

# St Christopher's the Hall Preschool.

At St Christopher's we aim to provide a happy, safe, caring, stimulating and well organised environment in which children learn by building upon what they already know and can do. Our aim is to ensure all children develop to their full potential academically, socially and physically, so that they acquire knowledge and understanding relevant to life.

## How my child will be learning

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework explains how and what your child will be learning to support their healthy development.

Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through **7 areas of learning and development**.

Children should mainly develop the **3 prime areas** first. These are:

- Communication and language;
- Physical development; and
- Personal, social and emotional development.

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in **4 specific areas**. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design.

These 7 areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities. The professionals teaching and supporting your child will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. This is a little bit like a curriculum in primary and secondary schools, but it's suitable for very young children, and it's designed to be really flexible so that staff can follow your child's unique needs and interests.

Children in the EYFS learn by **playing and exploring**, being **active**, and through **creative and critical thinking** which takes place both indoors and outside. These characteristics of learning will be reflected in the activities planned for the children.

At the end of the EYFS – in the summer term of the reception year in school – teachers complete an assessment which is known as the **EYFS Profile**. All the children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals.

## As a mum or dad, how can I help with my child's learning?

All the fun activities that you do with your child at home are important in supporting their learning and development, and have a really long lasting effect on your child's learning as they progress through school. If you make the time every day or week to do some of the following things with your child it will make a real difference to your child's confidence as a young learner.

We feel that your knowledge about your child's learning and development at home is important and should be valued, so do let your child's class teacher know about what your child does with you and

any achievements they do outside school. Photo's are also useful and you can email these to the teacher or give them a copy. If you do this please can you date the entry and give a brief description of what they are doing.

Anything you inform the teacher about or give them will be added to your child's Learning Journey. We are keen to work in partnership with you to create an overall picture of your child and to acknowledge that your child's learning doesn't just stop when your child goes home.

# IDEAS

you can try at home.

You would be surprised how even the most mundane household item can be used to capture your child's imagination! Who would have thought that different sized empty plastic bottles can be used in the bath to explore capacity or a plastic coat hanger could be a magical dragon detector for the garden! Or a wooden spoon could be the drumstick needed for a marching band!

Sing and tell nursery rhymes

Talk about the numbers, colours, words and letters you see when you are out and about

Allow your child to cut out and stick pictures from magazines

On a trip to the supermarket, talk about all the different packaging shapes

Cook / bake together

Talk to your child at every opportunity – e.g. what you are doing that day

Plant seeds or bulbs in a pot or garden patch



Use the weather – shadows, rain puddles, snow, wind, mist and sun – to extend your child's vocabulary

Share a book

Explore the park at a different time of the year – go off the beaten track

# Maths Ideas you can try at home.



## In the street

- Recognising bus numbers
- Number plate hunt. Who can find a 7? Add the numbers up.
- Comparing door numbers
- Counting – how many lampposts on the way to school?

## Doing the washing

- Counting in 2s – matching shoes
- Sorting by colour and size.
- Matching/pairing up socks.
- Find four shoes that are different sizes. Can you put them in order.



## Time

- What day is it yesterday, today, tomorrow?
- Use timers, phones and clocks to measure short periods of time.
- Count down 10/ 20 seconds to get to the table/ into bed etc.
- Recognising numbers on the clock. If you cover a number, what number was missing?

## Food!

- Can you cut your toast into 4 pieces? Can you cut it into triangles?
- Setting the table. Counting the right number of plates etc. How many more do we need?
- Can you make shapes/ patterns out of the knives and forks. Can you put them in the right place in the drawers?
- Helping with the cooking by measuring and counting ingredients.
- Setting the timer.
- Positional language at dinner time: what is on the rice, where are the carrots etc?



## Going shopping

- Reading price tags
- Counting items into the basket
- Finding and counting coins
- Comparing weights – which is heavier



## Measuring



- Are you taller than a ...?
- Marking height on the wall.
- Cut hand shapes out of paper. How many hands long is the couch? How long is the table? Which is longer?
- Who has the biggest hands in our family?
- How many steps from the gate to the front door?

## Shapes

- Cut a potato into shapes (circles, triangle etc). Use with paint to make pictures and patterns.
- Cut out shapes from coloured paper/ newspaper and arrange into pictures.
- Shape hunt: Can you find a square in your house or a circle?





Hopscotch

### Games

- Putting cards into piles
- Jigsaws (you can make your own by cutting up a magazine picture)
- Snap (matching pairs) or Happy Families (collect 4 of a kind)
- Snakes and ladders or other simple dice games.
- Adding numbers on two dice.
- Bingo, with numbers or shapes



### Number rhymes and songs

*Eg: 5 little monkeys jumping on the bed  
One fell off and bumped his head  
Mummy called the doctor and the doctor said  
"No more monkeys jumping on the bed!"  
4 little monkeys jumping on the bed ...*

### Recycling items

- Use different containers in the bath and talk about capacity with your child. Which one holds the most? How many of these little ones fill up this bottle?
- Get your child to use sellotape and glue to make weird and wonderful creations with different recycling items. This is often called junk modelling and it is a great opportunity for your child to problem solve, thinking about how they will achieve the desired effect. It can also be an opportunity to talk about shape, both 2D and 3D and positional language.



### Internet maths games:

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/3-5-years/counting>

<http://www.crickweb.co.uk/Early-Years.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/games/>



# How about these?

Encourage children to handle and manipulate a variety of materials and implements to develop their fine motor skills which will then help to develop pencil grip when they are ready. Here are a few ideas:

- Playdough is great for strengthening hand muscles. Squash it, squeeze it and pound it! Rolling out playdough with both hands together is good for coordination as well as for exercising the hand and wrist muscles.



- Pushing coins into money boxes is a fun exercise – all kids love feeling rich! Encourage your child to pick up and put in one at a time, and once they have mastered this, let them hold a few coins in their hand and put them through one by one without letting the others fall.
- Play games that involve small movements and picking things up like Buck-a-roo, Jenga, Pick up sticks, puzzles etc.

- Using clothes pegs is great for developing strength in the fingers. Try using the clothes pegs to pick up small pieces of paper or making cages for dinosaurs and wild animals by simply placing clothes pegs all around an egg box lid. Children love to be helpful. Try stringing out a washing line at your child's height and giving small clothing items to hang up with pegs.



Alongside developing your child's fine motor skills you can be developing their mark making and writing by trying some of these activities:

- Use a whiteboard marker to draw on a mirror (it usually wipes off easily with a DRY cloth, but test your mirror first). A whiteboard marker is fatter than a pencil and easier to control and working on a vertical surface develops wrist stability.
- This one is really messy, but a lot of fun. When your child is having a bath or shower, squirt a handful of shaving cream on the wall to smear and write in. Caution: shaving cream can irritate sensitive skins, so use the sensitive skin variants. Encourage your child to draw patterns and letters with their finger and hand.



- Outdoor activities are always more fun than indoors, and practicing numbers, letters and patterns in the sand hardly seems like work!

- Getting your child to play with water on a warm day is great fun. Using a paintbrush or a sponge, your child can 'mark make' on a driveway, paved area, decking, wall etc. The children love drawing pictures and patterns with it. Maybe you can create a pattern with chalk for your child to go over with the water.



- Using fat chalk on a wall, driveway or patio works well. Write the number, letters or pattern for them to trace over; or they can try it on their own.
- Provide opportunities to write meaningfully around the house, eg notepads by the phone, in the kitchen, on the fridge, making cards, writing notices, shopping lists etc.. Also provide a variety of writing tools and paper which your child can access freely to 'write' or mark make when they want.

- Draw attention to marks, signs and symbols in the environment and talk about what they represent
- Make books with children of activities they have been doing at home, especially in the holidays, using photographs of the children as illustrations