

Book Start session for F1 parents

Independence

In F1 we try to make sure that the children grow in independence. For some children, daily tasks including going to the toilet themselves, washing and drying their hands, following simple instructions and putting on their own coats can be difficult for them to do on their own. The adults in the units are there to support and guide the children and to encourage them to try do things for themselves first, before giving them a helping hand. It would help your child if you try to get them to do these things for themselves at home too.

As your children approach full time education in F2, new challenges will face them. They need to be able to eat without support as they will have their dinner in school every day. Encouraging them to do this at home will support their independence and make this less of an issue next year. Also they will be expected to be able to dress and undress themselves ready for PE. Encouraging your child to try to dress themselves each day, or by teaching them easy ways to take off their clothes will help them to do this independently. The children are assessed on their ability to do things for themselves through the Health and Self-Care strand of Development Matters (HSC).

Health and self-care (30-50m)	Listening and attention (30-50m)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can tell you when I am hungry and want something to eat or when I am tired and want to have a sleep. • I notice that when I am running, I get hot and I pant a bit. • I understand that I have to be careful when I am using children’s scissors to snip or my knife to spread jam. • Most of the time, I remember to go to the toilet in time and I wipe myself. • I can wash and dry my own hands. • When you help me and hold out my coat, I can put it my arms in and I can do the zip up when you start it. I can pull my own trousers up too. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When I like what they are talking about, I listen to my friends. • I listen to the stories you tell me and I talk about them later. • When you read me stories, I join in with my favourite bits, like “Who’s been sleeping in my bed?” when we are reading Goldilocks and the Three Bears. • I can join in with my favourite rhymes and stories with you and guess what will happen next. • I stop what I am doing and listen when I hear you talk to me, or I hear the door bell ring. • When you ask me to do something like “Come and put your coat on”, I will do it if I am not really busy playing.

Communication and Language

This area of learning of Development Matters is split into 3 strands - Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking. It is important that children are tuned into sounds in their environment, in the home and when you speak to them, to help them to make sense of the world around them. In F1, the children follow Letters and Sounds, Phase 1 phonics programme. This contains lots of activities which encourage children to listen to sounds, make sounds, follow instructions and talk about objects or their own experiences. In the Foundation Units, our main focus is developing language. By having adults in the areas of learning, they model language for children, encourage them to talk about what they are doing, introduce new vocabulary and develop the ability of the children to interact with each other. This is essential, as without being able to communicate through listening, speaking and understanding, the children will be unable to learn.

You can help your child by...

- Talking to them about what they have been doing in school.
- Talking about the environment when you are walking home.
- Telling them the names of things they are unfamiliar with.
- Playing games where they need to follow instructions.
- Reading stories together and asking them questions about the books.
- Looking at and talking about the pictures in books.
- Playing with toys and making up imaginary games.
- Singing nursery rhymes and songs.
- Visiting parks, farms, gardens and other places of interest to encourage your child to talk about their experiences.
- Ask them to do simple tasks where they need to follow instructions.

Phonics

In F1 the children are introduced to letter sounds. Phonics is about learning about the sounds of letters and the way words are made up of units of sounds. Instead of learning the **names** of the alphabet - 'Ay, Bee, Cee' - children learn the **sounds** the letters make - 'Ah, Buh, Cuh'.

Children start by learning the names of all the letters in a certain order. Each letter is usually introduced with a picture and an action to make the learning more fun and easier to remember. Homework is sent with your child after new sounds (phonemes) are introduced.

Next children learn how to blend (or crash) two letters together and work out what new sound they then make. They also learn about the shapes of letters, learning how to write them too. It sounds complicated but it is really just a way to teach children about the sounds of letters and how they chunk together to make word.

Phonics is taught in a really engaging and fun way. You'll probably find your child bringing home worksheets for the new letters they are learning. Please practice learning the sounds at home with your child and segment and blend the words on the sheet. You could play games like 'I spy with my little eye, something beginning with...' to help your child to associate objects with sounds. Perhaps you could go on a treasure hunt around your house, looking for objects beginning with the sound of the week. This will help to engage your child in learning new sounds.

Other ways to help your child

A document has been produced called '**4 Parents – What to expect, when?**' It is a parent friendly copy of the strands of Development Matters without the jargon. A copy of what to expect at 30-50 months is included in this booklet. It includes ideas for you to try with your child. If you have any questions about milestones in this document, please speak to a member of the Foundation team and we will be happy to discuss them with you.

Book Start Session 2017

Print pages 24 and 25 of the 4 parents booklet