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## HELPING YOUR CHILD PREPARE FOR SCHOOL

There are many ways in which you can help your child to prepare for school. Many of the suggestions in this booklet you will be familiar with. However, there may be some new ideas you can try. Encourage your child to do things independently, showing patience if they make mistakes. Every child is on their own journey in their own time.



### Before School - Checklist

Children settle into school easier if they can:

- Go to the toilet and wash their hands
- Use a knife and fork
- Dress and undress themselves
- Do up own buttons and zips on tops, trousers, skirts, jackets
- Change shoes
- Take off their coat, gloves and hat and hang them up
- Tidy and clear away toys when required.
- Use a tissue and put it in the bin when finished.
- Recognise their own clothing and name label.
- Share toys and be prepared to take turns
- Begin to be able to tie their own shoelaces.



Tidy Up

## LITERACY & ENGLISH

### Talking

Talk with your child, giving praise and encouragement whenever possible. Ask about their day and about what they have been learning. When travelling, shopping, cooking and playing, talk with your child, making him/her aware of the world around him.

### Listening

Encourage your child to listen and where possible give eye contact (if appropriate) when you are talking and ask if they have understood what you have said. It is important that children should be able to listen to and follow instructions when starting school.

### Sounds

Another important part of reading is learning the alphabet and sounds. You can help by playing word games with your child such as "I spy with my little eye something beginning with....." or the 'alphabet song.'

### Getting Ready for Writing

Your child's muscles are still developing at this stage. They need some help to develop the muscles for writing. This can be achieved through colouring in books, cutting out simple shapes, playing with modelling clay, playing with beads, lacing cards, building with bricks and doing jigsaws.

Many drawing and painting activities will help your child when they start writing in school. Where possible, we encourage letting your child have access to a variety of pencils, crayons, chalks, felt tips and a large supply of paper.

Let your child draw and scribble as much as possible. You will be surprised how quickly your child will be able to draw a recognisable picture, mark make ideas, stories and then to 'write' their name. Let your child hold the pencil in the hand in which they feel most comfortable. Do not worry if it is an incorrect grip we work on our pencil grip in Primary 1. All attempts at writing should be valued and encouraged.



## Observation

Observation is an important skill which can be developed in young children. Encourage your child to observe street signs, place names, advertisements etc. This activity can often lead to spontaneous reading by young children.

## Books

Books will play a vital role in your child's school life.

When looking at books with your child, talk about what is happening in the pictures, looking at people, animals, colours, shapes and sizes. As your child shows more interest, encourage them to tell you about it in their own words.

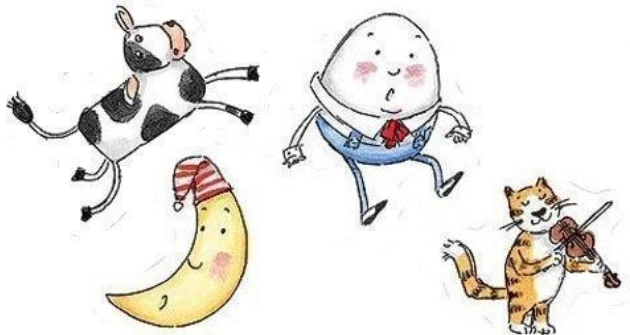
## Helpful Hints for Looking at and Learning about Books

1. Look at the Front cover and the title and ask your child what they think the book will be about.
2. Look at the blurb on the back of the book, does it help them make predictions or confirm what they guessed based on the front cover?
3. Look at and talk about the illustrations (pictures).
4. Discuss what is happening in the story and ask your child if they can guess what will happen next.
5. Ask your child if they enjoyed the story and why they liked it.

## Nursery Rhymes

The ability to rhyme is vitally important to reading and spelling processes. Here are some you could sing with your child:

- Humpty Dumpty
- Jack and Jill
- Three Blind Mice
- Sing a song of Sixpence
- Hickory Dickory Dock.
- Mary had a Little Lamb
- The Grand Old Duke of York
- Little Bo Peep



You could play a rhyming game such as,  
"I hear with my little ear something that rhymes with ...man "

## Health and Wellbeing

Children should be active every day. Help your child to develop gross motor skills by encouraging physical activity and movement. Try some of these activities as they will support your child's learning in Physical Education (P.E.):

- A walk or run in the park
- Throwing/catching/bouncing a ball
- Playing at the swing park
- Riding a bike or scooter
- Skipping
- Playing games with friends



## Numeracy and Mathematics

There are many opportunities for getting ready for this in everyday life - in the home, park, or at the shops. You can assist your child by helping to develop a simple vocabulary of number, size, shape and position using the following guidelines. The **language of Maths** is also featured in many well-known stories e.g. Goldilocks and the 3 Bears, The Enormous Turnip.

### Matching Games

Let your child help you lay the table, giving each person a knife, fork, spoon, etc.

Playing with dolls or teddies, let your child share his sweets or biscuits so they get the same.

### Counting

Count with your child as they are playing with his toys, having a bath, going upstairs, getting dressed.

### How Many?

Ask how many towels, sweets, cars, fingers.

### Singing number rhymes with your child

- 10 green bottles
- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Once I caught a fish alive.
- One potato, two potato
- There were 10 in the bed and the little one said "Roll over"
- Five Little Ducks went swimming one day

## Time

-Can they develop an understanding of time using the following terms correctly?

- Today
- Tomorrow
- Yesterday
- Morning
- Afternoon
- Evening



## Size

Ask your child to put things in order of size. Discuss the size with your child using the words big/small, thin/thick, tall/short, narrow/wide.

## Positions

Talk about:

- before/after
- in/out
- up/down
- over/under
- first/last
- back/front/side
- behind/in front
- next to/beside.



Make repeated patterns with coloured beads, buttons, sweets etc.

1 red, 1 blue, 1 red, 1 blue

2 green, 2 yellow, 2 green, 2 yellow, 2 green

**We hope this booklet is helpful to you. Thank you for your patience in taking the time to read through it and feel free to come back and revisit some of the advice when you feel it is approach for you and your child.**

**If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch.**

**Welcome again to our Toryglen Primary School Family.**