

Getting ready for School Information Evening

*“A **strong foundation** in the early years is crucial for **children's** success throughout their education and beyond”. Gov.uk*

Language rich environment

We cannot stress enough the importance of vocabulary and your child being exposed to a language rich environment. Talk to your child and explain longer words, don't simplify everything. Don't forget these are the same children who can tell you more dinosaur names than you ever thought possible! They don't need to have everything put into small words to understand.

Interesting statistic: the vocabulary gap in 5 year old children grows to give the following results - vocabulary poverty in early years means 6 times more likely to have poor reading levels at 11 years and twice as likely to be unemployed at 34 years. This is not about financial situation but it is 'rich get richer and poor get poorer'

Nursery support: every day your child is seeped in a rich language environment with adults who provide high quality interactions with plenty of new vocabulary and proto-conversation.

Rhyme & Story

The biggest gift for children is the love of story which supports language development.

Rhyme really helps with learning phonics. Nursery rhymes are brilliant and so are story books written in rhyme, for example Julia Donaldson books.

Read read read until your child is able to re-tell the story.

Non-fiction books are also important. This isn't about your child learning to read the book themselves.

Nursery support: we have books throughout the nursery and the woods. We share these with the children throughout the session. We encourage children to choose a book from our library to take home and share with family.

Sense of Independence

Most reception classes have a teacher and a Teaching Assistant (TA). The ratio will be around 1:15 which is very different to the 1:4 or 1:6 ratios at nursery.

If your child does not have a good level of independence when going to the toilet this can cause them anxiety and as soon as they need the toilet they will begin to worry. At this point they are not able to learn.

If your child can take themselves to the toilet this will empower them. Accidents may still happen and that is ok. A lot of the time children get caught up in the business and simply leave it too late. However, being confident in managing their own personal hygiene will ensure they are more likely not to have accidents.

Nursery support: children are supported to use
the toilet from the time they start nursery.
As they progress we encourage increasing independence.

Dressing and undressing themselves

If your child does have an accident they will need to change themselves. If they can do this by themselves it will empower them. Depending on which school they go to they may also need to change for PE. When you receive your child's uniform practice putting the items on and taking them off. School trousers can be a lot trickier than jogging bottoms. Perhaps decide not to put tights on when it is a PE day as many children struggle to put these on by themselves.

Teach your child to put their clothes neatly in a pile and turning them the right way round. This is a tricky skill.

Make sure everything is labelled, even socks! They are the most common items to get lost. When you label their book bag perhaps sew the name onto the handle so that it is easily distinguishable.

Make sure your child knows what their name looks like and can recognise it in different fonts. It is important that they can recognise their name.

Coats can be frustrating for your child if they cannot put it on by themselves. It may cause them stress and mean they choose not to go outside when they are able to freeflow. Doing up 30 zips can be tricky so the teachers will not always be able to assist.

Practice putting trainers on for PE. We are lucky at Grayswood as the children change from their wellies to indoor shoes regularly so many already know how to do this.

Nursery support: We encourage children to help each other put on coats. We don't teach them to put their coat on the floor and flip over the head which we know some nurseries teach. We have seen too many injured faces by being hit by a zip as the coat flicks over a head.

Children can see their name in a variety of places: welly mat, coat hook, book bag, green bag, name tag, and on their lunchbox, water bottle and clothing - **please name your child's things with their own name**

During the summer term older children will change for PE with Miss Maureen providing an authentic opportunity to dress and redress as they will at school

Being able to wait their turn

When there are 30 children to 2 adults it means there isn't always an instant adult to solve the problem.

Nursery support: if a child is waiting for help we will hold their hand/arm on shoulder to show we know they are there and will be with them as quickly as we can. We also explain we know they are waiting but we're just talking to someone else

Being able to ask for help

Children may worry about going to the toilet and if they do not feel confident to ask this can then lead to accidents.

It is also important for them to know what to do if they do not like something and being able to articulate that appropriately

Nursery support: we encourage children to use their words to ask for help role modelling the phrase to use

Being able to take turns

Have lots of playdates. If they can take turns with their own toys at home they should be able to do so at school. If your child finds this tricky find a strategy and help them practice.

Nursery support: we continually explain how to take turns sometimes using the timer to show how long until the next person's turn.

Sharing is more difficult at this stage, It's a difficult concept, even for grown ups!

Writing / fine motor skills

In order to write properly your child needs to be able to sit properly and hold the pencil and this comes from core strength. Core strength can be gained from tree climbing, painting, throwing bean bags, kicking balls etc. We are lucky at our nursery as they already do lots of this in the woods as well as at the hall. Some of the most successful writers are those that couldn't write when they first started school as they did not have to re-learn when they arrived.

Little Wandle is the scheme that many of the local schools use to support reading and handwriting.

Nursery support: the nursery is rich in opportunities to develop the muscles needed for writing later. Playdough, water play, Sports sessions with Naz, too many to mention

Being able to follow instructions

Practice at home with errands. Build up their memory by asking them to retrieve one thing from upstairs. Next time ask them to do 2 things etc.

Nursery support: we continuously support the children to expand working with 'information carrying words' and think of the sequence we need to follow eg when we prepare for home time

Being able to pay attention – can they sit and listen for at least 10 mins? Not using an iPad or film but in a conversation with family and friends, to a story, at a game

Nursery support: story time as a group, other short group times

Cutlery

If they can use their cutlery you are also building their muscles for writing. It is very helpful for them to be able to use their cutlery before school as mealtimes are busy and if every child needs their food cutting up it can be very tricky.

Nursery support: at hot lunches we use cutlery

Numeracy

Counting 1:1 association (pointing to each item as you count), estimating small numbers of items (for example the spots on a dice without counting them), recognising numerals, 2D and 3D shapes, mathematical language of one more or less, add on, take away, share. Only up to 5 in the first instance and only progressing once secure in all these concepts.

Nursery support: we use numerous continuous opportunities to introduce number sense authentically throughout the nursery

Be curious

A reception classroom is a busy environment. Children are able to investigate all sorts and they are encouraged to be curious. Encourage them to test things out, have a go and be curious. "if I do that, what will happen?..."

Nursery support: like a reception classroom our environment is overflowing with different opportunities to explore

Encourage them to be independent

"When you cut it for me, write it for me, find it for me, open it for me, tie it for me...all I learn is that you do it better than me" - Montessori

If we expect the best from them, we usually get the best from them.

Learn how to fail. Resilience is a really important thing. 'I can't do that **yet**, but I am learning'. Share the same language with your child about yourself - I can't do that yet but I keep trying and soon I will be able to It is important that they understand we are all learning new things

It is all about having fun. Learning is an adventure and should be exciting.

Ofsted has an expression which is helpful - practice makes permanent - the more your child is able to practice the skills the easier they will become and the more confident your child will be to try new things