your Child to Read

For children to learn to read, they need to be able to:

- match pictures;
- match shapes;
- match letters;
- spot differences in pictures and letters;
- recognise that letters can be written in different sizes, colours, fonts and at different angles and still be the same letter;
- remember the shapes of letters;
- make letter shapes;
- match pictures to their initial sounds;
- be able to say the sounds in words;
- hear the difference between different sounds;
- hear rhyming words;
- blend sounds together;
- complete phoneme substitution activities eg exchange c in the word cat with a m and read as mat.

### Games to support your child's reading development

- I – Spy  
I spy with my little eye, something red  
I spy with my little eye, something you can play with  
I spy with my little eye, something to eat  
I spy with my little eye, something beginning with ...  
I spy with my little eye, something which rhymes with ...
- Spot the difference for looking closely at pictures.

### Activities to encourage left to right movement in reading:

- Scan a page of a picture book -
- Find every: Letter a
- Tricky or high frequency word – eg the, in, at, I

### Matching pictures

- Photocopy a picture and cut it up into a jigsaw. Match the pieces over the original picture.
- Play Snap
- Play Pairs
- Play Bingo



## **Oral Blending and Segmenting**

- Show your child a picture of a simple CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) word eg map. Can they sound out the word m-a-p?
- You could also pretend to be a robot and say each of the sounds eg t-a-p. Can your child blend the word together and say tap?

## **Reading Tricky and High Frequency Words and CVC words**

- Matching word cards and snap games.
- Play Lotto or pairs games so children start to recognise the words on sight.
- When your child is beginning to link letters to sounds, you can practise reading simple CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) words using the letters and sounds your child recognises eg pig, cat, dog, man, tap.

## **Reading Books**

When your child is beginning to blend and segment words, they will bring home a reading book. Some of the books we have in Foundation are phonically decodeable books and some are repetitive and are intended for children to read common words on sight. Your child will bring home a variety of these books to encourage different ways of learning to read.

When reading with your child, they should be encouraged to trace the words with their finger. If they cannot read the word on sight, they should use their phonics to sound out the word and blend the sounds together to read.

If your child cannot read a 'tricky word' that cannot be decoded using phonics please read the word to them so they start to recognise it on sight.

By the end of the Foundation year, children should be able to read sentences and show understanding of what they have read. As your child's reading skills develop, please ask them to repeat what they have read. If they have understood what they have read, they will be able to repeat it back to you without having to decode the words again!

## **Reading to your Child**

At this stage of your child's reading development, it is essential that you are still reading books to them!

## **Why Reading to Children is Important**

Children's imaginations are sparked through hearing many different stories. It is extremely important that children hear lots of different stories so they have ideas for their writing as their writing skills develop.

You will also be helping your child to develop some higher order comprehension skills before they are able to decode words themselves. When reading to your child, please ask them questions about what has happened in the story, why characters have acted as they have, how characters are feeling and why and ask them to predict what they think will happen next.

Your child is at a critical stage in their language development. By reading to your child, they will pick up grammatical structures in the English language and begin to understand how sentences are constructed.

Joining in with stories is an important part of learning to read. Children will begin to predict what words might come next which will help them to develop more fluency in their reading.

Vocabulary development is particularly important and is often an area that holds children back when they are developing their reading comprehension skills. When you are reading to your child, please check they understand the meaning of individual words. You will be surprised how many meanings they do not know which we as adults presume they do know!!

Showing your child that reading can be fun!! Research has shown that where children read for pleasure they will achieve higher in all areas of the curriculum.

Perhaps most importantly, snuggling up with a book can be a really special time at the end of the day for you to enjoy with your child and to help them relax and get ready for bed!

Working in partnership with parents is important to us at Oakgrove Primary and Nursery. If you have any questions about how you can support your child with learning to read, please do not hesitate to contact their class teacher.

## Introducing Handwriting in Foundation

At Oakgrove Primary and Nursery, we use a cursive style of handwriting with lead in lines starting on the lines and exit lines. This style is introduced from the Foundation stage so children do not need to re-learn a style of handwriting when they progress to joining their handwriting later.

The advantages to using a cursive style of handwriting are:

- All letters start in the same place;
- Letter reversals are decreased;
- It enhances spelling ability;
- Children are less likely to make errors in spelling due to the continuous flow;
- It is quicker for children to put pen to paper so their ideas flow;
- It supports development of reading whole words rather than individual letters;
- It supports the development of memory skills;
- It will be easier for children to learn to print letters later than to teach a cursive style after they can print.
- Children's writing will be neater in the long term;

In order for children to learn to acquire a legible, fluent and fast handwriting style they need to develop the following skills:

- Good gross and fine motor skills:

Gross motor involves upper body strength alongside muscle movement in the shoulder, elbow and wrist.

- Fine motor involves many different skills including:
  - strength in hands and fingers;
  - a pincer grasp (picking up objects between first finger and thumb);
  - palm arch (holding objects);
  - manipulation (moving objects with one hand without the help of the other hand);
  - being able to touch each of their fingers with the thumb on that hand;
  - moving fingers independently of each other;
  - using both sides of the body at the same time eg cutting paper whilst holding the paper with the other hand;
  - crossing the midline eg putting on socks;
  - hand-eye co-ordination eg threading.
- A recognition of pattern;
- A language to talk about shapes and movements;
- The main handwriting movements involved in writing the letters l, c and r.

These skills need to be in place before a child begins to learn to write so a lot of time is spent developing and practising these skills to ensure a child is secure before letter formation is taught.

## **Partnership between School and Home**

We value working in partnership with parents and carers to support children in their development in writing. Whilst some children enter school being able to write their name, they may have learnt a print style of handwriting. These children will therefore take time to re-learn the cursive style of handwriting but time spent in Foundation doing this will help your child enormously in the future. A sheet of the cursive style of letters is attached and we would really appreciate you helping your child to develop this style of handwriting at home. When writing, children should always be supervised until their letter formation is secure so they do not pick up bad habits which will be difficult to eradicate in the future.

In Foundation, we use a multi-sensory approach to teaching letter formation eg writing in sand, cornflour, sandpaper letters etc as we believe children are less likely to form bad handwriting habits if this approach is used.

## **Stepped Approach**

As with phonics, the children will work through each step in learning and only moved on when they are ready. We will assess which step your child is on within the following steps:

1. Development of gross motor skills is appropriate.
2. Development of fine motor skills is appropriate.
3. Language in place – up, down, across, over, curve, straight, diagonal, around etc.
4. Recognition of shape and pattern.
5. Being able to copy shapes and patterns.
6. Ready to learn letter formation.
7. Ready to learn joined script.

Home-school partnership is essential in ensuring we work together to make handwriting development a success at Oakgrove Primary and Nursery. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher if you have any questions or concerns - we are always happy to help!

# Guidance to Support Your Child With Numbers

**Children are expected to be working with numbers from 0-20 by the end of the Foundation year.**

Children develop through the following steps in their understanding of mathematical concepts:

- Understanding mathematical language and number names through singing songs and learning number rhymes

Singing songs such as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Once I Caught a Fish Alive  
5 Little Speckled Frogs  
3 Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed

These songs are a fun way to help children learn about counting forwards and backwards which is the basis for adding and subtracting numbers. It is also an excellent way to help your child develop memory skills.

There are lots of number song clips on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/schoolradio/subjects/earlylearning/nurserysongs>

- Reciting number names in order with an understanding of quantity

Counting forwards and backwards to 10 and singing number songs will support this stage of your child's development. Children often find counting beyond 10 difficult and often miss out number 15. Repetition in counting will help them to learn the sequence over time. When your child has mastered counting forwards and backwards to 10 you could extend their learning by counting forwards and backwards to 20.

- Understand quantities and using 1:1 correspondence to count small quantities of objects, actions or steps

Playing board games, counting out plates, knives, forks and spoons to lay the table, counting biscuits on a plate and counting stairs will support your child to learn to count using 1:1 correspondence. As they start to develop this skill, ask them to move the object they are counting so they know when they have counted them all!

- Understanding the concept of 'How many?' and counting to find the answer

Use everyday opportunities to ask your child 'how many egg cups do we need?' and encourage them to count the number of people and then count out the number of objects.

- Recognising small quantities eg dots on a die or small quantities of objects and knowing that the quantity stays the same however the objects are arranged eg a group of 5 is the same as a group of 2 and a group of 3

- Estimating

Show your child a small group of objects on a tray before covering the objects with a cloth. Ask them to estimate how many there are without counting the objects. Counting together afterwards to check how close they were is important too!

- Recognising quantities with more or less

Show children 2 groups of objects and ask them which group has more or less. Develop different language eg fewer, most, least.

- Recognising the number symbols

Ask your child to spot numbers when you are out and about. Using car number plates and door numbers or when you are out shopping can be fun ways to find numbers. You may also spot them on calendars or in books. Children should learn the symbols 1-5, then 0-10 and then 11-20.

- Ordering numbers

When your child recognises the number symbols, you can ask them to order digit cards developing their understanding in small steps; 1-5, 0-10 and 0-20.

- Matching quantities to number symbols

When your child can recognise the number symbols ask them to count out buttons, pasta shapes, biscuits, sweets etc to match the quantity on the digit card.

- Finding 1 more or 1 less

Ask your child to find 1 more or 1 less than an amount of objects. It is important that children understand that when they find 1 more they are adding 1 more object and the number gets bigger and when they find 1 less they are taking 1 object away and the number gets smaller. This concept can be reinforced using digit cards, arranged in order, and children understanding that 1 more is the number following the number and 1 less is the number before.

- First stages of addition – children finding how many objects altogether

The children should understand that there are a quantity of objects in 1 group and a quantity in the second group. Ask your child how many objects altogether and encourage them to push the 2 groups of objects together and count how many there are in total. This could be done whilst playing with cars or farm animals etc as a fun way to encourage children to use maths!

- Starting to use the language of addition and subtraction

In practical activities start to develop the children's understanding of addition and subtraction. Using objects to support, ask the children questions such as: If I have 2 biscuits and 3 cakes how many are there altogether? If I have 6 sweets and take 2 away how many will I have left?

- Formal addition and subtraction

When children have an understanding of addition and subtraction, they will be introduced to written number sentences. To find the answer for addition, they should be encouraged to count out the number of objects for each side of the number sentence and count how many altogether. For subtraction they should count out the first number and then take away the second number in the sentence to find how many are left.

- Finding halves

Children should be taught finding half of a number by sharing between 2. You could use sweets or biscuits and share an amount between 2 teddy bears.

- Finding doubles

Children are taught to find doubles of numbers by adding the number again. You could use 2 plates and count out the number to be doubled on 1 plate and then the same number on the second plate. Your child should then count how many altogether. You could introduce this in practical activities by asking questions such as: I have 2 forks what would double 2 forks be?

- Sharing

This concept should be introduced in practical activities such as setting the table. Count out a number of plates and ask your child how many each person will have if there are x number of people at the table. Encourage the children to share to each person saying 1 for you, 1 for you, 1 for you and then start again at the first person. They then need to count how many each person has when they are all counted out.

- Grouping

Again this concept should be introduced in practical activities. Using teddy bears or plates ask the children if each teddy had 2 sweets each how many would there be altogether. The children will need to give each bear 2 sweets and then count how many there are altogether.

- Writing numbers and recording number sentences

Children will begin to record number sentences and answers when they have a full understanding of the concepts of addition and subtraction using objects and practical activities.

## **Shape, Space and Measure**

- Recognising and naming 2D shapes

Encourage your child to recognise shapes in everyday objects.

- Talking about properties of 2D shapes

When talking to your child about shapes ask them how they know it is a particular shape eg it is a triangle because it has 3 sides and 3 corners.

- Recognising and naming 3D shapes

When your child can name 2D shapes introduce 3D shapes such as cylinder, cube, cuboid and sphere. Look at different everyday objects, eg tins of beans, so children make links between everyday objects and 3D shapes.

- Talking about properties of 3D shapes

When exploring 3D shapes talk to your child about the number of faces, corners and edges the shape has. You could also talk about the shape of the faces and whether the shape has a straight or curved edge or face.

- Understanding prepositions (where something is)

Play games with your child such as place the teddy bear on, next to, behind, in front, between the boxes etc. This is an important stage in your child's language development.

- Using everyday language related to time

Encourage your child to talk about things they are doing, have done or going to do. They should be developing simple language such as now, next, after, before, tomorrow, today and yesterday.

- Beginning to use everyday language related to money

Introduce money by encouraging your child to pay when they go shopping. Talk about the different coins that we use. During role play, children will start to use language such as “that will be 5p”.

- Ordering and sequencing familiar events

When you take part in activities over the day or weekend, ask your child to remember what they have done and in the correct order. You could also develop this area of learning through sequencing stories.

- Ordering two or three items by length or height

During practical activities ask children to order different objects by length and height. You could ask them questions such as are you shorter or taller than a door.

- Ordering two items by weight or capacity

Cooking is a fun way of exploring weight and capacity with an enjoyable end result as well!

If you have any questions about how to develop your children’s understanding of mathematical concepts please do not hesitate to contact their class teacher.

## Appendix

Rhymes for letter formation - taken from Read Write Inc.

<p>a</p>  <p>Around the apple and down the leaf.</p>	<p>b</p>  <p>Down the laces to the heel and around the toe.</p>	<p>c</p>  <p>Curl around the caterpillar.</p>	<p>d</p>  <p>Around the dinosaurs bottom, up his tall neck &amp; down to his toes.</p>	<p>e</p>  <p>Lift off the top and scoop out the egg.</p>	<p>f</p>  <p>Down the stem and draw the leaves.</p>
<p>g</p>  <p>Around the girls face, down her hair and give her a curl.</p>	<p>h</p>  <p>Down the head, to his hooves and over his back.</p>	<p>i</p>  <p>Down the body and dot for the head.</p>	<p>j</p>  <p>Down his body, curl, dot for his head.</p>	<p>k</p>  <p>Down the kangaroo's body tail and leg.</p>	<p>l</p>  <p>Down the long leg.</p>
<p>m</p>  <p>Down Maisie, mountain, mountain.</p>	<p>n</p>  <p>Down Nobby and over his net.</p>	<p>o</p>  <p>All around the orange.</p>	<p>p</p>  <p>Down the pirates plait and around his face.</p>	<p>qu</p>  <p>Round her head, up past her earring, down her hair, and flick.</p>	<p>r</p>  <p>Down the robots back and curl over his arm.</p>
<p>s</p>  <p>Slither down the snake.</p>	<p>t</p>  <p>Down the tower, across the tower.</p>	<p>u</p>  <p>Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle.</p>	<p>v</p>  <p>Down a wing, up a wing.</p>	<p>w</p>  <p>Down, up, down, up.</p>	<p>x</p>  <p>Down the arm and leg, repeat the other side.</p>
<p>y</p>  <p>Down a horn, up a horn and under head.</p>	<p>z</p>  <p>Zig-zag-zig.</p>				

## Letter Formation and Order

m a s d t i n p q

o c k u b f e l h

sh r j v y w th z

ch qu x ng nk