Numeracy Learning at Home
Secure within 10 – firm foundations

Information for Parents

On the back of this sheet, there is a grid of activities which you can do with your child to help them practise number skills. Doing these a little and often will build their understanding of number concepts, complement their work in school and prepare them well for future learning.

Background to this developmental stage

10 is the building block of our number system. A child who can work confidently with numbers to 10 and who has secure understanding will go on to work confidently with larger numbers. At this stage, it may well be the case that your child can rote count beyond ten – this can be encouraged but it should not, on its own, be seen as a sign that your child is secure at ten. Being able to rote count is only one aspect of understanding number. Research suggests that children who begin to work exclusively with larger numbers before they are fully secure at ten do not go on to become confident with larger numbers as the basic building blocks are not in place. Some children will spend two or three years working within ten to become fully secure – the time spent doing this is well worth it in the long run. In particular, it is very important that your child can:

- Count a group of objects by pointing to each one, understanding that one number corresponds to one object and understanding that the number corresponding to the last object tells the total number. The child will be able to do this regardless of how the objects are laid out and regardless of which of the objects they start with – this is called 'one to one correspondence'.
- Understand that the number of objects doesn't change if the layout changes e.g. if you lay out a row of 7 stones and your child counts them and then you rearrange them into a circle and ask how many, will they want to count again?
- Look at a small group of objects (up to 5) and say how many there are without counting – this is called 'subitising'.

Tips and Hints:

These tasks should be fun and enjoyable for you and your child.

- 10 minutes a day is enough.
- Don't carry on when your child gets bored.
- Don't get cross if your child can't do it – try a different task or smaller numbers.
- Don't feel worried if your child is stuck, just try something different.
- Don't worry if it seems easy - lots of practice is very important and you will find there are some numbers your child finds harder and needs more practice with.
- Keep it fun – you'll be surprised how excited your child will get over a small thing e.g. use legomen to count for a change or (for a treat) jelly beans!
- Involve older and younger siblings.
- Make sure your child doesn't think it is babyish to use fingers or objects to help with counting or working out. This is a good strategy and it promotes solid understanding.
- Use games on tablets or computer with care – some are very good but in others your child may appear to be doing well but is actually using a different clue to click the right answer and isn't developing number knowledge. We would always recommend your child does not use a screen for at least one hour before bedtime as the blue light can suppress the body's ability to produce melatonin and so prevent a good night's sleep.

Play board games like snakes and ladders or ludo where your child is using a dice and moving their piece on. Play games where there are objects to count e.g. Hungry Hippos.	Lay out sets of objects for your child to count – stones, fir cones, little toys, bricks, counters (anything you have to hand). Don't always lay them out in the same way, put them in a line, or a circle or a bunch.	Encourage real life opportunities e.g.: when you are shopping, ask them to collect 5 apples or 4 tins count the coins in your purse (don't worry about value yet) lay the table – put out 5 spoons, 5 forks, 5 mats cooking – put in 4 spoonfuls of flour	Ask lots of questions e.g.: There are four people in our family, if granny and granddad come, how many then? I've got three apples, I need six for the recipe, how many more do I need? There are 6 sweets, how many can you and your brother have each? (what about if there are 7?)	
Hide a small group of objects under a plate (less than 5) and flash a peek – can your child say how many without counting?	Put a number of objects on the table e.g. 7. Make sure your child counts how many there are. Hide some, can your child work out how many you are hiding?	Practise bonds to 10 (numbers which add up to 10): You say 3, your child says 7 You say 6, your child says 4 You will need to practice with objects first but then work up to recall.	Sing counting songs e.g. Ten Green Bottles and count up and down in ones and twos.	Share objects out fairly e.g. given 9 apples and 3 children they will give three each. What about if there are 10?
Write numbers to ten with correct formation – you can write on paper with a pencil, pen or felt tip or on the ground with chalk or use paint or write in the mud or sand.	Match a number symbol to a group of that number of objects – you might have jigsaws or games which encourage this.	Put number symbols in order – you can make cards with numbers on to mix up and lay out correctly or use magnetic numbers on the fridge – muddle them up overnight and get our child to re-order them in the morning.	Put groups of objects in order – make a pile of one, then two, then three and so on	Make up stories for a sum e.g. 4-3=1 – I had 4 sweets, I ate 3, I have 1 left.
Play 'Go Fish' – use ordinary cards but remove the face cards and jokers. Deal 10 cards each. Put the rest in a pile. The aim is to collect the most pairs. You can lay down pairs making 10 only. Take in in turns to lay down a pair or to ask another player for a card. E.g. if you have a 9 and an Ace you can lay them down (Ace=1) but if you don't have a pair, ask another player for a card that makes a pair. If the player doesn't have the card you ask for, they say 'Go Fish' and you take one from the pile. The game ends when all the cards have been taken and someone lays all their cards down. The winner is the one with the most pairs.			Play pairs with a pack of cards with the face cards and jokers removed. Lay the cards out on the table. Each player takes turns to turn two over – if they add to 10 they can keep them. The player with the most cards at the end wins. Alternatively, you can make cards with numbers on. You can reduce the time of the game by using fewer cards.	