



Preparing for School Ideas

I'm sure all our rising stars parents are now thinking about the best way to prepare their children for starting school. Here are some helpful tips which include what we would have been doing in our rising stars group time.

Literacy

We had started looking at Phase 2 set 1 phonics. We were focusing on the letters S,A,T,P,I and N. For each of these letters there is a corresponding song. These can be found on you tube by searching Jolly phonics songs. For each letter you could ask your child to find objects around the house, sing the song, and progress onto sorting objects into the correct phoneme (letter sound). If you are taking a daily walk you could go on a phoneme hunt.

Encourage mark making whenever possible. When your child draws a picture ask them to write their name on it. Maybe they could write letters to friends and family members they have not seen.

Make a name card for your child to look at to encourage name recognition. If they are still developing the skill of writing their name they could always have a go at writing it themselves.

When reading stories to your child ask them to predict what they think will happen. Discuss the illustrations. Point out words that rhyme, and ask your child to continue the rhyming pattern.

Numeracy

Go on a number and shape hunt. You could hide numbers or shapes around the house for you child to find. This can be as simple as numbers written on post it notes or scraps of paper. When the children find the numbers they could order them or draw the correct amount of dots under the number.

Lego is a great resource. It can be used for sorting colours, counting numbers of bricks in towers and making patterns.

If you are going for a daily walk look at number plates and door numbers and talk to your child about them.

Play number and shape bingo. You can make your own or templates are free to download on twinkl.

Physical development

Continue to encourage your child to be as independent as possible. Allow them to dress themselves in the morning and put their own coats and shoes on. Remember they will be expected to get changed for PE when they start school.

Messy play is fun and has huge benefits. Shaving foam is great. Spray it onto a tray or flat surface and allow the children to make patterns and even practise their writing.

Play dough is very good for developing muscles in small childrens' hands. This is vital in preparing children for writing. If you have the ingredients you could have a go at making your own!



If you are lucky enough to have a garden play some ball games, throwing and catch, or just take the opportunity to be outside as much as possible.

Creative Development

Lots of children will role play with their toys. This is building their imagination and is a very important skill. If they have not been given enough time to play and develop their imagination they will never be the next J K Rowling!

If you have the resources, encourage the children to draw, paint and build. Its amazing how entertained the children can be with just a few boxes, glue and paint.

If you have a garden, as the weather improves, take the mess outside. The children at preschool loved water and paint brushes in the garden. Its a great way to explore whilst being creative. This also links nicely to understanding the world as you could ask questions such as " I wonder why your picture has vanished?"

Understanding the world

Keep a scrap book or diary about what is going on in the world at the moment and how it has impacted your family. In years to come when we are all back to our normal everyday lives our children will be learning about this in their history lessons!

On your daily walks discuss changes in the environment as we are moving into spring. See if your child can notice any changes eg, flowers growing, weather getting warmer, blossom on trees.

Personal, Social and Emotional development

We focus on this area a lot in preschool. Turn taking and sharing are important skills that not all children find easy. Playing simple board games where the children have to wait for their turn to come is a good way of practising. At preschool we use a sand timer to encourage the children to wait for their turn. If you do not have a sand timer at hoe you could always use the timer on the cooker.

We appreciate that these are very uncertain times but it is still important to talk to your child about starting school. Once school places have been allocated maybe you could walk your child passed their school on your daily walk, talk about their uniform and what class they may be in.

This is certainly not how we planned to spend the last term with our rising stars. I hope these ideas and suggestions will be useful over the coming weeks in preparation for "big school!"