

## How to Help Your Child at Home

### Preparing for School

Starting school is an exciting adventure for your child! As a parent or carer, you are your child's first and most important teacher. The everyday interactions you share at home lay the strongest foundation for their learning journey.

This guide shares simple, effective ways you can help your child become confident and '**school ready**'. Focusing on these key areas will make the transition smoother and more successful.

### Emotional Regulation and Independence

Being able to manage feelings and cope with changes is essential for settling into the school environment.

- **Name Feelings:** Help your child identify what they are feeling by giving it a name. Say things like, "You look **frustrated** that the tower fell down," or "I can see you're feeling **happy** right now!" This builds their **emotional vocabulary**.
- **Teach Coping Strategies:** Practice simple ways to calm down. This might be taking a deep breath, counting to five, or finding a quiet corner. Help them understand that it's okay to feel upset, but they need to learn **how to react** to that feeling.
- **Routines and Predictability:** Keep routines consistent at home (bedtime, mealtimes). This sense of **predictability** helps children feel safe and secure, which supports their ability to handle bigger changes, like starting school.

### Communication and Language (Oracy)

The best way to develop strong communication skills is through **talking and listening!**

- **Chat About Your Day:** Talk about what you are doing together (e.g., "I am putting the **red** socks in the washing machine now."). Use new and interesting words.
- **Listen Actively:** Give your child your full attention when they speak. Ask them open-ended questions like, "**Tell me about...**" or "**How did you feel when...?**"
- **Share Stories:** Read together daily. Talk about the pictures, the characters, and what might happen next.

## **Physical Skills (Handwriting)**

Developing the small muscles in the hands is vital for good handwriting. These skills develop naturally through play!

- **Play with Purpose:** Encourage activities like playing with **LEGO/Duplo**, rolling **playdough** (squeezing, squashing, and cutting it), using **safety scissors**, or drawing and colouring with chunky crayons.
- **Developing Control:** Practice threading beads or using tongs to pick up small items. Even simple tasks like tearing paper can build strength!

## **Literacy Foundations (Phonics)**

Phonics is about hearing and recognising the different sounds that make up words.

- **Rhyme Time:** Share nursery rhymes and rhyming books. Play simple rhyming games ("What rhymes with 'cat'?").
- **Sound Detective:** Listen to the world around you. Ask your child to identify sounds: "I can hear a **dog** barking!" or "Listen to the **tap** dripping." Play 'I Spy' using the **sound** a word begins with, not the letter name (e.g., "I spy with my little eye something that begins with 's-s-s'").

## **Early Maths Skills**

Maths is all around us! Helping your child notice and talk about numbers, shapes, and measurements builds a strong foundation for numeracy.

- **Count Everything:** Practice counting **objects** that can be touched, such as toys, pieces of fruit, or socks. When counting, ensure they touch or point to each item to understand the **one-to-one principle**.
- **Explore Shapes and Size:** Talk about the shapes you see in the environment (e.g., "Look, the clock is a **circle**," or "The window is a **rectangle**"). Use language to compare sizes: **bigger**, **smaller**, **longer**, **shorter**.
- **Time and Routine:** Talk about the sequence of your day using words like **first**, **next**, and **last**. Involve them in simple sorting tasks, like putting spoons in one pile and forks in another.

**Ready to find out more?** We have created helpful support pages with specific activities and resources for you:

- [\[Click here for your Oracy Support Page\]](#)

- [[Click here for your \*\*Handwriting\*\* Support Page](#)]
- [[Click here for your \*\*Phonics\*\* Support Page](#)]
- [[Click here for your \*\*Maths\*\* Support Page](#)]