



Westfield Nursery School Literacy



Literacy in the early years includes talking about books, sharing & reading books, print in the environment, early mark making and writing. Literacy is key in helping with language acquisition.

Why is Early Reading Important?

There are lots of reasons to read/ enjoy sharing and talking about books with your child. There is a lot of research available to support the fact that it helps brain development, language development, strengthens family relationships and builds a picture of the world outside of our own.



Did you know...

- Studies have shown that those who read for pleasure have higher levels of self-esteem and a greater ability to cope with difficult situations.
- A study by the Institute for Education found that those who read for pleasure have a 14.4% advantage in vocabulary and a 9.9% advantage in math, compared to their peers.
- It's been found that reading enhances our attention spans: the structure of stories helps kids' brains process things in sequence, which holds their attention for longer and enables clear thinking.
- Reading books for pleasure will help improve self-esteem and confidence, enabling us to reach our goals.
- Reading helps aid our sleep.

<https://kidadl.com/education-learning/incredible-facts-about-reading-and-books-you-wont-believe-your-eyes>

- The three top reasons children enjoy being read to are that 'It is a special time with my parents', 'Reading together is/was fun' and 'It is relaxing to be read to before I go to sleep'

<https://www.annabelkarmel.com/advice/reading-to-children-vocab/>

- A study in the USA showed starting in kindergarten (age 5), if a student reads 20 minutes a day at home, they will hear 1.8 million words per year. They will have read for 851 hours by 6th grade (11-12 years) and on standardized tests, they will likely score better than 90% of their peers.

<https://www.wcpo.com/brand-spotlight/how-reading-20-minutes-a-day-impacts-your-child>

Early Reading at Home

Click the link to find a useful article about early reading.

<https://theconversation.com/learning-to-read-starts-earlier-than-you-might-think-five-tips-from-an-expert-171561>

Five tips to support early reading for children aged under three.

1. Create a chatty environment
2. Have fun with rhythm and music making
3. Share meaningful images such as shop logos
4. Draw attention to print in everyday life
5. Engage with books frequently (Borrow from our library-inside or the book castle- outside)

More Reading Ideas...



Snuggle up and read with your child every day. Have a special place to keep your books. Look at and talk about the pictures.

Sometimes run your finger under the word to show them that the print has meaning.

Make your voice interesting and animated as you read; Use different voices for the characters.

Encourage your child to join in with parts they know well, for example 'Run, run as fast as you can, you can't catch me I'm the Gingerbread Man.'

Children love books with rhyme, rhythm and repetition. For example, The Gruffalo, Going on a Bear Hunt and The Three Little Pigs.

Encourage your child to look out for the letters in their name on signs and words they find in the environment.

Take your child to the library, let them choose their books. (Westfield Library/ Dunstable Library) Join in special events.

Let your child act out the story. They might be moving but they are still listening!

Talk about interesting words and what is happening in the book.

Give your child their own short shopping list with words and pictures.

Make your own picture books.

Play I Spy (use the letter sounds).

Show your child how much you love reading! (Books, magazines, newspapers, recipes, shopping lists, instructions, texts- anything.) Explain what you are reading and why- children need to know print has meaning and is important.

Eventually your child will need to know the letter names and sounds. At this stage the sound is more important as it helps them to learn to read. Please use 'pure sounds'; that is not adding an 'uh' sound onto them. So 'p' not 'puh', 'mmm' not 'muh'. If you are not sure ask a member of staff or watch 'How to learn the letters and sounds of the alphabet' on You Tube with Mr Thorne

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LITw0oiLNys>

Check out

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/>

Early Reading at Nursery

We have reading areas in each class and outside for children to self access books. In each area children can access books both fiction (story) and non-fiction (information) books, linked to the theme or learning in class. Children also use books in other areas such as at the mark making table.



At large group times adults enjoy reading and sharing a story with children. They may use big books, story sacks or props to support children listening to, enjoying and talking about a range of books.



Each class also has a 'logo' book in the reading area, which includes pages about drinks, foods, films, apps, schools, home items, supermarkets, fast food, the high street and TV programmes. Children can spot meaningful images.



In the reading area there is also a book of child-friendly policies. These cover the work of the nursery such as the curriculum and safeguarding. There are pictures (and simple explanations) to spark conversations.



Children self-register when they enter their classroom. They have to 'read' their name card and put it on display. They can access their name card at any point, for example if they want to use it to support them writing their own name on a picture.



For each theme we use our knowledge and vocabulary sheets (on the curriculum tab of the website) to select some key words. We display these key words using picture prompts to support the children using the words during their learning.



Phonics Progression

1. General sound discrimination: Listening skills- Listens to and identifies a range of environmental sounds

Hears and identifies a range of inside environmental sounds inside and outside

2. General sound discrimination: Listening skills- Listens to a range of music
Listens and responds to a range of music

3. General sound discrimination: Instrumental Sounds

Listens to a variety of sounds produced by sound makers and plays sound makers in a variety of ways

4. General sound discrimination: Body Percussion

To listen to, identify and remember sounds

To talk about sounds we can make with our bodies and what the sounds mean

5. Sound reproduction skills: Rhythm

To follow a rhythm

6. Sound reproduction skills: Rhyme

To recognise rhyming words

7. Sound reproduction skills: Syllables

To understand that words can be split into parts (syllables) and that these parts give a word its rhythm.

To orally blend syllables together to form words and segment words into syllables.

8. Sound reproduction skills: Alliteration

To develop an understanding of alliteration

To explore how different sounds are articulated

9. Voice Sounds

To distinguish between differences in vocal sounds, including oral blending and segmenting

To explore speech sounds

10. Oral Blending and Segmenting

To develop oral blending and segmenting of sounds in words

To listen to phonemes within words and to remember them in the order they occur

To talk about different phonemes that make up words

To learn to say a discrete phoneme, recognise and write the letter that represents that phoneme

The sounds are taught in a specific order (not alphabetically). This enables children to begin building words as early as possible. (First letters s, a, t, p, i, n)

Writing Ideas

Encourage and praise your child's attempts at mark making, even if 'it's just a lot of squiggles'. This is an important part of writing development. Ask your child what they have drawn/ written.



Encourage your child to use a three-fingered grip (tripod). (Ask a member of staff to show you.) Find out more at <https://www.ot-mom-learning-activities.com/pencil-grasp-development.html>

Make marks with a variety of materials such as felt tips, crayons, pencils, water, paint and chalks.

Make marks in a variety of materials such as shaving foam, rice, sand and cornflour.

Make marks on different scales large and small.

Make marks in different places- the floor, table top, easel, clipboard or a whiteboard. (Some children are more confident and prefer marks which can be wiped away.)

Let your child see you writing, such as a list of jobs, a shopping list, a diary, birthday cards or a letter. It helps your child understand why and how we write.

When they show an interest encourage their writing such as a greetings card, a shopping list or their name. (Please use a capital letter at the start of the name and then lower-case letters.)

Include mark making in their play such as writing a label for the model.

Gross and fine motor play will support your child's writing.

Ideas for gross motor skills

- Use ribbon sticks to make large circular and zig zag movements in the air
- Swing and hang from climbing frames
- Lift and move heavy objects
- Anything that encourages children to stretch their arms above their heads.

Ideas for fine motor skills and hand strength:

- Use small droppers to drop water on to a target
- Use a spray bottle to fire water on to a target
- Screw up small pieces of paper
- Open and close zip loc bags using index finger and thumb
- Squeeze sponges to move water from one container to another
- Pop bubble wrap
- Push pipe cleaners through the holes of a colander
- Prod, poke, squeeze and roll play dough or push it through a garlic press
- Pick up small objects and put them in compartments or a cupcake tray
- Twist and open containers with lids

Check out

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/early-years/>