



## Everyday guidance for home learning in the EYFS (Nursery and Reception)

The way babies, toddlers and children learn and develop changes as they get older. It is important to remember that for children aged 3 to 5, the most important types of learning are **communication skills, social and emotional skills and physical skills**. This means that **so much learning takes through play and real-life activities**, and more formal academic activities should be very brief at first, with children gradually concentrating for longer as they get older.

**Thank goodness!!!! That means we can help our children to learn throughout the day without them even thinking they are working!**

Every child, family and home is different, with family members, time commitments, location, space, personalities and interests. **You know your child better than anyone else**, and can support their learning in many ways at home, while schools and nurseries are closed, just as you do when they are open. We suggest weekly activities for Nursery and Reception which you can choose from and use throughout the week if and when suitable to you and your child, but do not expect these to be followed rigidly and hope they may be enjoyable. If an activity is becoming stressful - for you or your child! - please stop and have some time doing something you both enjoy. If you feel they are ready concentrate for longer, there are web-links and online activities suggested to extend them by their class teachers for which you have the logins, or you can encourage them to apply reading, writing and maths skills linked to things you do in the day.

So many suggestions are being produced online it can be baffling to know what is best, so I have tried to summarise some of the most reliable current advice (*selected from various sources by Early Years experts*) below, which I hope will be helpful and reassuring.

### How to help young children learn at home (from gov.uk)

You can help your child to learn through the little things you do with them, for example:

- everyday conversations
- make-believe play
- games with numbers or letters
- reading together
- involving them in the things you are doing, such as household chores, and talking with them about it

You do not need to set separate time or plan complicated activities dedicated to learning. These activities can be incorporated into everyday life and play.

You know your child best. Avoid forcing them into lengthy planned activities if they naturally respond better to a mix of shorter activities. This can stop them getting bored or frustrated and keep them active, interested and learning through things they enjoy.

## **Keeping a routine**

Do not worry about trying to keep to the full routine that your child had in nursery or with their childcare provider. But children will feel more comfortable with a predictable routine, so try to make sure they:

- get up and go to bed at the same time each day
- have regular meal times
- turn off any electronic devices, including the TV, at least an hour before bedtime

## **Keeping active**

Young children should be active for at least 3 hours a day in total.

It is also good to get some fresh air every day. If you do not have a garden and are taking children outside to exercise, make sure you follow the rules on social distancing.

While inside, there are plenty of things you can do to keep children active, such as:

- playing hide-and-seek
- seeing who can do the most star jumps
- making an obstacle course
- playing music and having a dance-off

## **Television and using digital devices**

There are lots of ways to help your child to learn such as reading together and make-believe play. You can also use what children have watched on television or the internet to help their learning. Talk with them about what they are watching or use their favourite TV characters in other games and activities.

Digital devices such as a laptop, desktop, tablet or smartphone can help some children learn. If your child does use them, try downloading some apps that will help them learn (*see advice from St Patrick's class teachers*).

Set age-appropriate parental controls on any devices young children are using and supervise their use of websites and apps.

Try sharing things your child makes with your friends and family online and encourage others to do the same. Your child might enjoy seeing things they have made on the screen or seeing what other children have done.

### **Socialising while social distancing**

Spending time with other children is important for your child's development, but at the moment it is important they stay at home.

It will help them if everyone in the home talks with them through the day, responding to them and being led by the things they are interested in.

If you can, try a video call with other children. Younger children may not have a conversation as you would, but they can share activities or show each other things they have made or like.

Try a call with other people that your child knows, such as grandparents.

Sit and do the call with them to help. Not all children will like it, so try again another time or have a call with family members while you are sitting down and eating a meal.

Try sitting with your child and looking at pictures of their friends or family. Talk about them and the things

### **Ideas: 2 – 3 year olds (From the “Hungry Little Minds” website)**

Fun activities to add to your routine

- Do daily tasks with your child. Talk about what you are doing and why you are doing it. When hanging up the washing, you could say ‘The clothes are wet, let's hang them up to dry.’ Give them simple tasks like passing you the socks. Praise them for helping.

Other ideas

- You could make a photo-book / scrapbook of funny, or memorable, family events and talk about it with your child.
- Sing songs together that encourage your child to use their imagination. For example, try singing The Wheels on the Bus and ask your child to suggest other things on the bus and describe what sound they make.
- Read picture books together. Talk about the things they can see and how we use

them. For example, 'A bed is something we sleep in.'

- Use books to talk about your own experiences, and theirs, giving them time to respond. 'Oh look, there is a cow. What sound do cows make?'
- When you're sharing a book with your child, sit close together or even build a den to sit in.
- Talk to your child about what has happened so far in the day – for example, 'We spoke to Grandma on the phone this morning, didn't we?' And talk about what is going to happen next – 'After lunch we'll do the washing up'.
- Put on some music and play 'musical statues'. Dance together then stop the music – see who will be the first person to stand still.

### **Ideas: 3 – 5 year olds (from the "Hungry Little minds" website)**

Fun activities to add to your routine

- Try sharing familiar books at bedtime. Pause when reading so that your child can join in. Talk about the sounds at the beginning of words and words that start with the same sound (like words beginning with P).
- Encourage your child to recall what has happened in the story. For example, 'Why is bear feeling sad?' Ask them to guess what might happen – 'What should they do next?' – or how the story might end – 'Do you think they're going to find the treasure? Where could it be?'

Other ideas

- Try role-playing games together such as shopping. Set items out on the sofa, give your child a bag and some real or pretend money. Then switch roles and let them be the shopkeeper.
- Play teddy bears' picnic. Put soft toys in a circle and give your child a few cups and spoons. Give your child a chance to tell you what to do like, 'Stir teddy's tea.' You could chat to them as you are doing actions, for example, 'let's cut the cake in half'.
- Start conversations by using open questions with lots of possible answers, for example, 'What are you going to play with today?'
- Plan a treasure hunt game, where your child has to listen to your instructions to find a clue or an object. For example, 'Try looking behind the sofa'. Help your child look for a specific number of objects and count them together – such as 3 cups, 2 pink socks, 5 pens.
- Help your child make a puppet show about their favourite story using objects around the house.
- Play sorting games together. Collect a range of different household objects and practise sorting them into different groups, perhaps by size or colour. Once you have finished, count all the objects in each group.
- Play a make-believe journey game with your child. Make a car out of a cardboard box that you decorate together, or just grab some cushions, pile in a few teddy bear passengers, and let your child drive you off on an adventure.

## Games ideas (from *School Improvement Liverpool*)

- Play would you rather – **example questions below (older children)**
- Play I spy
- Play Simon says – **example actions below (younger children / any age)**
- Play board games
- Play hide and seek
- Indoor scavenger hunt
- Play bingo
- Play card games
- Do a puzzle (*you could make one by cutting up a picture and sticking back together*)
- Play charades
- Build your own game
- Play freeze dance
- Play hot potato
- Play marbles
- Keep the balloon up
- Play dominoes
- Play hangman
- Play Tic-Tac-Toe

### **Would you rather questions:**

1. Would you rather have a magic carpet that flies or your own personal robot?
2. Would you rather be the worst player on a team that always wins or the best player on a team that always loses?
3. Would you rather have one eye in the middle of your head or two noses?
4. Would you rather see a firework display or go to a concert?
5. Would you rather go water skiing or snow skiing?
6. Would you rather eat donuts or candy?
7. Would you rather fly a kite or ride on a scooter?
8. Would you rather have an extra finger or an extra toe?
9. Would you rather only be able to crawl on all fours or only be able to walk backwards?
10. Would you rather be able to create a new holiday or create a new language?
11. Would you rather be the funniest person alive or the smartest person alive?
12. Would you rather be a famous singer or a famous actor?

13. Would you rather be able to fly or be invisible?
14. Would you rather never have to shower again or never have to clip your toenails?
15. Would you rather have the chance to design a new toy or direct a movie?
16. Would you rather be ten years older or four years younger?
17. Would you rather be able to control the weather or have the ability to talk to animals?
18. Would you rather be a master at painting or an amazing dancer?
19. Would you rather live on the Moon or live on Mars?
20. Would you rather meet your favourite celebrity or be in a movie?
21. Would you rather only be able to whisper or have an incredibly loud voice?
22. Would you rather eat a raw potato or a whole lime?
23. Would you rather be invisible or be able to fly?
24. Would you rather speak every language or play every instrument?
25. Would you rather live without a TV or without a phone?

**Simon says ideas:**

1. Sit down
2. Turn around in a circle
3. Jump up and down
4. Hop on the right foot
5. Hop on the left foot
6. Clap your hands
7. Put one arm in the air
8. Flap your arms like a bird
9. Slither on the ground like a snake
10. Quack like a duck
11. Run in place
12. Stand on one foot

13. Put your hands on your hips

14. Pretend you are a dog

15. Moo like a cow

16. Wink your right eye

17. Pucker your lips

18. Sing as loud as you can

19. Pat your belly

20. Put both hands on your head