

Weston Park Primary School

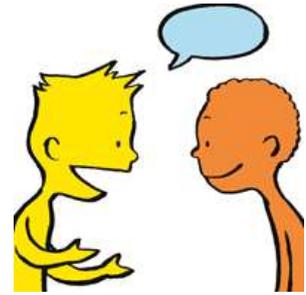


Ready for School?

How You Can Help

Talking

Good communication is essential for all learning and is the foundation for reading and writing. Being able to talk about what they think and explain how they feel are the most important skills for any child starting school. Children who can't communicate their wishes, feelings and concerns are more likely to become disruptive or withdrawn in the classroom.



At home you should:

- Share stories. Talk about what is happening and encourage your child to predict what might happen next. Don't just limit stories to bedtime. Research shows that children who are read to **daily** do better in all areas of learning.
- Share family photos as a starting point for conversation.
- Use puppets, soft toys or small world figures to make up stories and role play everyday events.
- Talk about days out or what they have done at preschool. Can they recount what they have done to a family friend or relative?
- Making decisions - give your child opportunities to state their preferences, offer opinions or talk about how they feel.
- Talking to other children - social experiences will give them confidence as well as teaching them to negotiate, collaborate and cooperate.
- Ask questions - Why do you think...? What will happen if...? How does...?
- Sing nursery rhymes songs - this will help develop their language and communication skills.

Listening

We follow a play-based curriculum but children are still required to do a lot of listening at school. Good listening skills will help them get off to a good start.



- Model good listening - get down to your child's level, get eye contact, give them your full attention away from distractions such as mobile phones. Talk about what they are doing or what they have done today.
- Provide quiet times at home - away from devices and TVs.
- Story time - encourage your child to recall key events from stories
- Play games such as 'Simon Says', 'I spy' or 'I Went to the Shops and I Bought...'
- Sound walk - encourage your child to stop and listen to things they can hear when you are out - a distant siren, birds tweeting or an aeroplane.

Self-care

Support your child in becoming more **independent** at the following routines:



- Going to the toilet. Support your child in being confident to ask when they need to go to toilet and getting there on time. Often children prefer or are used to having a parent or carer help them with wiping but you can support them in improving on this skill.
- Washing their hands. Chat with your child about the importance of washing our hands especially after going to the toilet or before eating food.
- Dressing and undressing. Allow extra time in your morning routine to allow your child enough time to practise this. Support them in folding their clothes as they take them off and putting them all in one pile. Teach them little tricks to support them in putting clothes on the right way round, on the right feet and how to pull on socks. This will be great preparation for PE lessons.
- Recognising their name. This will help your child to look after all of their belongings independently as they will be able to read the labels on their clothes and bags.
- Feeding themselves. School meals are free for children in year R, 1 and 2. Can your child use a knife and fork independently? Can they make choices about the food they want or ask for help if needed? If your child will be taking a lunchbox, take time to show them how to open packets and containers.
- Using a tissue - catching a sneeze or wiping a runny nose. Teach them good hygiene routines about putting tissues in the bin and then washing their hands.
- Tidying up. Support your child in becoming responsible for their own things - hanging up their coat, putting their toys away, clearing the dinner table.

The School Run



- Practise getting everyone up and ready, including eating breakfast, in time to leave. If you need to rely on buses for your journey, check the times and routes. Do you need to make any child care arrangements to support dropping off and collecting your child whilst you are at work?

Mark Making

Mark making is a great start to learning how to write and draw. Before children begin to form letters they will explore different marks and they will use them to represent different things in their lives. It can be done in so many different ways indoors and outdoors meaning there is something to appeal to all children.



- Use sticks to make marks in wet sand.
- Move hands through paint or gloop to explore different swirling patterns.
- Drive toy cars through puddles to look at the tracks they make.
- Explore different pens and crayons - draw lines, circles, dots. Experiment in big and small movements, and moving vertically and horizontally as well as anti-clockwise circles.
- Use a tablet to explore different drawing apps.
- Explore the marks that different objects make by printing with paint.
- Allow your child the opportunity to add their marks and squiggles to real things - shopping lists, birthday cards are great.
- Value their efforts - provide lots of praise and pin up their drawings in the home.



Writing letters

If your child shows an interest in writing their name or the alphabet please use lowercase letters as shown below. Capital letters should only be used for the first letter of their name.

a b c d e f g h i j
k l m n o p q r s t
u v w x y z

Developing Strength

Your child will need to develop a series of muscles in their bodies to learn to write, starting with their shoulders and working down through their elbows, on to wrists and finally fingers. These can be developed easily through a variety of different tasks:



Gardening - pulling up weeds, digging in soil with a big spade to exercise shoulders.

Cooking - kneading or rolling out dough

'Cleaning' - wiping large surfaces, sweeping or mopping floors

Playing football and other sports in the garden or local green space,

The local park - where they can have space to run faster and further.

Scooping and pouring opportunities - water, dry cereal, rice and pasta provide great opportunities to practise this. Combine with different size containers and spoons and add small animal toys or figures for interest.

Fiddly tasks and games that exercise little fingers:

Threading beads or dry pasta onto string, threading pipecleaners or dry pasta into colander holes.

Playdough - cutting, rolling, moulding, pinching

Dressing and undressing dolls or action figures

Colouring and drawing

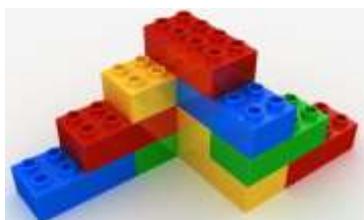
Cutting and sticking

Construction - joining together small pieces such as lego and duplo

Pegging up washing

Water sprayers - great fun and great exercise for little hands!

These pre-writing skills are an essential part of learning to write and crucially, are play based and fun!



Numbers

Teaching Maths at school today is quite different to how we might remember our own experiences at school. It is fun, play-based and children have a wealth of opportunities to get involved in practical problem solving. If you did not enjoy maths at school, try hard to avoid passing on these feelings and attitudes to your child.

- Engage your child in spotting familiar numbers - their age or house number for example. Can they spot it at the bus stop? On number plates or on front doors?
- Role play - incorporate counting into every day play - how many apples are you buying at the shop, how much does it cost?
- Counting songs - encourage your child to join in singing rhymes such as '5 Little Ducks', 'Ten Green Bottles' or '1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Once I Caught a Fish Alive'. The BBC school radio website has an impressive selection of rhymes that you can play if you are looking for new songs.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/schoolradio/subjects/earlylearning/nurserysongs>

- Board games - snakes and ladders, Ludo, snap etc all offer good opportunities to count and compare quantities.

Everyday Maths

- Weight - unpack the shopping together. Can they compare different items and say which is heavier or lighter?
- Counting - anything and everything! Sweets in the packet, cars on the road, ducks in the pond, steps up to bed...
- Can they share out the fruit so that everyone has the same?
- Money money money - use coins to play shops, write receipts and give change.
- Cooking - there are loads of great opportunities for maths in the kitchen. Measuring, counting spoonfuls, sharing the mixture or counting out the toppings.

