

CLASS: Building the Foundations at home



a Parent and Carer's Guide



CLASS: Communication, Learning and Autism Support Service



ISEND
CHAMPIONING CHANGE FOR CHILDREN

Inclusive Innovative Solution Focussed Act with Integrity Collaborative

Introduction

Did you know that...

... 75% to 85% of a child's waking hours are spent outside school, so it stands to reason that parents and carers can have a big impact on their learning.

But it can be hard to know where to start!

CLASS has produced some factsheets, packed with easy and enjoyable activities, that you and your child can do together as a gentle introduction to the skills they will need to build firm foundations for learning.

Attention and Listening

Have fun!

Multi-Sensory and Active Learning – Literacy

Vocabulary

Phonological Awareness

Motor Skills

Visual Perception

Multi-Sensory and Active Learning – Maths

...children can develop skills much faster when they're having fun.

...children who are read one book a day will hear about 290,000 more words than those children who don't.

...a child will need to hear a new word around 15 times to embed it into their vocabulary.

...everyday interactions such as sharing stories, singing songs, playing games and talking about anything and everything play an important role in a child's readiness to learn.



...play and learning go together!

...before children learn to hold a pencil, they need to develop their core muscles along with shoulder and elbow control.

...language development supports your child's ability to communicate and to:

- express and understand feelings
- think and learn
- solve problems
- develop and maintain relationships

Learning Early Skills in Attention and Listening

What are attention and listening skills?

Attention and listening is being able to listen and focus on specific tasks or sounds. Good attention and listening skills help with:

- Social skills
- Understanding language
- Following instructions
- Learning to communicate
- Speech sounds
- All areas of learning



Ready Steady Go! These games are a great way of sharing an activity with a child and gaining their attention.

- Bubbles
- Sliding down a slide
- Chasing
- Spinning top
- Rolling a ball / pushing a car along the floor or down a ball/car run



Taking turns... when you are playing games that require turn taking you are supporting your child to learn to wait, pay attention to what is happening around them and to be aware of others.

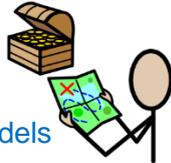
- Snap, pairs, Connect 4, Lotto, snakes and ladders, Ludo, Pop Up Pirate
- Simon Says; What's the time Mr Wolf?; Duck, duck, goose!



Following instructions...

Playing games and doing activities together that require your child to follow instructions will support your child to improve their working memory.

- Cooking
- Treasure hunts
- Building Lego models
- Tidying up
- Building dens
- Doing jobs about the house



Listening Walk...

Write a list of things that you could listen out for when you go for a walk, include seagulls, motorbikes, voices, aeroplanes, sirens, crunching leaves, waves.



Sharing books and TV Programmes...

When you sit together you are supporting your child to sit still, listen and pay attention for short periods.

- Ask your child to spot things in the pictures.
- Ask questions about the pictures and story.
- Talk about what has happened, the characters and what you enjoyed.



Did you know that...

Role play can support friendship building... when you are playing with toys with your child they are learning when to speak and when to listen. This skill is important when learning and when building friendships.

- Pretending to work in shops, doctors, cats and dogs, parties, teddy bears picnic, schools.



Have a look at these websites for some great ideas:

Hungry Little Minds



SCAN ME

Tiny Happy People



SCAN ME

Words for Life



SCAN ME

Music can be a fun way to develop skills in listening.

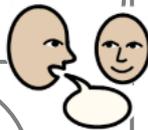
- Listen out for words that rhyme.
- Make up new lyrics and copy rhythms
- Heads, shoulders, knees and toes.
- Action songs, Musical statues



Developing Vocabulary

Learning new words is an important building block to building sentences.

Learning new words can support your child in learning to read. The more words your child knows the better their understanding of what they are reading will be. It will also improve their ability to express their own ideas and interpret ideas from others. Talking and being read to is the key.

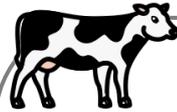


When reading and sharing books with your child, talk about the pictures and the characters in the story. Draw pictures to represent unfamiliar words. Write words down and place them around the house, see if your child can find them and tell you the words.



Teach your child through physical activities about concept words such as - on, under, next to, in front, behind, up, down and between.

When talking about events use the words, today, yesterday, and



Sort words into categories

- When talking about animals – Discuss where they live, what they eat, colours, are they big or are they small. Introduce other descriptive words use like gigantic, enormous, huge, tiny.
- Vegetables and fruit – Discuss if they are fruit or vegetables and sort into size, colours, and shapes.
- Sort clothes - Discuss if you would wear them when it's hot or when it's cold.
- Look at vehicles - Are they used for work, deliveries or for a family?
- Sort out toys - Are they made of plastic, wood, paper, are they soft or hard?



Some daily activities that will develop your child's vocabulary

- Cooking
- Gardening
- Shopping
- Bathing
- Dressing
- Tidying up
- Mealtimes
- Walking to school
- Trips out



Play Games

- Play sorting or matching games.
- Play – What's the opposite?
- Play word or picture Lotto.
- Play I-Spy.
- Play 'I went to market...'
- Play guessing games - describe something and see if your child can guess what you are describing.
- Play an alphabet game - name a letter and ask your child how many words they can think of that starts with that letter.



Did you know that...

Have a look at these websites for some great ideas

CBeebies



SCAN ME

Scholastic



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Readbrightly



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Learning Early Skills in Visual Perception

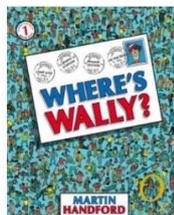
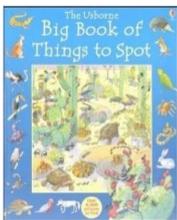
What is visual perception?

Visual perception is the ability to recognise, recall, discriminate, and make sense of what we see in our surrounding environment.

Good visual perceptual skills are important for many everyday skills such as reading, writing, completing puzzles, cutting, drawing, completing maths problems, dressing, finding your sock on the bedroom floor, as well as many other skills.

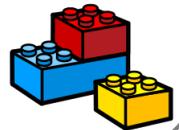
Books can be a great way to develop visual perception skills.

- Encourage your child to look carefully at the pictures in the storybook. *What can they see?*
- Encourage your child to spot objects and items. The trickier the better!
- Read books which focus on visual discrimination as seen below



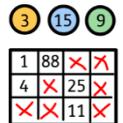
Construction activities are a great way to learn visual perception skills.

- Build towers with Lego, Duplo, Magnatiles or blocks.
- Add or takeaway blocks to change the shape and design
- Model spatial concepts such as *above, below, over, under & through*.
- Copy block shapes and patterns.



...good observational skills are important! Some great games and activities to play are:

- Spot the difference
- Letter tic tac toe
- Bingo
- Memory
- Dot to dot
- I spy (shape & colour)
- Letter/word search
- Pencil mazes
- Size sorting
- Silhouette matching
- Jigsaws



Did you know that...

Learning about shape can help visual perception:

- Use shapes to make tangrams
- Sort shapes into groups with the same features
- Make shape pictures and collages



Exploring objects through touch can support visual perception skills:

- Use a 'feely bag' of everyday objects to touch and feel. Have children describe and guess what they could be!



Have a look at these websites for some great ideas:

Kidsense



SCAN ME

Eyecanlearn



SCAN ME

Activities



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Developing Motor Skills

Motor Skills refers to the ability to use our joints and muscles to move and carry out activities. There are two kinds:

Gross Motor Skills – These are the large movements that use our whole body and our big muscles.

Fine Motor Skills – These are small movements that use our hands and fingers.

... good **gross motor skills** are important for all sorts of things such as running, jumping, climbing, balancing, playing and even being able to sit still in class. You can help your child build strength and co-ordination by:

- Taking them to the park to run, climb and hang!
- Challenging them to try different balance poses.
- Setting up a mini assault course.
- Playing games with them such as chase, throwing and catching, football, tug-of-war



...good **fine motor skills** are important for eating, dressing, self-care (like cleaning teeth and wiping your bottom), colouring, drawing and of course writing. Children need to develop arm and hand strength first. Build these skills by:

- Putting things a bit out of reach so they need to stretch up to get them.
- Playing clapping games.
- Playing with plasticine or dough - rolling, squashing, squeezing, stretching.
- Cooking and baking.
- Opening jars and pots.



...children also develop **gross motor skills** by:

- Helping around the house - sweeping, hoovering, tidying, carrying shopping.
- Helping outside – digging, raking, pushing a wheelbarrow, washing the car or the windows.
- Playing - Riding a bike or a scooter, pushing a pram, building dens, racing
- Doing activities - swimming, football, gymnastics, yoga, dancing, mini golf.



Did you know that...

...children also develop fine motor skills by:

- Doing craft activities – cutting, sticking, sewing, knitting, threading, ripping, painting, colouring.
- Using things they have to squeeze like pegs, tongs, tweezers, washing-up liquid bottles, bubble wrap.
- Doing up and undoing buttons, zips, laces, hooks.
- Turning handles and keys; doing up bolts and screws; linking paperclips or carabiners.
- Using a knife and fork.



...playing is important with toys like Lego, Meccano, bricks, jigsaws, posting boxes, peg boards, baby dolls and dolls houses.



Have a look at these websites for some great ideas:

Hands on as
we grow



SCAN ME

OT Mum



SCAN ME

The Imagination
Tree

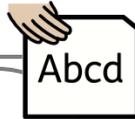


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Learning Early Skills Phonological Awareness

What is phonological awareness?

Phonological awareness is all about playing with sound and sound patterns within words. By playing with words and sounds in different ways, parents and family members can support the development of phonological awareness—which, in turn, will one day help children to read!



Listening for the first sound in words will help your child to make links between words, letters and sounds.

- Find pictures and objects that begin with the same sound.
- When reading emphasise, the first sound in words.
- Play 'I spy'
- Scavenger hunt – “Can you find something that begins with a “sssss”

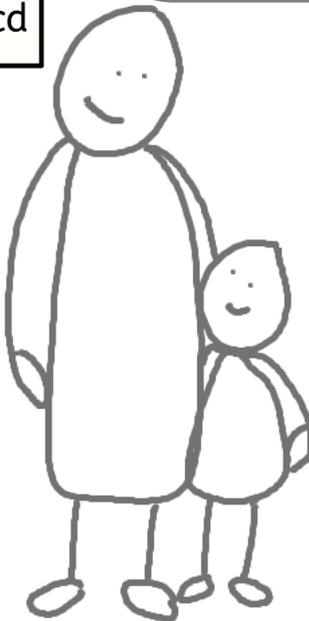


Rhyme time is a good time...

Learning to hear and produce rhymes is a great skill for children to master.

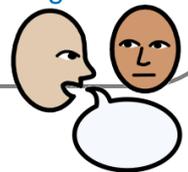
Have fun learning rhymes by:

- Read (and re-read) books that rhyme
- Sing Nursery Rhymes & learn rhyming poems
- Point out rhyming words.
- Have fun generating silly rhyming words.
- Produce rhyming words, “What rhymes with bat?”



Listening skills help children learn to read. Develop reading skills by:

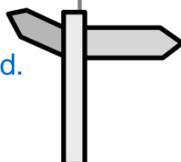
- Listening and counting how many words in a sentence.
- Listening for words that sound the same or begin with the same sound.
- Listening to sounds *blended* together and guessing the word they make.



Did you know that...

Exposure to letters in the environment and the sounds they make can support phonemic skills.

- Look for letters in the environment. Say the sounds they make together.
- Can children find the letters in their name? What sounds do they make?
- Introduce alphabet books and puzzles.
- Look at how letters are formed. are they tall? short?



Music is a great way to learn about the rhythm of words.

- Play songs in the car that involve actions and clapping.
- Clap, pat and stamp to music, trying to keep a beat.
- Use instruments to tap along to a beat. Can you tap out the sounds in words?



Have a look at these websites for some great ideas:

ABCva



SCAN ME

Alphablocks



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Phonicsplay



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Multisensory and Active Learning - Literacy

Did you know that...

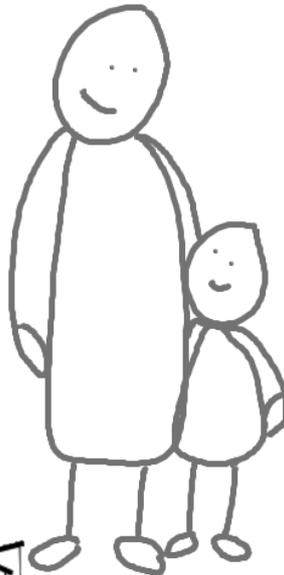
the more **active** and **fun** learning is, the more likely children are to want to do it AND to remember what they have learnt.

The more senses you can use, the better. This is known as '**Multisensory**' Learning.



... to be able to read and spell, you need to be able to hear sounds and patterns in words. This is called Phonological Awareness. You can help your child by:

- Sharing nursery rhymes, reading rhyming books, playing rhyming lotto games.
- Playing games like I-Spy, linking letters to an action
- Making a 'First Letter' book or display by cutting out pictures or finding things that begin with each letter.



... you can help your child learn about stories and to read by:

- Putting aside time every day to share books and read to them.
- Visiting your library to choose books or go to a story session.
- Talking about the pictures in a book and guessing what the story might be about.
- Making up your own stories from pictures or sequencing cards; doing role-play; having puppet shows.
- Reading anything and everything aloud, in and out of the house – signs, cereal boxes, labels, junk mail...
- Turning on the subtitles on the TV and watching with them.
- Letting them see **you** read.



... you can use your environment to teach recognition of letters and words by:

- Tracing in sand, rice, mud, goo, writing in wax and revealing with paint.
- Using pebbles on the beach to make letter shapes.
- Making letters/words from bread dough, icing on biscuits, alphabet spaghetti.
- Sticking them up around the house in surprising places.
- Pointing out letters on packaging when shopping.
- Playing 'Spot the name of your town' on shops, vans, flyers ...



Did you know that...

... you can help your child learn to write and spell by:

- Setting up a special area with scraps of paper, envelopes, postcards, different pens and pencils. You could theme this into an office, vets, doctors, hairdressers, school etc.
- Using magnetic letters, chalks, bath crayons
- Cutting out letters from magazines.
- Doing 'big' writing on large sheets of paper, chalk boards, mirrors, the patio (with a wet paint brush or playground chalk).



... you can teach your child to recognise and write their name – point out the letters; trace over them; find the letters in books; label toys, lunch boxes, drinks bottles, clothes.

Practise every day



Have a look at these websites for some great ideas:

National Literacy Trust



SCAN ME

Teach your monster to read



SCAN ME

Parentkind



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Multisensory and Active Learning - Maths

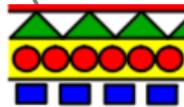
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... maths is all about pattern. You can help your child by:

- Making repeated patterns with colour, size or shape. You can use almost anything - beads, buttons, toy cars, building blocks, pegs, sweets
- Can they copy your pattern? Can they continue it? Can they make a pattern of their own?



...maths is all around us:

- Go for a walk and look out for numbers on buses, houses, cars, shops, drain covers, lamp-posts.
- Go for shape scavenger hunts.
- Take photos for a scrap-book.
- Do cooking, shopping and play board games together.



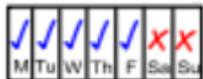
...maths has lots of special language and ideas to learn. You can help by asking questions and comparing things, for example 'Which is the biggest? Find one that is smaller. Which one has more?'

Size and weight – big, small, tall, short, long, middle-sized, thick, thin, heavy, light.

Quantity – more/less/fewer; most

Capacity – full, empty, half-full enough.

Position - next to, between, behind, under, in front, over, high, on top, up, in, on, first, second ...



... you can help your child understand time by:

- Looking at a calendar every day
- Using the words – now, next, earlier, later, yesterday, today, tomorrow, second, minute, hour, morning, afternoon, evening, night
- Teaching the days of the week and months of the year.
- Showing the time on a clock with hands (analogue) as well as a digital clock.



...understanding about numbers is MUCH more than just learning to count. Children can learn to count in sequence without understanding what the numbers represent. Start by teaching **0-5**. You can help by:

- Encouraging them to touch or move objects as they count.
- Sorting and grouping things into 0; 1s; 2s; 3s etc
- Counting items of clothes as you put them on – 1 sock, 2 socks.
- Counting as you go up steps.
- Counting forwards and backwards. Remember Zero is a very important number!
- Asking 'What's one more/less?'

1
2

Did you know that...

...learning about shape is important. It helps to use the proper mathematical words:

- circle, square, rectangle, triangle, diamond, sides, corners, flat, curved
- Look for shapes around you – in the house, on clothes, on toys, in the street, on cars, on signs, in books.



Have a look at these websites for some great ideas:

Maths on Toast



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Family Maths Toolkit



SCAN ME

BBC Bitesize



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