

Helping Your Child with Reading

Reading with your child is vital. Research shows that it's the single most important thing you can do to help your child's education. It's best to read little and often, so try to put aside some time for it every day.

Think of ways to make reading fun - you want your child to learn how pleasurable books can be. If you're both enjoying talking about the content of a particular page, linger over it for as long as you like.

Books aren't just about reading the words on the page; they can also present new ideas and topics for you and your child to discuss.

Tips for helping your child to enjoy books:

- Encourage your child to pretend to 'read' a book before he or she can read words.
- Visit the library as often as possible - take out CDs and DVDs as well as books.
- Schedule a regular time for reading - perhaps just before bed.
- Look for books on topics that you know your child is interested in - maybe dragons, insects, cookery or a certain sport.
- Make sure that children's books are easily accessible in different rooms around your house.

Helping Your Child with Maths

As with reading, try to make maths as much fun as possible - games, puzzles and jigsaws are a great way to start. It's also important to show how we use maths skills in our everyday lives and to involve your child in this.

Identifying problems and solving them can also help your child develop maths skills. If you see him or her puzzling over something, talk about the problem and try to work out the solution together.

Tips for helping your child to enjoy maths:

- Point out the different shapes to be found around your home.
- Take your child shopping and talk about the quantities of anything you buy.
- Let your child handle money and work out how much things cost.
- Look together for numbers on street signs and car registration plates.
- Do some cooking! Let your child help you weigh the ingredients they need in grams and kilograms. Practise doubling/ halving by baking e.g. If we wanted to make Grandad and Grandma a cake too, what are the total ingredients we would need?
- Talk about what time it is and how long things take to do.
- Try playing number games with cards, dominos and board games - try to encourage them by joining in yourself! They could even have fun creating their own games.
- Let children sort the washing! Matching and counting pairs of socks is a great way of practising odd and even numbers, counting in twos and the 2 times table and means it is one less job for you!
- Look at the pattern of house numbers as you walk along - are they odd or even numbers? What house number will be next?

- Practise fractions by cutting pizza or sandwiches into halves and quarters. Is there a different way that I could cut my sandwich into quarters?
- Simple dot-to-dot puzzle books are a great way of practising number order. Look for repeating patterns all around you! Can the children create their own repeating pattern? Maybe they could draw a repeating pattern as a border for a letter or in their notebook?