

Summer 1 2020

Dear Parents/Carers and children,

We all hope you are well and making the most of the lovely weather we've been having. Please find below some ideas for activities to support the children's learning and maintain healthy minds and bodies. I have tried to adapt the activities we would normally be doing in school to a household situation using everyday objects.

In Early Years, learning is split into 7 main areas of learning. Each one is important in its own right.

Communication and Language

(Listening to stories and responding with relevant comments).

- Read a few pages of a story to your child and encourage them to talk about what is happening in the pictures/in the text. You can also watch your child's favourite TV programme together and talk about what is happening.
- Ask questions such as 'Why is the little dog sad?' or 'How did the family get home from the park?' to make sure that your child understands what they have seen/heard.

Physical Development

Moving and Handling: Please continue to support your child by encouraging them to write their name and draw pictures. Other activities that are great for physical development are:

- building with Lego or other construction materials.
- being creative with Play-doh (stretching and squashing builds up strength in shoulders, arms and hands).
- using child-friendly scissors for cutting and sticking activities.
- jigsaw puzzles; picking up small objects helps children with their co-ordination and control over small movements.
- playing ball games outside involving throwing, catching and hitting a ball or a target.
- running, jumping, skipping and walking are fantastic ways to maintain physical and mental wellbeing (for adults and children!!!).

Health and Self-Care: We have been learning about healthy lifestyles maintained by:

- Food and drinks - healthy choices
- Exercise - to keep us fit and strong
- Sleep - to give us energy
- Hygiene - especially the importance of hand washing.

You can help by reminding your child about the importance of making healthy choices like fruit, vegetables, milk and water. Children need **at least one hour** of physical exercise per day (this doesn't need to be all at once; it can be in 10-15 minute sessions if that is easier).

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The most important thing you can do for your child at this time is to keep on making them feel safe and secure. The children will be missing their friends, staff and the experience of coming to school. You can help by enjoying this time spent as a family so that when your

child comes back to school, they will be ready to settle back into school life. The right combination of keeping busy and getting enough rest will keep the balance just right.

Literacy

Reading - Reception children are working on reading words and simple sentences. You can point to words in books or write your own simple sentences for children to read, eg 'I like my toys' or 'It is a sunny day'.

Writing - Reception children are working on writing their own simple sentences eg 'I love my dog' or 'This is my Mum/Dad/Nan' (including drawings to practise pencil control and creativity).

The BBC has some great Literacy games, activities and songs, using this link:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/topics/literacy>

Mathematics

Numbers: Reception children have been working on:

- Recognising and ordering numbers to 20. You can help by playing number games with your child. If you have older children, get them involved too.
- Write numbers 1-20 on small pieces of card or paper and lay them face down. Take turns turning over a card and saying the

number. If you get the answer right, you keep the card. If not, you put it back. The person with most cards at the end wins.

- Spread number cards randomly on a table/floor. Take turns with your child to put the numbers in order. Support and encourage where needed. Pretend not to be able to find the next number so your child can 'help' you.
- Play counting games with ordinary household/garden objects - crayons, Lego blocks, raisins, leaves, clothes pegs, even tea bags! Show your child one of the 1-20 cards and ask them to count out that many pegs, blocks etc. Take turns and repeat.
- Practise **adding** with groups of objects - "I've got 3 crayons here and 4 raisins here. How many things have I got altogether?".
- Practise **subtracting** with groups of objects - "I've got 8 pegs but now I'm taking 2 away. How many have I got left?". (Use larger numbers beyond 10 if your child is ready).

Shape, Space and Measure

Look for shapes indoors and outdoors - eg rectangles = doors, TV, table, windows; circles = plates, clocks.... What other shapes can you find?

Use everyday language to talk about **weight** eg light/heavy/weights more/weights less. Involve your child in making cakes or biscuits, looking at the numbers on scales and seeing what happens as you add ingredients.

Use everyday language to talk about **distance** eg close, near/far away and **size** eg long/short/wide/narrow. Involve your child in using a tape measure to see how long your living room floor is or how short a spoon is.

There are some fabulous Maths games on a website called Topmarks that the children are familiar with and really enjoy. This link will take you directly to the Early Years section:

<https://www.topmarks.co.uk/Search.aspx?q=early%20years>

Numberblocks on the BBC site is also excellent:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/numberblocks>

Understanding the World

The main book that we were going to focus on in class this half term was '**Handa's Surprise**' by Eileen Browne. The story, which is set in Africa, is about a little girl called Handa who is going to visit her friend Akeyo. The book features a range of fruits (linked to healthy eating) and animals found in Kenya (linked to Understanding the World). We are lucky enough to have children in Reception from various countries around the world and we have looked at where they are on a World map. If you would like to buy 'Handa's Surprise' online,

it costs about £6.00. Please don't feel that you have to though.

There is a lovely animated version of the story on YouTube, using the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UuMS5UQ1kyE>.

Story-based activities to do at home:

- It's a good idea to watch the whole video with your child first (it's only about 4 minutes long). Then watch it again, this time pausing the video to talk about the names of the 7 fruits that Handa puts in her basket. Count them as she puts them in (Maths links).
- Which animals appear in the story? What do you already know about each animal. Look on a laptop or tablet for information - what the animal looks like, how it moves, what it eats.
- Which animal from the story is your favourite? Draw and write a sentence about it.
- Talk about friendship. Who are your friends? What do you like about them? They're funny, kind, helpful etc.
- If you were taking a basket/box to your best friend, what would you put in it? Opportunity to talk about and draw healthy/less healthy foods eg a banana because it's healthy, a cake because my friend likes them and it's a treat.

There is a sequel to the book called '**Handa's Hen**', also found on YouTube. The link is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZnEW5ydMpk>

Story-based activities to do at home:

The story has plenty of opportunities for counting as Handa and Akeyo find quantities of creatures in their search for Handa's hen. Pause the video and let your child count the animals found.

Talk to your child about the **differences** between environments - how is the village in Kenya different to Kirkby? Look at the pictures for ideas. What are the homes in the village made of? What is your house made of? Why wouldn't a straw house be very good in the UK? Talk about weather. Talk about **similarities** - in both environments, people are living in groups called **communities**.

- Look at the range of creatures the two friends see. Have you ever seen any of these animals in real life? Talk about past experiences - trips to the zoo, Safari Park etc.
- Which creatures can we see in our local environment? Look in the garden for minibeasts.
- What animals are kept as pets in our local environment?

Expressive Arts and Design

- Act out 'Handa's Surprise' using a basket/box and putting in things that you would like to take to your friend (doesn't have to be food - a favourite book, toy, game).
- Draw and write about your favourite part of the story.
- Sing Nursery rhymes and songs. The children love the animated videos on the BBC's School section of the website. We use these clips often in Maths lessons as there are various counting songs, as well as other rhymes. The link is:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/nursery-rhymes-a-to-z-index/z4ddgwx>.

I hope these activities have given you some ideas for ways to support your child's learning until we return to school. I'm sure you have some great ideas of your own, as you know what interests and motivates your child. Please don't feel under pressure to complete every activity. It is more important that you are enjoying playing a valuable part in your child's learning.

The Early Years team look forward to seeing all our families again soon. We have missed you all. Take good care of yourselves and each other and stay safe.

Happy learning!

Miss Fealey