

Charity No. 1137620

Mobile - 07972 810218
Landline - 01277 821496
Email - enquiries@blackmorepreschool.co.uk
www.blackmorepreschool.co.uk



Newsletter

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Leavers home Learning support and ideas

Welcome to our next closure newsletter. In this newsletter we will look at preparing your child for the next big chapter in their life **'big school'!!**

You will find lots more ideas for home learning, and transition tips, targeted specifically to help your child become 'school ready'. These are NOT compulsory activities - they are only ideas!

Remember to have fun - Having fun while learning helps your child retain information better because the process is enjoyable and memorable.

Keep following Government guidelines, keep safe and keep smiling 😊

If you need to contact us during the closure, please email our address above as this will be checked intermittently.

Role-Play schools

Role-Play enables children to act out real life experiences – such as starting school.

The area can be set up for register, class time, lunch time, library or any other school event
Children can dress up in school uniform, dressing up clothes or older siblings/parent's clothes
All the family can join in – older siblings can teach valuable information about school life
Practice some typical school rules eg putting hands up before you speak
Let your child take on the role of the teacher, call the register and give you instructions to follow.



This could also be an opportunity for your child to discuss any concerns they may have about big school

School websites

Look at the school website with your child. This will help your child become familiar with the layout, classrooms, playground and the teaching staff – name the staff to your child.

Talk about what they may do in each area of the school.

Give your child the opportunity to ask questions and express any concerns – if you don't know the answer, email the school, as many schools are still replying to emails.



Transition book

Some children enjoy making a special 'big school' book of their own.

This could be personalised with a photo of your child on the front

It could include printed photos of key teachers, and rooms, as well as drawings of all the fun things they want to do at big school.

This may make it easier for your child to share their excitement, and anxiety, about big school.

This can also act as a transition tool and an 'ice breaker' on their first session at school

Meal times

Encourage your child to use a knife and fork at mealtimes – give lots of praise for efforts.

If your child is reluctant to use a knife and fork during mealtimes allow use during play eg to cut up play dough.

Role-Play packed lunches - allow your child to try and open boxes and packets themselves to encourage independence



Getting Dressed

All children learn to undress first

You can help your child to learn by breaking down each part of dressing into little steps

Make sure clothing is laid out and the right way around

Choose loose clothing and if possible, with easy openings/elasticated waists

Practice when you are NOT in a rush!

Some children find it easier to dress in front of a mirror so they can see what they are doing

If your child is reluctant – **make it fun** – it is all practice!

Musical dressing up – when the music stops put on a top, trousers, sock or shoe... before the music starts back up!

Dressing up – wearing 'funny' clothes or putting clothing on incorrect body parts

Practice dressing dolls or teddies – this develops knowledge and skill



And remember PRAISE, PRAISE, PRAISE

Toileting/hand washing

Encourage children to tend to toileting themselves

If they are reluctant to wipe their own bottom begin by getting them to wipe it once it is clean, gradually giving them more independence.

Use sticker charts as incentives and lots of praise

Encourage your child to be independent in washing and drying their hands

Talk about why wash our hands

Building self-esteem/taking responsibility

Create jobs and chores in and around the home to further independence, responsibility and build self-esteem. Introduce them to hanging up their coat and putting things away so they learn management of their belongings. Promote your child's strengths, to build self-esteem. Eg to help a younger sibling - "you're such a kind boy... can you help _____ put her coat on."

Involve you child in making decisions around the home. What could we have for lunch? What do we need to make it? Where shall we eat lunch?

What Parents Can Do

- Use positive statements
- Non-verbal language
- Be generous with praise
- Teach positive self-statements
- Teach decision making/problem solving
- Use constructive criticism
- Be an example

Academic Skills

Preparing your child academically is not to say you need to teach your child everything they should know before they start school but practicing the basics will help them feel more comfortable and it won't be something entirely new.

Children learn at different paces, it's not a race!!! Most schools would like your child to be working towards counting to and recognising 1-20, knowing some of their alphabetical sounds phonetically and recognising and writing their own name, but this is just a guide!

There are many ways for your child to learn these skills and the best way to learn is to make it fun and relaxed.



Below are some fun ideas to develop some of these skills:

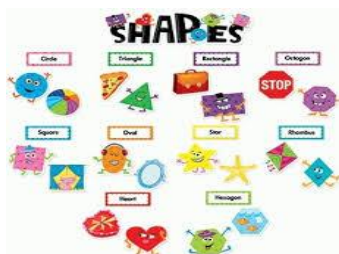
Scavenger hunt

Take any theme, such as patterns, letters or colours and hunt around the house.

Make it official with a clipboard and check off items as you go.

Make a chart to show how many you have found. Compete with family – who can find the most?

Crawl, reach high and get down low!



Pencil control

Pre-writing skills are the activities children take part in to prepare them for writing.

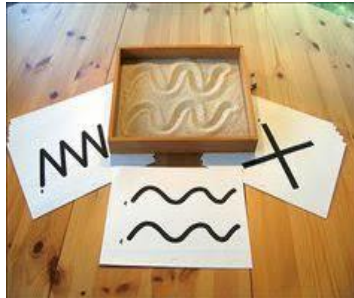
For a child to be able to write and form letters properly they need initially to learn how to copy and form simple shapes

The making of marks that imitate another person's marks, is important because it helps a child learn hand-eye coordination.

These activities can be used to develop pre-writing skills as well as develop pencil control and letter formation for those already beginning to write

Always emphasise that work should be from 'Top to Bottom' and 'Left to Right'.

- Try drawing on sandpaper, patterned wallpaper, in sand or mud
- Draw in lotions, pudding, whipped cream, icing sugar, chocolate spread and shaving foam
- Experiment with different colours of chalk, markers, crayons, pens, pencils and paints
- Draw in shallow trays of sand
- Make scribble drawings with the child. After allowing time for the child to make their own marks, demonstrate making marks such as - | O
- Draw on cakes with coloured icing tubes or draw with cheese spread on bread or crackers.
- Encourage activities such as fuzzy felt and making pictures out of shapes
- Try outdoor activities such as rubbing over different textures e.g. concrete, brick or bark
- Use thick paintbrushes and buckets of water to paint on outdoor surfaces.
- Praise the child if they look at the mark, as you make it. Praise any attempt they make that is approaching your example
- Use short regular pencils, small pieces of chalk, felt markers and crayons, this helps the development of finger control
- Make shapes with noodles or spaghetti
- Practice dot to dots. Encourage the child to stop on each dot. Use arrows to indicate the next dot to improve forward planning and direction
- Make shapes and lines out of rolled up play dough



Don't focus too quickly on forming letters, try to make drawing fun!

Bowling

Take a look around your house for something to stand up as the pins. Do you have paper towels? or just the tubes? toilet paper? and how about plastic bottles?

Now you have a fun game for all the family and can teach number skills at the same time. How many can you knock over?

Record the amount of skittles you knock down – making small marks for each one. Encourage your child to add them up and practicing writing the total number.

Write on, or add a sticky label, to each pin giving it a number – encourage your child to name, or repeat the number, each time it is knocked down.



Most importantly – HAVE FUN!!!

Baking

Most toddlers and pre-schoolers love to help with baking. They are enthusiastically hands-on and enjoy weighing, stirring, kneading, rolling and scooping batter into baking pans. This provides fantastic opportunities for them to learn naturally – for example: number recognition (weighing ingredients), counting skills (spooning ingredients into the bowl), reinforcing names of shapes (eg using shape cookie cutters), enhancing fine motor skills (stirring, kneading, rolling, scooping), introducing children to scientific concepts (eg the change heat brings to raw ingredients), increasing focus, attention and ability to follow instructions (following recipes). Baking also teaches life skills and can promote healthy eating.



Sharing stories

What Children Can Do:

- Tell you which books they want to share with you.
- Pretend to read a favourite book aloud to you.
- Tell you how a story is like things they have seen or done.
- Ask you questions about books you are enjoying together.
- “Correct” you if you skip a word or page in a favourite book.
- Tell you the story in a favourite book in their own words.

What Parents Can Do:

- Find a quiet, comfortable place for book sharing.
- Ask your child to tell you about the pictures and the story.
- Respond with enthusiasm to your child’s questions and comments.
- Ask your child to show you all the things in a picture that are alike in some way. You can say: “Can you find all the blue things?” or “Show me all the things that can fly.”
- Point out colours, shapes, numbers and letters in their books.



Quiet Time

Lastly, spend some quiet time with your child doing puzzles, painting and playing games. This will help build concentration and encourage them to be able to sit for long periods of time. Encourage your child to take turns, listen and follow instructions. Your child uses a sand timer at pre-school to wait turns - often a visual reminder can help – if you don’t have a sand timer try setting a timer on your phone.

And **HAVE FUN!!!**

Get them excited for school!

Toilet Train- so they can use the toilet independently, if possible

Give them opportunities to practise taking turns and also to play independently

Read to them- foster a love of books

Teach them how to put their shoes on (velcro is best!)

Teach them to put on and take off their own coat

Help them to use a knife and fork

Make sure they can open their own lunch box

How to Prepare your Child for Starting Primary School

Practise taking off and putting on PE kit

Show them how to hold a pencil correctly.

Start teaching them to write their own name

Start practising how to use scissors safely.

Label everything with your child's name, including shoes!

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS RESOURCES BLOG
by Cheshire SEN Tutor LTD

WWW.SENRESOURCESBLOG.COM

Although the days with little kids often seem long, the years fly by. Use this practical and purposeful blueprint to savour the moments you have together!