

## Nursery Newsletter 10<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear parents/carers

Hello everyone and a happy new year to you. I hope that you are all safe and well and not feeling too frustrated by the recent turn of events. I have waited until now before posting this letter because of the uncertainty regarding government decisions but it would seem, now, judging by today's announcement, that our schools will be closed for a while longer. I know that this is not what any of us wanted but it is probably for the best if we are to combat this virus.

While I recognise that online learning is not particularly suitable for nursery-age children as, during classroom time, their learning occurs in a very practical, play-based way, I thought you might want some guidance if you are thinking about ways in which you can give them similar experiences. I have been looking at online educational sites and there are many which are offering activities for nursery children, some of which are free to access during school closures.

As far as phonics is concerned the letter sounds we would be learning in school are as follows:

s, a, t, i, p, n then c k, e, h, r, m and d then g, o, u, l, f, and b.

If you want to practise these sounds with your child, focus on letter recognition and correct pronunciation. If you have your Sound and Letter books at home please feel free to continue filling in the pages in the order above. Ask them to make collections of items beginning with the letter sounds (or point to them) and draw things beginning with the sound. [The 'Topmarks'](#) website has a good selection of online games/demonstrations for the early phase letters and links to many other sites. [BBC Bite Size has the Alphablocks](#) series of phonics stories which we use in class. Another site we use in class is [Animaphonics](#) which is free for nursery age children (they really enjoy this one) and, of course, the old favourite Jolly Phonics letter sound songs (with actions) are available on Youtube. There are also a lot of games which train children to listen to sounds in general (e.g. a dog barking, a lawnmower) which develops their listening skills and it goes without saying that listening to stories being read, either by you or by selecting them from the vast choice on [Youtube](#), helps to improve both listening skills and concentration.

If you would like to practise writing these letters with your child, we use the ['Read, Write, Inc'](#) system. [Bramleysunnyside infant school](#) have a guide on [Pinterest](#) to help you to encourage your child to form the letters correctly while saying the little rhyme to go with each letter. The [OxfordOwl](#) has a video which explains how the scheme works and some free ebooks, too.

Number work next! Any activities that involve counting to 10 (forwards and backwards) will help them with their counting. During this term we would also be looking at ordinal numbers (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, etc.) and working on number recognition, at least to 5 and up to 10. Counting objects, while physically touching them, should be encouraged. We usually make a collection of objects and I ask them to count 2,3,5, moving each as they count. For example, with a collection of, say, 10 buttons (with three different colours) ask them to count 5 blue buttons, 3 red buttons and so on. We then move on to adding small numbers of objects up to 10: 1+1, 1+2, 3+2 for example, and similar activities involving taking away one number from another.

'Numberblocks' on the [bbc](#) are great for number work and, if you've got cubes they can make the numbers to match. There are lots of these on Youtube - just choose the easier ones. If they want to practise forming their numbers to 10, that would be great, too. There are many (free) number games online ('Topmarks', 'Oxford Owl' and [CBeebies](#) have a good selection and Pinterest have hundreds of ideas to promote numeracy at this age). [Abc ya](#) is another site to try - the children love the games on this one. There are also many sheets to help them with their number formation which are free to download. Any games involving shape-recognition are also excellent and measuring things around the house and outside, using non-standard measurements (a stick, a finger, a pencil), all help.

I would also suggest that you let your child cut out (from old magazines or catalogues) regularly - using child-friendly scissors, of course. Any form of drawing, 'writing' or painting will also help with the development of their fine motor-skills and, again, there are many sheets you can download for them to follow. If you've got play-dough at home they can do the 'Dough-disco' exercises (on Youtube). They only take a few minutes each day and really help to strengthen their hands and fingers. They will also enjoy doing any craft projects - again there are so many online. Have a look at [BBC schools radio](#) for a wide selection of dance, singing and story activities - they are really good - just look under [EYFS](#) on their website.

[www.firstdiscoverers.co.uk](http://www.firstdiscoverers.co.uk) have some really good simple science activities to try at home as do 'family.co' (10 EYFS science experiments).

I will be checking the education websites regularly for anything new or updated and will let you know when I find something exciting which I think will be of interest.

That's all for now, folks. Stay safe and please get in touch with me (via the school - the message will be relayed to me and I'll call you) if you have any queries. Thank you also, for your (very generous) Christmas present - so kind and thoughtful of you all. Love to all my little cherubs.....

Best wishes

Julie Kneath xxx