

How can you help me with my learning in preparation for starting school?

Maths

- Play 'spot the number.' Focus on numerals 0-10 initially (then teen numbers.) Challenge your child to find them everywhere (in the house, on cars, on front doors, clocks, in birthday cards, at the shops.) **I should be able to recognise at least numbers 1-5 upon starting school.**
- Look at the numbers on phones, calculators, the remote control etc.
- Get into the habit of counting everything- from ducks in the pond to stairs up to bed! **I should be able to count up to 5 objects independently.**
- Practise counting aloud! When starting school **I should be able to count aloud to at least 10** (ideally a little more.) Practise counting forwards and back from a given number (this is great to do in the car!)
- Sing counting songs and rhymes with me (Five Little ducks, Ten in the Bed, Five Currant buns, 10 Green Bottles etc.)
- Play counting games with me (board games such as snakes and ladders, dominos, number snap etc.)
- Measure things! Who is tallest? Shortest? Can they guess which is heavier- A tin of beans or a kitchen roll?
- Chat about shapes around the house (e.g. whilst unpacking the shopping- "This tin is a cylinder. It's got 2 circular faces. Can you find any other cylinders?") When starting school, **I should be able to name some simple 2D shapes** (e.g. circle, square, triangle)



Literacy

- Provide me with lots of opportunities to mark make and draw- as well as using pencils and pens, use brushes to paint with water on the floor outside, draw with sticks in sand or mud, use chunky chalks on the pavement/patio, draw with fingers in a tray of shaving foam, use bath crayons, magnetic writing boards, water drawing mats etc.
- Encourage me to **use a three fingered "tripod" pencil grip**. I should be trying to do this upon starting school (no longer using a whole hand grasp.) Allow me to draw, colour, trace and do dot-to-dots.
- Let me see you writing! (birthday cards, calendar notes, shopping lists, write a simple story, write notes to each other etc.) Give me opportunities to do my own "pretend" writing. **I should be able to "pretend" write when I start school.**
- When starting school, **I should be able to recognise my own name.**
- **I should ideally be able to write my own name.** Encourage me to form the letters correctly. If your child can already write their own name- introduce them to other important words (sibling's names, mum, dad etc.)
- Read to me every day! Talk about stories; predict what might happen next etc. Read information/non-fiction texts too! **I should be able to sit quietly and listen to a story. I should be able to talk about and retell stories.**
- Play "I spy" and use sounds instead of letter names (something beginning with "duh")
- Sing songs, chants, rhymes etc. Practise rhyming words.
- Begin to talk about the sounds that letters make (these will be introduced in school.) Segment sounds when giving instructions (e.g. let's feed the duh-o-guh! Dog!)

Expressive Art & Design

- Allow me to get messy and explore my creativity! – paint, pens, play dough, clay, scissors, glue, sticky tape etc.
- Encourage me to draw and colour things that interest me (family members, my favourite characters etc.) Encourage me to think about the colours I choose (e.g. Daddy's hair is brown, not green!)
- Value the process and not necessarily the end product (my creative exploration involves lots of important skills, even if it looks messy by the time I've finished! ☺)
- Join in my role-play! Get into character with me! Whether it's dressing up, puppets, acting out real-life roles or playing with small figures- role play is great for developing language, social skills, empathy and cultural awareness.
- When starting school, **I should be able to give meaning to my drawings and paintings** (tell you what it is/talk about/explain my creation!)

Understanding the World

- Talk to me about important or significant events in my life. **I should be able to talk about personal experiences.**
- Talk about similarities and differences between me and my friends and family (e.g. I have blonde hair, my friend has brown, my mummy used to live in another country, my friends mummy lives in Tamworth and I live in Whittington.)
- Encourage me to take an interest in different cultures and other ways of life. What is it like to live in a different country? Is it hot/cold? Do people speak the same language?
- Let me explore outside! Go on a bug hunt, collect sticks, feathers and natural objects, play out in the rain...get muddy! Talk about changes in different seasons. **I should be able to talk about some of the things I observe/find. I should have some understanding of growth and change.**
- Let me play with different types of technology (computer, laptop, tablet, mobile phone, camera, remote control toys, CD player etc.)