

# Spring 1 - January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers and children,

Happy New Year to all of our Westvale School community! We hope you are all safe and well. It's unfortunate that we are starting 2021 with a lockdown, but we are going to do our best to make learning fun and enjoyable for your child (with your help)! We know that home learning is no substitute for being in school but we will work in partnership with our families to make the most of learning opportunities for our pupils. The Government expects primary school children to complete three hours of school work per day at home. This work will consist of a range of different activities as set out below.

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

## **Communication and Language**

### **Listening and Attention (sitting still, looking and concentrating)**

- Read a few pages of a story to your child and encourage them to talk about what has happened so far. Ask "What do you think might happen next?". Turn the pages to find out next event. Praise children for their prediction, even if it's different to the events in the story. In Reception, we encourage the children to understand that there is a range of possibilities and the only way to find out what will happen is by reading the story/looking at the illustrations. This also works with TV programmes or films

that your child hasn't seen before. Pause the programme and ask what your child thinks might happen next. This will show you whether they have been looking/listening attentively.

- We also work on children being able to follow a story without pictures by listening carefully. The BBC website has short (5-6 minute) stories for Early Years children on topics that interest them like Transport and Animals. The link is as follows:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/audio-stories/zh3t2sg>

### Understanding

- Ask questions about stories you have read to your child to make sure that your child understands what they have heard. Ask 'Why....?' and 'How...?' questions to see if your child has followed the story.
- When reading aloud to your child, use different voices for characters. Focus on funny parts of stories. Reception age children show good understanding of humour. They love it when bad characters come to a sticky end eg the wolf at the end of 'The Three Little Pigs' and the troll at the end of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'.

Interactive traditional tales to share with your child such as 'The Gingerbread Man' and 'Jack and the Beanstalk' can be found here:

[https://www.lancsngfl.ac.uk/curriculum/literacy/lit\\_site/html/fiction/fairytales2/fairytales.htm](https://www.lancsngfl.ac.uk/curriculum/literacy/lit_site/html/fiction/fairytales2/fairytales.htm)

## Speaking

- Encourage your child to explain their thinking by using the word 'because':

" I think it might rain today **because** the sky is cloudy".

" I love playing with Lego **because** I enjoy building models".

" This is my favourite story **because** I love hedgehogs".

- As our new topic is 'Caring for Animals', we will be learning the names of a range of pets, including different breeds of dog.

### Key vocabulary:

Diet - the healthy food and drinks that animals need.

Domestic - at home, not a wild animal.

Grooming - keeping your dog clean and tidy.

Nervous - shy (how a new pet might feel).

Pet - an animal that lives at home as part of a family group.

Shelter - a place of safety, such as a rescue centre.

Training - teaching your dog how to "sit", "wait" and "stay".

## Physical Development

Moving and Handling: Please continue to support your child by encouraging them to write their name and draw pictures. They could copy pictures of dogs or other pets found on the internet. 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 target.
- Cycling, walking and running are fantastic ways to maintain physical and mental wellbeing. So is walking a dog!

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

- Food and drinks - making healthy choices.
- Exercise - to keep our bodies fit and strong.
- Sleep - to give us energy for daily activities.
- Hygiene - especially the importance of handwashing.

The **self-care** requirements for the end of Reception are that your child shows independence in managing their own toilet needs and dressing independently. Please continue to support with this at home by encouraging your child to get dressed/undressed independently every day, put on their own coat, hat, gloves etc.

Our 'Caring for animals' topics involves the children learning about how humans have a responsibility for making sure that we meet the needs of our pets.

## **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

I'm sure that the children will be missing their friends, staff and the experience of coming to school. However, being at home can provide opportunities to do things that we don't always get a chance to do in our usual, busy lives such as going for bicycle rides, making cakes and playing board games. As Parents/Carers you are doing a brilliant job in making your children feel safe and secure until it is safe for us all to be together in school again. We are now asking you to make sure that your child completes all work sent home each Friday and return the work to school the following Friday, ready to collect the new pack.

## **Literacy**

**Reading** - Reception children are working on reading simple words and a few children are already able to read short sentences at this point in the year. You can help by pointing to simple words in books and encouraging your child to 'sound out' and blend sounds to read words eg d-o-g makes the word 'dog', c-a-t makes the word cat.

**Writing** - Reception children are working on writing simple words and labels, for example drawing a family picture and attempting to write names of family members. Some children are already writing their own simple sentences. At this stage, we don't expect children to spell every word perfectly. It is more important that they have had a go

at representing each sound in the word. For example, if a 4-5 year old writes 'duc' for duck, that is a good effort. The child has represented every sound in the word. We still show the child how to write the word correctly, but definitely praise their attempt.

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

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

## **Mathematics**

Numbers: We have been using a 'Number of the Week' approach in Reception - we got as far as 10 by Christmas. We take a whole week to get to know the number in depth.

- Recognising and ordering numbers to 10 and beyond. You can help by playing number games with your child. If you have older children, get them involved too.
- Write numbers 1-10 (then beyond) 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 (they love it when they know more than the adult!).

- Play counting games with ordinary household/garden objects - pencils, Lego blocks, leaves, clothes pegs, pasta shapes. Show your child one of the 1-10 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 5 pencils here and 4 pegs here. How many things have I got altogether?".
- Practise **subtracting** with groups of objects - "I've got 8 pasta shapes but now I'm taking 3 away. How many have I got left?". Use fingers to check.

## Shape, Space and Measure

Use everyday language to talk about **weight** - light/heavy. This can be done if children are helping indoors/outdoors. Which objects are **too heavy** for a young child to carry? Which ones are **light enough** for them to manage? Which dogs look heaviest/lightest? Which animal is heavier - a goldfish or a cat?

Use everyday language to talk about capacity - how much will fit inside containers. What will **hold most** - a bucket or a paddling pool? Use terms full/half-full/empty.

Use everyday language to compare sizes - smallest, medium, biggest. (The story of The Three Billy Goats Gruff is useful here):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QzT1sq6kCY>

Use this link for a nice activity, putting animals in size order:

[http://resources.hwb.wales.gov.uk/VTC/the\\_zoo/eng/Introduction/mainsession1.htm](http://resources.hwb.wales.gov.uk/VTC/the_zoo/eng/Introduction/mainsession1.htm)

## Understanding the World

The two main books we are going to focus on this half term are 'Oh no, George!' by Chris Haughton and 'Our Very Own Dog' by Amanda McCardie, stories about two dogs that behave very differently! This gives us the opportunity to talk about how to train and take care of dogs. 'Our Very Own Dog' is available to buy on Amazon for about £5.00 if you would like to buy the book. There is a really good interactive read-along version of 'Oh no, George!' using the link below:

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/storybooks-and-games/oh-no-george/>

There are talking activities available by clicking on the  icon, such as "What does 'being good' mean?". This gives parents the opportunity to talk about positive behaviour, the consequences of not doing what we are supposed to do etc.

For Literacy based 'Oh no, George!' activities to do at home, see Reception planning for week beginning 11/1/21.

### Expressive Arts and Design

- Draw and write about your favourite part of stories.
- Re-enact the stories using animal soft toys/figures if you have them. If not, you can use a pair of old socks to make puppets of dogs/other pets. Alternatively, make pet models using Lego or cardboard and use them to retell the stories.
- Sing songs and Nursery Rhymes related to dogs:  
Old Mother Hubbard - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/nursery-rhymes-old-mother-hubbard/zdsmd6f>

BINGO -

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbPUVMiytig&vl=ko&ab\\_channel=KidsLearningVideos](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbPUVMiytig&vl=ko&ab_channel=KidsLearningVideos)

Who let the dogs out? -

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ojULkWEUsPs&ab\\_channel=BahaMen](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ojULkWEUsPs&ab_channel=BahaMen)

Nursery rhymes related to other pets -

A cat came dancing - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/nursery-rhymes-a-cat-came-dancing/z6q792p>

Did you ever see a bunny? - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/nursery-rhymes-did-you-ever-see-a-bunny/z7vmd6f>

Take care and happy learning!

Miss Fealey and the Reception team