



Mathematical Development



Working with numbers is fun and we work hard in school to ensure children develop the confidence to explore the number system, to make mistakes and learn from them. The encouragement that you offer at home will have a big impact on your child's response to mathematics in school.

Counting can make anything seem fun! Count the stairs, the teddies on the bed, the cracks in the pavement - anything and everything to build your child's confidence in sequencing numbers to 10, then 20 and beyond. The teens numbers are the hardest and will need lots of repetition! Be sure that they pronounce them correctly e.g. 13 not 30. If you are counting objects, encourage your child to touch or move each object as they count - we encourage this in school as it ensures accurate counting, even as children get older.

Recognising number symbols is harder, but numbers are all around and there are many opportunities for you to play games looking for numbers in the environment - on doors, cars, buses, street signs, in shops - everywhere. Once your child is interested in writing numerals, encourage the correct formation.

As well as enjoying books involving counting, see if you can sing some number songs or chant number rhymes. Your child may be able to learn some by heart and perform them!

Many traditional games involve recognising numbers and counting. Anything involving dice is excellent - try to use dice with numerals on **and** those with dots. Give your child time to count the dots for themselves! When they become more confident, use 2 die. At first, use 2 die with dots, so your child can count each dot, then progress to a numeral dice and a dot dice together - and ask them to start with the number and count on the dots. Eventually we hope they will be able to total 2 numbers. To encourage understanding of subtraction find 'real life' example - "you've got 8 strawberries for pudding today, oh now you've eaten 3. How many have you got left?"

Moving a counter along a track - snakes and ladders and other board games - is a tremendous help. Many children find it difficult to count on - they want to count the space they are on, rather than jumping to the next space - and they will need to do this along a number line in school.

Maths work involving money and time is ideal for practising at home. Let your child handle money, so they recognise different coins and begin to total small amounts of 1p coins. Children soon learn to tell the time if it involves a favourite TV programme or going swimming! As children progress, we teach digital as well as analogue time - maybe you could have both around the home. Cooking is another wonderful opportunity for developing mathematical language - weighing and comparing - but remember to use grams!!

Much of our teaching in Maths revolves around mental work, but in the early stages children will naturally use their fingers. Once they gain confidence, they should be able to say the number that is one more or one less than any number to 10 - play a game where you add or subtract from a small collection and ask your child how many are left. They should guess then check. As children progress, we encourage them to picture a number line and "see" the number that is one less/one more. Get your child to use the correct vocabulary. We also encourage the children to talk about how they do calculations and explain their thinking - so expect your child to talk about what they are doing.

Above all - make it fun and non-threatening!!

