



BOWERDEAN & MAPLEDEAN NURSERY SCHOOL

Helping your child to succeed with Reading and Writing

As Children prepare to go to school it is important that we give them the best possible start by laying the foundations for literacy in a playful and fun way. Parents play a key role in this process as they are children's first educators and most influential teachers.

Phonics - The sounds that letters & words make

- Chatter Matters - talking to children is key to helping them learn language and pick up new vocabulary. The wider a child's vocabulary the quicker they will be able to understand language and begin to learn all about the sounds that words make.
- Rhymes & Songs -Singing to children, saying nursery rhymes and getting them to learn words and join in is key to their development. Teach your child rhymes in your home language and English, the more your child knows the better their listening and speaking skills will develop.
- Children need to play with sounds - They need to be able to make funny noises with their mouths, speak in loud/soft voices experiment with sounds by changing the shape their mouths make. Play games with children for example robot voices or whispering voices.
- Children need to hear sounds in the environment - go on a listening walk, point out the sounds of birds, fire engines, keys jangling or a door bell. Encouraging children to tune into noises will help them to discriminate between different sounds.
- Sounds in words - Point out to children similar sounds. For example Musa and Mary they both start with the same sound Mmmm.
- Rhyming words - It is very important that children begin to hear rhymes in words as this helps them with spelling and reading. Point out words to children that rhyme for example bed and ted / cat and hat / up and cup.
- Using the pure sounds for letters helps when children begin to blend and segment words in the future. So say 'Mmmm' not 'Muh' for the letter M and Ssssss not Suh for the letter S.
- Limit the amount of time a child spends in front of a screen - a phone, computer, TV or tablet. These activities are all passive and do not encourage children to speak enough.
- Build into family life opportunities for children to be immersed in language. Meal times are great opportunities for speaking and listening around a table where young children can engage in meaningful conversations. This is good for children as it helps them to extend their vocabulary and listen and respond to others.

Reading

- 5 a day is not just about healthy eating - Children need to hear at least five stories a day to help them to understand all about book language. Whether it's at nursery, at home, at bedtime or in the car it is important that children have a strong understanding about stories. This will provide them with rich ideas to draw upon when they begin to write and will help them develop a love of books.
- Sharing information books with children is also key to future success. Looking at books about dinosaurs, horses, trucks, animals or whatever your child is interested in is a vital way to support them to gather information. Making regular links with your local library will really help to foster a love of books from an early age.
- Children need to be taught how books work - They need to learn about turning pages and they need to focus on what are the pictures and (when they are ready) what are the words.
- Words all around us - Children can be helped to read by identifying familiar words in their environment. Get your child to recognise words like ASDA, ESSO, McDonalds, Kelloggs or whatever they see at home or in your community.
- Children need to see adults reading for information and enjoyment - Talk to your child about what you are reading even if it is a newspaper, a letter a book or something on the computer. Let them see that you read for a purpose to get information and that you also enjoy books maybe by a favourite author.

Writing

- Writing begins with physical movement - It is important that children are able to develop muscles in their arms and their hands through physical activity before they are able to use a pencil correctly. Lots of opportunities to climb, throw and catch a ball, complete jigsaws and thread beads will really help your child's hand-eye coordination.
- Mark Making - Children need lots of opportunity to explore using different pens/chalks/paint to see the effects they can make. Writing begins when children start to tell you what the marks they have made are all about as they begin to give meaning to their work. Make sure you have plenty of resources at home for children to make marks with and ask them to tell you about what they have written.
- Children need to see adults modelling writing. Show your child what you are writing for example a birthday card, a shopping list or cooking ingredients. Let your child see the purpose of writing and encourage them to play at doing this for themselves. Always praise their efforts and make them know that you believe they are writing.
- When children begin to form recognisable letters, for example as they write their names you need to encourage them to use lower case letters (but with a capital letter for the first letter of their name.) So Sally not SALLY or sally and Isha not ISHA or isha

Lower case letters - a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Upper case letters - ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

- As children become more confident writers encourage their efforts and don't worry too much about spelling at this stage just get them in the habit of being writers and having fun!