



Madley, Herefordshire, HR2 9PH

Dear Families,

To understand and support how your children learn to read and write we have put together the following information about the development of how children become literate. Some families have expressed concern as to whether their child should be writing their name or learning to read. However to allow children to do this confidently and effectively there must be a solid foundation of skills laid down beforehand for each child to work from. While children are developing these skills it is essential to remember each child's as an individual and they will acquire these skills at a different pace.

To allow your child to have a solid foundation for writing their large motor movements need to be encouraged and supported first. Depending on the child they can later begin to concentrate on their fine and more controlled movements that will eventually allow them to form letters. We encourage children to create marks in a variety of contexts and gradually build on these skills through encouraging more detail. Practitioners model the correct formation of letters when labelling children's work or if it is appropriate through an activity. A love of stories and picture books is vital for later reading skills and is encouraged in a variety of ways such as story-telling, IT, CD's and puppets. Through allowing children to enjoy literacy experiences we can support them to have the intrinsic motivation that they will need to become literate.

Throughout each term the governments Letters and Sounds framework is embedded in to our planning to further promote the foundation for childrens literacy development. The framework continues throughout Primary School with phase one revisited in the Reception class before they move onto the next steps. In order to give you an overview of what we focus on during the year the following comes from the Letters and Sounds document which we plan for within our sessions in order to support the development of phonic skills in a variety of ways.

Phase 1

Introduction to Letters and Sounds Phase One

Phase One of Letters and Sounds concentrates on developing childrens speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in Phase 2. The emphasis during Phase 1 is to get children and babies attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills.

Phase 1 is divided into seven aspects. Each aspect contains three strands: Tuning in to sounds (auditory discrimination), Listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing) and Talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension).

It is intended that each of the first six aspects should be dipped into, rather than going through them in any order, with a balance of activities. Aspect 7 will usually come later, when children have had plenty of opportunity to develop their sound discrimination skills.

Aspect 1 - General sound discrimination - environmental

The aim of this aspect is to raise childrens awareness of the sounds around them and to develop their listening skills. Activities suggested in the guidance include going on a listening walk, drumming on different items outside and comparing the sounds, playing a sounds lotto game and making shakers.

Aspect 2 - General sound discrimination - instrumental sounds

This aspect aims to develop childrens awareness of sounds made by various instruments and noise makers. Activities include comparing and matching sound makers, playing instruments alongside a story and making loud and quiet sounds.

Aspect 3 - General sound discrimination - body percussion

The aim of this aspect is to develop childrens awareness of sounds and rhythms. Activities include singing songs and action rhymes, listening to music and developing a sounds vocabulary.

Aspect 4 - Rhythm and rhyme

This aspect aims to develop childrens appreciation and experiences of rhythm and rhyme in speech. Activities include rhyming stories, rhyming bingo, clapping out the syllables in words and odd one out.

Aspect 5 - Alliteration

The focus is on initial sounds of words, with activities including I-Spy type games and matching objects which begin with the same sound.

Aspect 6 - Voice sounds

The aim is to distinguish between different vocal sounds and to begin oral blending and segmenting. Activities include Metal Mike, where children feed pictures of objects into a toy robot's mouth and the teacher sounds out the name of the object in a robot voice - /c/-/u/-/p/ cup, with the children joining in.

Aspect 7 - Oral blending and segmenting

In this aspect, the main aim is to develop oral blending and segmenting skills.

To practise oral blending, the teacher could say some sounds, such as /c/-/u/-/p/ and see whether the children can pick out a cup from a group of objects. For segmenting practise, the teacher could hold up an object such as a sock and ask the children which sounds they can hear in the word sock.

The activities introduced in Phase 1 are intended to continue throughout the following phases, as lots of practice is needed before children will become confident in their phonic knowledge and skills.

I hope that you find this information beneficial and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to come and speak to us. If you have any other songs and rhymes please share them with us to place in to the song file.

Many thanks

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