



Early Years Newsletter



12/06/2026 Summer Issue 1

#shineatpriorweston

Virtual tour @ <https://bit.ly/32RoLWi>

#unitedagainstbullying

We aim high * We are resilient * We are curious learners * We value diversity * We are respectful

Dear Golden Lane and Prior Weston families,

In this newsletter, we will focus on maths and put the spotlight on how to support early number skills. We hope you find the information and links useful.

There is also an update from the different rooms as we find out the focus for their learning for the summer term.

A lot of thought is put into the newsletters. Any feedback or suggestions are welcome.

Happy reading!

Bev & Rae

Deputy Head & Children's Centre Lead

Dates for your Diary

June 2026	
Wednesday 17th June	Reception NHS Hearing and vision check AM
Thursday 25th June	Tempest Class Photographs
Sunday 28th June	Run Prior Weston Run! from 10:00am–12:00pm at Highbury Fields.
July 2026	
Monday 6th July	PM– Sports day on pitch Reception then Nursery
Friday 17th July	End of summer term 2pm finish

RUN KIDS RUN



Welcome to this edition of the Early Years Newsletter – Spotlight on Early Number skills

In this edition, we're excited to share how **early number skills develop in the Early Years** and how we nurture these important foundations every day.

In the early stages of learning, maths isn't just about counting or recognising numerals—it begins long before that. Children explore numbers through play, notice patterns, compare quantities, and make sense of the world around them. These early experiences help build the confidence, understanding, and curiosity they need to become successful mathematicians.

Guidance from **Birth to 5 Matters** highlights the importance of providing rich opportunities for children to explore mathematical ideas in meaningful, playful ways. Whether they're filling and emptying containers in water play, stacking blocks, sorting objects, or noticing patterns in nature, children are constantly developing their understanding of numbers and relationships. Through these experiences, they begin to see that numbers have meaning, quantities can change, and mathematical thinking is part of everyday life.

Throughout the Early Years, we offer a wide range of **hands-on, practical, and engaging activities** that encourage children to explore early maths concepts. From counting games and number songs to problem-solving and pattern play, we create opportunities for children to develop confidence and enjoyment in maths. In this newsletter, we will share simple ways you can support your child's early number development at home.

Number skills are a journey that begins long before children can count confidently or recognise numerals. From noticing "more" and "less" as toddlers to beginning to understand number bonds and patterns, every stage helps build strong mathematical foundations.

The **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Profile Early Learning Goals for Mathematics** focus on two key areas:

- **Number** – developing a deep understanding of numbers to 10, including counting, subitising, and simple addition and subtraction
- **Numerical Patterns** – recognising patterns, relationships between numbers, and counting beyond 20

This means that rather than simply reciting numbers, children are developing a **true understanding of how numbers work.**

Birth to 3 Years: Laying the Foundations

At this stage, children are beginning to explore early mathematical ideas through their senses and play.

Children may:

Notice when quantities change (e.g. more, all gone)

Explore through filling, emptying, posting, and stacking

Begin to understand simple language such as big, small, more

Enjoy number rhymes and songs

Start to recognise patterns in routines

At this stage, children are not counting yet—but they are building the essential foundations needed for later number understanding.

3 to 4 Years

3 to 4 Years: Beginning to Count and Compare

As children grow, they begin to show a stronger awareness of numbers in their play and environment.

Children may:

Begin to say numbers in order

Start counting objects (though this may not always be accurate)

Show interest in numbers they see around them

Begin to answer “how many?” with small groups

Use language like more, less, and same

Explore patterns and relationships

Children are still developing understanding—especially that the last number counted represents the total.

Reception (Children in Reception)

Reception: Developing Deep Understanding

In Reception, children begin to build a deeper and more secure understanding of number through play and focused learning.

Children may:

Count reliably to 10 and beyond

Understand that numbers represent quantity (how many)

Begin to subitise (recognise small amounts without counting)

Explore how numbers are made (e.g. $5 = 2 + 3$)

Solve simple addition and subtraction problems

Recognise patterns and number relationships

Children need lots of hands-on experiences to fully understand numbers—not just recite them.

Link to the Early Learning Goals

By the end of Reception, children are working towards:

Number: Deep understanding of numbers to 10, number bonds, and simple calculation

Numerical Patterns: Counting beyond 20 and recognising patterns and relationships between numbers

Supporting Your Child at Home

You can support early maths in simple, everyday ways:

Count steps, toys, or snacks together

Talk about more, less, and same

Sing number rhymes

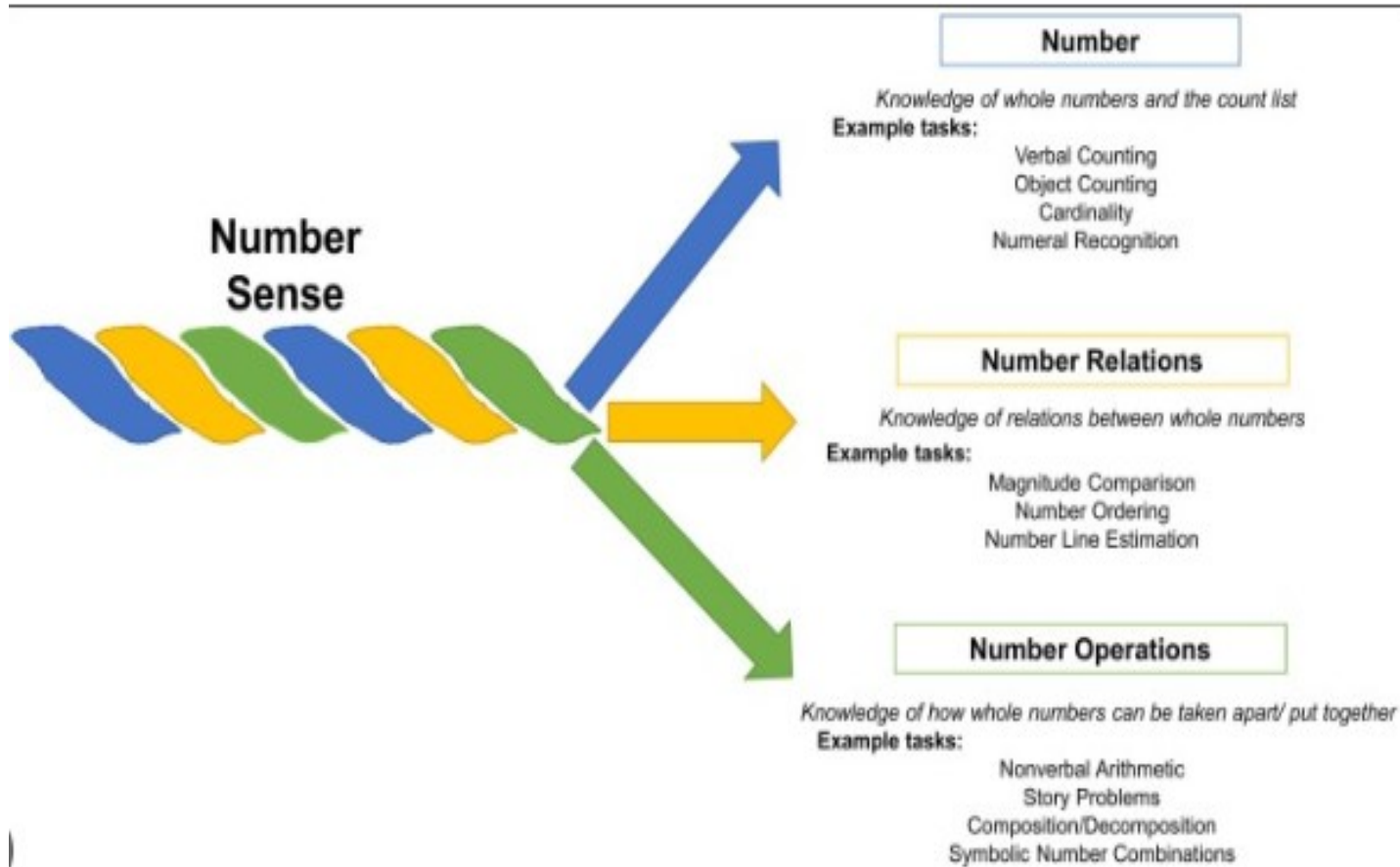
Play games with dice or counting

Involve children in real-life maths like cooking or tidying

✦ Remember:

Early number development is a journey that starts from birth. Through play, talk, and exploration, children build the understanding they need to become confident and capable learners.

Together, we're helping our youngest learners grow into curious and confident mathematicians!

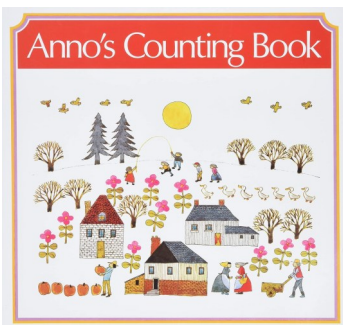


Every child is a natural mathematician, according to Mitsumasa Anno. Children are constantly comparing and classifying things and events they observe around them. As they try to bring sense and order into what they observe, they are actually performing basic mathematical feats.

With Anno's Counting Book, the creator of the brilliantly inventive Anno's Alphabet invites young readers on another stimulating adventure of the imagination--this time into the world of numbers and counting.

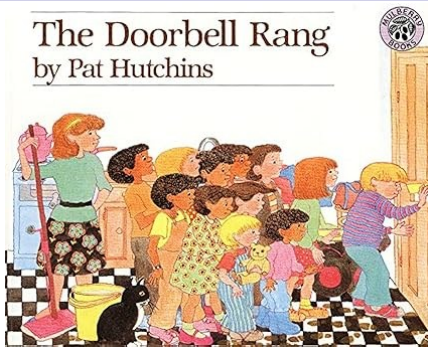
Gentle watercolor pictures show a landscape changing through the various times of day and the turning seasons, months and years, and the activities of the people and animals who come to live there. But the seemingly simple plan of the book is deceptive: look more carefully and you will see one-to-one correspondences; groups and sets; scales and tabulations; changes over time periods; and many other mathematical relationships as they occur in natural, everyday living. The reader is subtly led to see and understand the real meaning of numbers.

Look at this book and look again. Each time you do so, you will find another application of a natural mathematical concept that you had not noticed before.

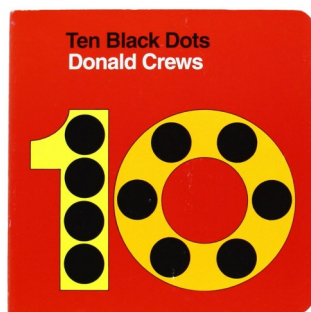


The Doorbell Rang

by Pat Hutchins



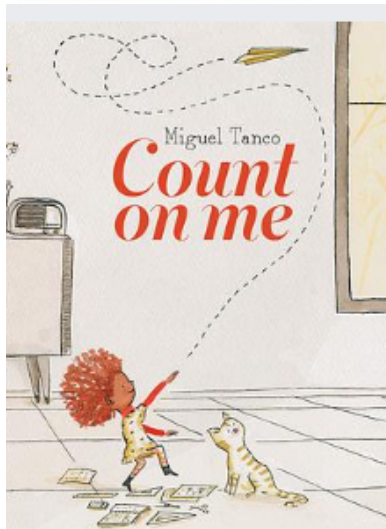
Ma has made a dozen delicious cookies. It should be plenty for her two children. But then the doorbell rings--and rings and rings. Each ring of the doorbell brings more friends to share the delicious cookies Ma has made.



What can you do with ten black dots?

One dot can make a sun, two dots can make the eyes of a fox, and three dots can make a snowman's face.

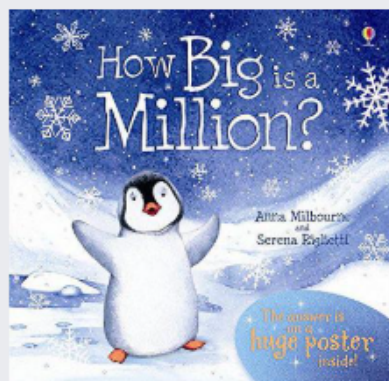
And that's just the beginning in this unique counting book! Children will develop visual learning skills, explore creativity, and practice counting numbers, all in one deceptively simple—and fun!—picture book.



Miguel Tanco

Count on Me

This gorgeous picture book celebrates individuality and finding your passion in life. A little girl watches as everyone around her finds their calling, but hers is a little different – because she really likes maths! Her unique perspective helps her to see all sorts of beauty in the world. By sharing this story together, your little ones might start to see the shapes and numbers that are all around us, even just in the everyday things.



Anna Milbourne
Serena Riglietti

How Big is a Million?

If you know a wee one who is less interested in 1, 2, 3 and more focused on bigger numbers, then this sweet story about a penguin on a mission to find a million might hit the spot. Little penguin is able to quantify tens, hundreds and thousands, but it's not until the final page that he finally gets to understand what a million actually looks like. The narrative may be less compelling than you will find in other stories, but it definitely brings the concept of large numbers to life.

Developmental steps for early writing

At the end of Reception children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG)

- Shows interest in patterned songs and rhymes, perhaps with repeated actions
- Experiences patterned objects and images
- Begins to predict what happens next in predictable situations

- May be aware of number names through their enjoyment of action rhymes and songs that relate to numbers
- Looks for things which have moved out of sight

- Says some counting words
- May engage in counting-like behaviour, making sounds and pointing or saying some numbers in sequence

- In everyday situations, takes or gives two or three objects from a group
- Beginning to notice numerals (number symbols)
- Beginning to count on their fingers.

Counting

- May enjoy counting verbally as far as they can go
- Points or touches (tags) each item, saying one number for each item, using the stable order of 1,2,3,4,5.
- Uses some number names and number language within play, and may show fascination with large numbers

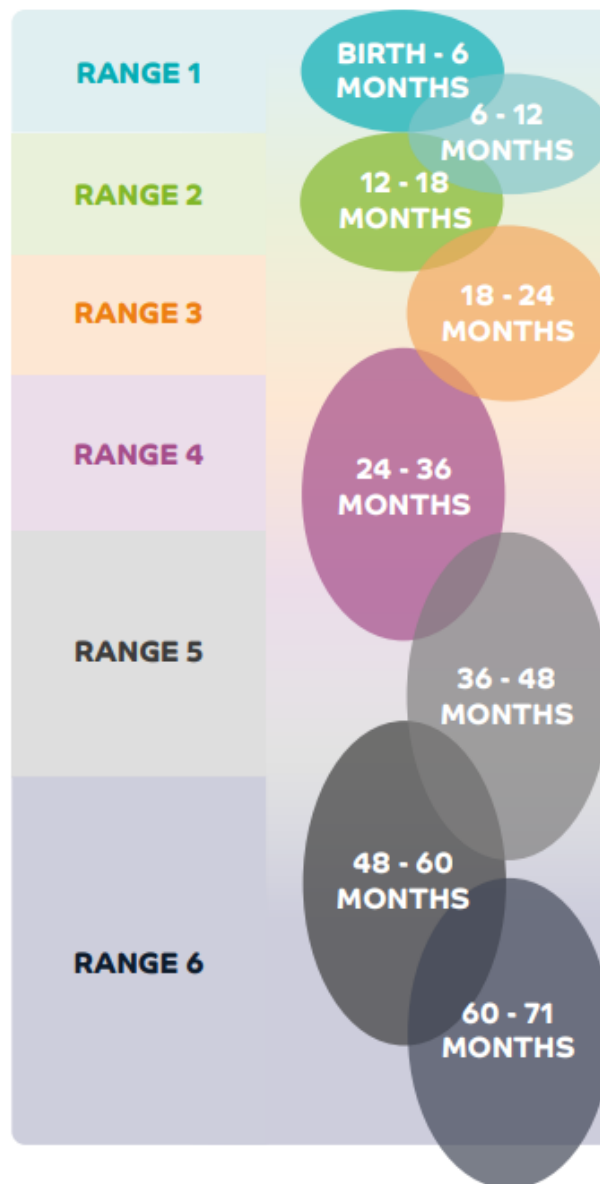
- Begin to recognise numerals 0 to 10

Cardinality

- Subitises one, two and three objects (without counting)
- Counts up to five items, recognising that the last number said represents the total counted so far (cardinal principle)
- Links numerals with amounts up to 5 and maybe beyond
- Explores using a range of their own marks and signs to which they ascribe mathematical meanings

- Engages in subitising numbers to four and maybe five

- Counts out up to 10 objects from a larger group
- Matches the numeral with a group of items to show how many there are (up to 10)



Statutory ELG: Number

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number;- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5;
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

Statutory ELG: Numerical Patterns

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system;
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity;
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

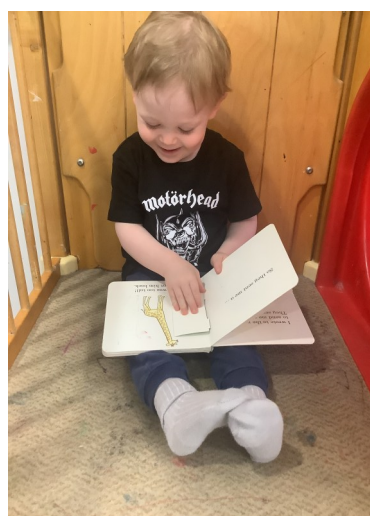
News from baby room

In the baby room, we have been very active this term. Firstly, we would like to warmly welcome new families and babies who have recently joined us. This term, we have participated in numerous local trips, including visits to The Shoes Lane Library once a week, Fortune park, Hackney Farm, Young V&A Museum, and the Shoreditch Fire Station. These activities promote young children's social skills, boost confidence, and enhance personal development.

Our book of the month is "Dear Zoo." This story features animals from around the world and promotes interactive play, early literacy, and the use of descriptive language. It also encourages the development of fine motor skills through lift-the-flap when looking at the book, which the babies enjoy taking turns with. These activities aid in learning animal names, making animal noises, and engaging with the repetitive text.

Additionally we have 9 amazing children who will be transitioning from the baby room to the toddler room from next Monday. It is absolutely lovely to watch them grow to the next stage of their milestone development.

We are very excited and look forward to our upcoming summer trip to South End Beach, where we will have the opportunity to spend quality time with all parents and children.



News from Toddler room

This Month the focus book we are focusing on is 'The Rainbow Fish'. The children all have opportunities to immerse themselves in sensory experiences. Children will have opportunity to develop friendships, learn to manage their feelings, develop on sharing skills and building positive relationships as they learn through this particular book. The children will develop through play, being able to explore messy activities and explore a range of experiences with paint, water and sand play, rice play and many more. Adding to this, they will develop language through learning new words, colours, phrases which are repeated in the story.

Overall, the children will be able to develop and enhance on their imaginations and re-enact in their play. Please take a look at our lovely pictures and be a part of our journey.

In the last two weeks, through the half term our some of our children visited 'Shoreditch Fire Station'. All the children had an opportunity to sit in the fire engine, had a chance to touch the special tools which fire fighters use. The children all had a chance to use the hose which put fires out and had a chance to shoot the water out at the training building. Finally, we all experienced the fire fighters sliding down the pole when they have to rush off to emergencies!



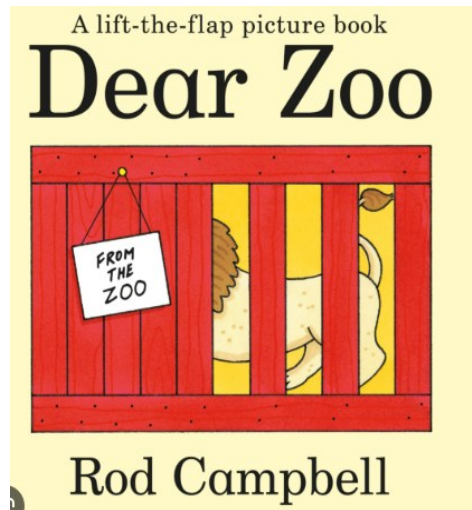
News from Nursery

In Nursery this term, we have been exploring the wonderful world of animals. The children have loved sharing what they already know, asking questions, and discovering new facts through stories, play and hands-on activities.

We began with the much-loved story Dear Zoo, thinking about different animals, the sounds they make, and why some might make good—or not-so-good—pets. The children enjoyed retelling the story, acting it out, and creating their own animal crates in our creative area.

Now, we are moving on to another favourite: The Tiger Who Came to Tea. The children have been fascinated by the idea of a tiger visiting a home, and we've been using the story to talk about imagination, manners, and mealtimes. We will also be exploring patterns, comparing big and small animals, and taking part in tiger-themed role play in our home corner.

Throughout the term, the children will continue to build their vocabulary, practise early storytelling skills, and develop confidence in speaking and listening through our animal theme.

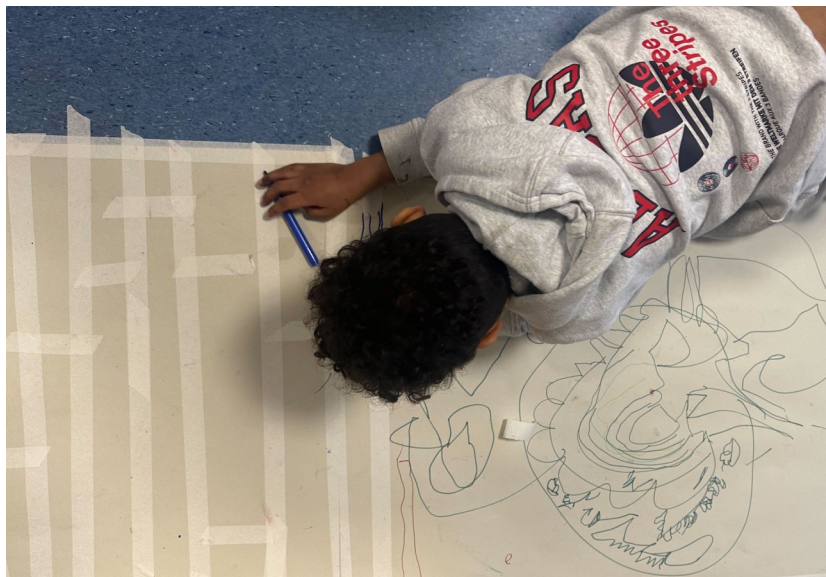


News from Reception

This term in Reception, we have been focusing on the theme of transition, helping the children prepare for their move to Year 1. In literacy, we have enjoyed reading Jabari Jumps and The Suitcase, which have supported discussions about change, new experiences, and managing our feelings. We have also been learning more about what Year 1 will be like, and today we had an exciting first visit to our new classroom.

Alongside this, we have been working hard to secure our writing skills and develop our fine motor control, building confidence and independence. In maths, we have been exploring how to use rekenreks to strengthen our number fluency and deepen our understanding of numbers.

Next week, we are looking forward to creating our own memory books to celebrate and reflect on our special time in EYFS. We'll also be preparing for a local visit to the Guildhall at the end of the month and for our first whole school sports day in July- we hope you are able to come along and join us!



https://



* JUST ADDED



Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Course

By Bright Futures Islington Follow

Willow Children's Centre - London, England
Friday, Feb 27 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm GMT

Free
Feb 27 · 9:30 am GMT

Reserve a spot

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/strengthening-families-strengthening-communities-course-tickets-1980995346408>

Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow



Every School Day Counts!

Child Absences

We look forward to welcoming in all our children everyday. If your child is unable to attend for any reason, i.e. they are unwell or have an appointment or you they will be in late please contact the office on 0207 786 4800, via parentmail or email office@priorweston.islington.sch.uk and we will pass the information on to their room.

Important Dates

The academic calendar for 2025/26 is available on the school's website. Please check it regularly to stay informed about upcoming closure dates and event days.



VITAMINS FOR MUMS & CHILDREN

Collect your **FREE** Healthy Start vitamins.



Collecting Your Child

If a different adult is collecting your child, please inform a staff member in the room and the receptionist at drop-off. The adult **must** also have your child's password.



What to expect, when?

Guidance to your child's learning and development
in the early years foundation stage



Supported by



Department
for Education



https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/sites/default/files/what_to_expect_when._a_parents_guide.pdf

In this guide, your child's first five years have been divided up into six age bands which overlap. This is because every child is different and children do not grow and develop at the same rate. It highlights what you might notice your child doing at these points. Children learn and develop through playing, exploring, being active, creative and being asked questions to help their thinking. After each age band we give you an example of some ideas and tips as to how you can help your child's learning and development. Page 34 details where you can find out more.

Spare clothes reminder

Dear Children Centre and Reception class families,

As part of our daily routine, we often need to change children into clean clothes after outdoor play, creative activities, after lunch or the occasional spill. Our centre does keep a small supply of spare clothing, but these are currently at an all-time low.

To help us ensure your child is always comfortable, could you please re-stock their spare clothes bag. Ideally, the bag should include **two full changes of clothes**, along with **underwear and socks**. Having these items ready means we can quickly support your child whenever needed.

Thank you so much for your help and continued support. It truly makes a difference in keeping our days running smoothly.

Warm regards,

The Children Centre and Reception class team

