

Supporting Children's Language Development



Getting Ready to Learn in Pre-school

Information for Parents/Carers

Children develop concepts and skills of language & literacy in pre-school settings that are rich in language

Listening and Talking ~

- ⓐ Increasing vocabulary & developing listening & conversational skills
- ⓐ Expressing thoughts, ideas and feelings
- ⓐ Talking about their experiences
- ⓐ Asking questions & following directions & instructions
- ⓐ Sustaining attentive listening & responding to stories, nursery rhymes, poems, jingles and songs
- ⓐ Beginning to show an awareness of rhyme
- ⓐ Engaging in role play



Reading ~

- ⓐ Enjoying books & other printed texts
- ⓐ Browsing through books & making choices
- ⓐ Developing book handling skills
- ⓐ Being aware that print carries meaning & of directionality of print
- ⓐ Recognising own first name

Writing ~

- ⓐ Creating pictures to convey thoughts or ideas
- ⓐ Experimenting using symbols and patterns
- ⓐ Engaging in early attempts at writing using a variety of drawing, painting and writing materials



Children will have opportunity to develop early language and literacy skills through a range of experiences including:

- ◆ conversing, questioning, exploring with other children/adults in play, in small groups and as a whole class
- ◆ Engaging in role play/puppet play
- ◆ Use of computer, listening centre & other technologies
- ◆ Activities to develop listening skills
- ◆ Activities to encourage visual & auditory processing, e.g. rhyming games, sound lotto, matching games, odd one out

- ◆ Listening to a rich selection of stories & rhymes being read/told; joining in, discussing content, recalling favourites
- ◆ Observing adults model reading and writing in a variety of situations
- ◆ Regular use by adults and children of environmental print in the classroom
- ◆ Instruction and advice in handling and using books
- ◆ Opportunities to see and use their names, symbols and other text in a variety of contexts

- ◆ Varied and frequent opportunities to paint, draw and engage in early writing tasks
- ◆ Displaying of children's early expressive work
- ◆ Opportunities for writing in tactile materials, e.g. sand, shaving foam, water
- ◆ Activities which use a wide range of writing tools and papers
- ◆ Activities which encourage development of hand/eye co-ordination and fine motor control



Some suggestions to support children's Language and Literacy experiences at home include:

- ◆ Talk to your child as much as possible ~ get down to eye-level ~ model good language and use a rich vocabulary.
- ◆ Follow your child's interests ~ rather than directing a conversation, sit back and respond to what your child is telling you ~ this will make them want to talk to you even more! Take turns in conversation ~ it is important that your child learns when to talk and when to listen.
- ◆ Encourage your child to listen carefully ~ say their name to gain their attention. Provide a good listening model for your child ~ when your child is talking to you, it's good to stop what you're doing, make eye contact and concentrate on what they're saying.
- ◆ Keep the conversation going ~ avoid asking too many questions or questions that just test your child's knowledge.
- ◆ Add new language e.g. expanding what your child says: 'I see a car'; 'Yes, I see a red car driving on the road' ~ provide a running commentary on what you are doing, emphasising important words.
- ◆ Sing songs and say rhymes ~ using actions adds meaning to what you are saying/singing ~ make up new or silly rhymes.
- ◆ Provide opportunities to play with a range of toys and regularly play with your child ~ this is one of the main ways that children learn language and communication skills.
- ◆ Read with your child ~ use expression and link the pictures and the words ~ make it fun!
- ◆ Go to the library ~ help your child choose a book ~ encourage them to handle and take care of the book properly.

Remember: Use every day experiences - Do you have time in a queue? A car journey to make? Make the most of these opportunities. Shopping to put away? Toys to be tidied? Turn the chore into a language learning activity!