



STARTING SCHOOL at Abbey Road Primary School...



...and how I can help

What will my child be doing in the Reception Class?

We believe that your child will only learn when they are settled and happy. We will work in partnership with you to ensure that your child is happy and is able to achieve to the best of their abilities as a valued member of our school. At Abbey Road Reception new starters do full days at school from day one, we don't do phased starts.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage your child will follow a broad and balanced curriculum and will learn through practical, play-based activities.

They will cover seven areas of learning:

Three Prime Areas

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

Four Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Mathematical Development
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All of these areas of learning are underpinned by the **Characteristics of Effective Learning**.

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

In the Reception Class your child will take part in a wide range of activities, including:

- Open ended investigations
- Jigsaws and games
- Sand and water play

Small world play e.g. farm, zoo, train set, dolls house

- Roleplay
- ICT – e.g. iPads, listening centres, interactive whiteboards
- Design Technology area - design and make their own creations
- Construction
- Writing area to practise independent writing and mark making
- Malleable materials - play dough, clay etc
- Outdoor play
- Creative activities
- Physical play
- Music and dance



- Children also have sessions of 'Dough Disco', where they use their fingers to manipulate dough to music. This builds up finger strength and gets their fingers ready for writing. They have a phonics and reading session each day as well as a maths session.

GETTING YOUR CHILD READY FOR SCHOOL

It would really help your child to have a stress-free start to school if he / she can confidently do the following. We will support your child if they do need help.



- Fasten/unfasten his/her own coat
- Use the toilet and wash and dry hands
- Use a knife and fork correctly
- Pack his / her own bag
- Play turn-taking games
- Use a pair of small scissors to cut out

It is appreciated if your child can;

- Remember to say "please" and "thank you".
- Wait his/her turn when someone else is speaking.

TASKS YOU CAN PRACTISE WITH YOUR CHILD AT HOME.

- To recognise their own name.
- To recognise and name colours.
- To sing several nursery rhymes.
- To rote count to 10.
- To count up to 5 objects carefully, moving them as you count.
- To recognise some numerals and relate it to a number of objects.

The link below is filled with really good advice on how to help your child starting school.

[Starting primary school - BBC Parents' Toolkit - BBC Bitesize](#)

When your child starts school, remember to check the school website for updates. The Reception class post each half term with some photos of what your child has been up to.

HOW WILL MY CHILD LEARN TO READ?

- Your child will begin by first learning the 26 sounds (phonemes) in the alphabet. This will be taught using the rhymes from the Read, Write, Inc scheme. To ensure that you are teaching your child the correct enunciation of the sounds, please listen to the video below. It is very important to say the sounds softly and correctly in order to enable them to blend the sounds together in order to read.

[Read Write Inc.: How to say the set one, set two and set three sounds - YouTube](#)



- Your child will be taught to hear the sound at the beginning of words. You can play games to help your child hear the sounds, e.g. collect items that begin with a certain letter from around the house. Say the name of each item correctly.
- Once your child can remember some of the sounds with the picture cues, you can take away the pictures and begin to look at just the written letter (grapheme) and make the sound (phoneme). Use the picture cards to help your child remember the sound until they eventually will be able to do it without them.

m m	a a	s s	d d	t t
i i	n n	p p	g g	o o
c c	k k	u u	b b	f f
e e	l l	h h	sh sh	r r
j j	v v	y y	w w	th th
z z	ch ch	qu qu	x x	ng nk

- The first sounds that your child will be taught are **m a s d t**
- Once your child recognises some of the letter sounds, they will begin to blend the sounds together to sound out simple three letter words, e.g. s-a-t, s-a-d, m-a-t
- In Reception there are 45 key words that the children need to be able to read. These words will come up regularly in their reading books. Flash cards will also be sent home on green cards, your child will say each sound and blend the sounds together to read the word. Eventually they will be able to read the words without having to say each sound. Please practise these words little and often, five minutes every night is more beneficial than 20 minutes all in one go.
- Your child's reading books will be changed as appropriate. Please use the reading diary to communicate with your child's teacher and to let the teacher know your child has read at home. Please add extra comments to let us know how they're getting on.
- Reading books more than once is very valuable. When a child reads or hears the same book multiple times, they become familiar and comfortable with a greater number of words and this helps them to develop fluency.
- Alphabet jigsaws and games, phonics play website and books can also be used to assist your child at home.

TOP TIPS WHEN READING WITH YOUR CHILD.

DO:

- ✓ Praise your child continually. Tell him/her how well they are doing and how pleased you are with them.
- ✓ Find somewhere warm, cosy and quiet to read.
- ✓ Look at the title and count the words and letters in it. Remind your child that each word has a finger space between it.
- ✓ Talk about the story and the pictures.
- ✓ Encourage your child to point to each word as they read.
- ✓ Encourage your child to sound out words which they do not know.
- ✓ Encourage your child to use phonic and picture cues to attempt a word
- ✓ Encourage your child to read signs when you are out, ASDA or McDonald's may well be among the first words your child recognises!
- ✓ Use the library and read lots of different books to your child, comics, information books, poems and picture books.



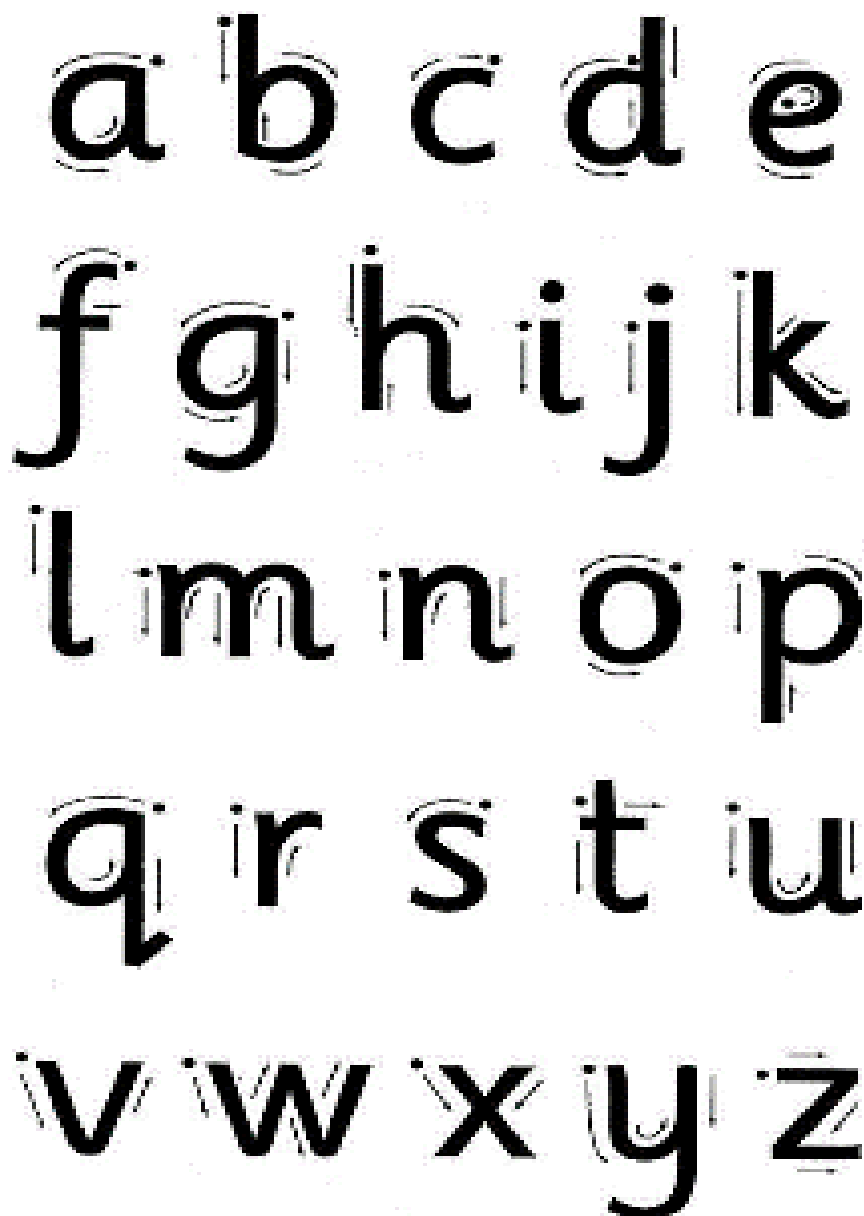
DO NOT:

- Get cross with your child's efforts
- Do anything else at the same time. (turn off the TV etc)
- Let your child struggle
- Correct errors immediately, give your child time to realise errors for themselves.

Encouraging Early Writing Skills

It is important to do activities that use a child's fingers and hands to develop fine motor control before beginning to write. These include jigsaw puzzles, threading beads and cards, construction toys, dressing dolls, painting, drawing, colouring, art kits, fastening clothes, handling small objects, (e.g. small Lego, jewellery making kits.) Using big tweezers to pick up objects develops the pincer grip they need and using their fingers to pick up small objects, e.g. sorting beads, sequins, sorting rice from lentils, to name but a few.





It is **very important** that your child holds their pencil in the correct way once they are ready to write.

The pencil should be held in the tripod grip between the thumb and the first two fingers. If a child's hold starts incorrectly it is very difficult to correct later.



It is also **vital** that letters are formed correctly from the start. Please monitor starting points and directions. All of the letters apart from d and e start at the top.

This is how we form the letters in the alphabet. We teach lower case letters first. Handwriting rhymes will be sent home to help your child remember the letter formation.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Encourage early mathematical skills by talking with your child about numbers, patterns and shapes.

Have a go at:

- Singing number rhymes, e.g. 123 45 once I caught a fish alive
[Counting songs - BBC Teach](#)
- 5 little men in a flying saucer
- Counting the stairs as you climb up
- Counting everyday objects by moving them as you count.
- Finding numbers on packaging.
- Look for numbers on house doors, road signs etc.
- Recognising numbers and matching objects to them.
- Naming and talking about the shapes of objects around them. Talk about curved and straight lines on shapes.
- Understand positional language.
- Make repeating patterns using any objects.
- Bath time activities involving filling, emptying and half filling containers.
- Baking activities involving weighing ingredients and counting out spoonfuls.



OUTDOOR LEARNING - FOREST SCHOOL

We are lucky at Abbey Road School to be able to take our learning outside. Through Forest schools we use our imaginations and learn new skills while building our confidence and having fun!

We cook over open fire and learn how to be safe and follow rules.

