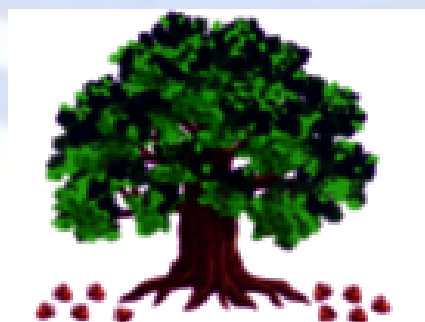


BISHOPMILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Activities To Help Your Child At Home



Starting Primary School



FROM A LITTLE ACORN GROWS A MIGHTY OAK

ACHIEVEMENT COOPERATION OUTSTANDING BEHAVIOUR RESPECT NEW BEGINNINGS

Ambitious to Achieve Excellence *Together*

Parents often ask what they can do to help their child at home, especially when the child will soon be starting school.

There are a great number of workbooks on the market and parents often feel pressurised into buying these and spending time sitting teaching their child to read or write. There are lots of fun activities that you and your child can enjoy that will help develop all the skills they need without completing workbooks.

There is plenty of time for more formal learning once they start school.

This booklet has been produced to reassure parents that many of the activities you do with your child have already helped them to develop a great number of skills. Hopefully it will provide some new ideas and help you to appreciate the things that can be learnt from everyday tasks.

Children learn quicker when engaged in practical tasks when they can



See



Touch



Explore



ASK QUESTIONS

This booklet comes with a serious word of advice.

Do not try to push things too far. Things will happen when your child is good and ready and has had the necessary experience and skills to build on. There is no point in trying to make children do things before they are ready – this can be frustrating for you and your child; it can lower their self-esteem and put them off completely.



Social and Emotional Development

This is the one area of development that many parents and carers often overlook; however, a child who is confident, independent and willing to try things for themselves will cope well with starting school. At school, they must be responsible for themselves and their belongings. Taking coats off, hanging them up, unpacking schoolbags, going to the toilet unaided, eating their lunch and learning the rules are some of the things children have to cope with when they start school. At home, you can help to prepare them for starting school by working on the activities suggested below.

- Encourage independence in dressing and undressing, fastening clothes, zipping up jackets, putting on shoes, buckling shoes, tying laces.
- Help them to make decisions by giving them simple choices. Don't ask, "What do you want for tea?" or "What do you want to wear?". These decisions are too big – give a choice between two things. However, do not consult them on every issue as that would make life too complicated and put too much pressure on you and your child – be realistic. They have also got to learn that sometimes there are no choices!
- Allow them to struggle a little before 'diving in' to help as this will encourage them to persevere.
- Praise new achievements but it is also vitally important to praise the effort your child has made, rather than just their successes. Children are often more motivated if their effort is acknowledged. It will help them to keep trying!
- Playing board games helps with learning about waiting and taking turns, as well as developing concentration.
- Tidy up toys – make this easier by concentrating on one thing at a time. Asking children to tidy up their bedrooms is too big a task and they will not know where to start. Make it fun by helping and having a race.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT – BODY

- Catching and throwing to an adult or into a container – use beanbags, different sized balls, scrunched up paper.
- Skittles – use empty food boxes.
- Kicking – a static ball, a moving ball.



- Balance on one leg and count to 3 – increase the number as your child improves.
- Hopping – play Hopscotch.
- Skipping without a rope – to music.



- Jumping from a height.
- Jumping forwards and backwards.
- Jumping over low objects.



- Walking backwards.
- Running around obstacles – make an obstacle course in the garden.
- Riding a bike.

- Balancing while walking on planks of wood or walking on a line.
- Have fun at the park.
- Swimming.
- Above all else, please make sure your child can go to the toilet independently along with being able to wash and dry their hands.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT – HANDS AND FINGERS

Good hand control makes it easier when learning to control a pencil.

- Dough – moulding, rolling, etc.
- Threading – beads, pasta, etc. (Wrap sellotape round the end of a piece of wool or string to make threading easier).
- Tweezers – use thumb and forefinger to pick up small items.
- Weaving – ribbon, wool, strips of plastic bags, etc. through mesh or draining board mat.
- Tearing paper – make a picture.
- Cutting and sticking.
- Working with small construction materials – Lego, building blocks.
- Fastenings – buttons and zips.
- Drawing – people (not stick people), lines (straight, wavy, zigzag) circles, crosses, squares – make patterns with these shapes:



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When drawing horizontal lines encourage going from left to right and start at the top of the page with vertical lines.

Give your child lots of opportunities to use paper and writing materials. Make it easy for them by using thick pencils, crayons and felt pens.

- Opening own snacks.
- Using a knife to spread.
- Pouring from a jug – have fun with lots of containers in the bath or water in the garden.

MATHS ACTIVITIES

- Colours and shapes – look for these around the house and when out walking. Play I-spy with colours and shapes.
- Setting the table: matching and counting plates etc.
- Use teddies to play hide & seek games using position words – in, on, under, beside, in front, behind, between, high and low.
- Build towers, make trains or play dough snakes and use measurement words – short, tall, big, small, long, thick, thin.
- Put toys in order of size.
- Count everything – stairs, buttons, cars, lampposts.
- More or less – compare toys, buttons, etc.
- Share out sweets or toys.
- Look for numbers on cars and doors.
- Complete a colour pattern using Lego, blocks or beads – red, blue, red, blue and so on.
- Time sequences – talk about your day – “After lunch we will go to the park then we’ll.....!” Talk about today, tomorrow, yesterday, before, after and next.
- Bake cakes – lots of opportunities for counting and more, less, full, empty.
- Make the play dough using the recipe in this book.
- Simple problems using toys or buttons – show me 3 cars, now make that 4 (or 1 or 2) adding on and taking away to get the number asked for.
- Sort the washing and put the socks into pairs.
- A trip to the supermarket provides endless opportunities to develop the understanding of colour, counting and size.



LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Read at least one story a day

- Encourage eye contact when talking.
- With new stories ask:



“What do you think this story will be about?”

“What do you think will happen next?”

“Why do you think that happened?”

Involve your child but do not spoil the story by asking too many questions.

- Say or sing Nursery Rhymes – play games and miss out words or say the wrong word.
- Read rhyming stories.
- Play rhyming games – fat, mat, sat.
- Re-tell favourite stories, using the pictures as prompts or using puppets.
- Look for road signs, street signs.
- Play board games and snap.
- Play I-spy, saying the letter sound rather than the name of the letter. When you introduce this game, it will be easier if you select a few objects and place them in front of your child so that their choices are limited or use a picture book.
- Look for well-known shop signs, car logos, etc.
- Learn to recognise own name – make a sign for their room, or where they hang their jacket, so they get used to seeing it.
- Find the letters in his/her name on signs, in books, etc.
- If they are starting to write their own name, please only use a capital letter at the start, as it is difficult to ‘unlearn’ things. (Children who go on to form letters correctly often revert back when writing their name, as this is how they learned it and what their name looks like to them).
- Copy clapping patterns.
- Clap word patterns: penguin – 2 claps elephant – 3 claps



PLAY DOUGH RECIPE

1 cup of plain flour
1 cup of water
2 teaspoons of cream of tartar
1 tablespoon of oil
½ a cup of salt
Food colouring



Mix all the ingredients together.

Stir over a medium heat until the mixture has thickened into a dough consistency.

Remove from the heat and knead until smooth.

When cool, place in a plastic bag or airtight container.

This will last for weeks.

Lentils, glitter or rice can be added to give a different texture.



Bishopmill Primary School
Morrison Road
Elgin
Moray
IV30 4DY

Telephone 01343 547841

E-mail: admin.bishopmillp@moray-edunet.gov.uk

Website: <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/my/bishopmill/>

School Telephone and Information Line: **0870 054 9999**

School PIN Number: **031120**