

Whitecross Nursery School

Exploring maths through play at home



There are many opportunities to support children's development of maths through number and shape, space and measure in our everyday lives. Here are some ideas of things you can do at home. This list is no way extensive but it gives a starting point of how maths concepts can be supported and developed at home through play. By using maths rich language in context we naturally support our children, the more we play with and talk to our children about maths naturally, the more the concepts embed and children learn without realising.

Language

Model mathematical language in everyday situations (size, shape, position, cardinal /ordinal numbers)

Use interests of your children for example;

If they love bath time explore floating and sinking, capacity and shape

If they love space use the number of planets/comparative sizes of planets/ how far away (children like to hear and use large numbers)

If they love cars sort for colour/line up 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc. / compare lines of cars for longer, shorter lines

Sorting/ Matching

Pairing socks after washing

Sorting items on return from shopping e.g. tins/fruit/frozen

Selection of different sized pots and lids - matching correct lid to pot

Setting table- matching cups, plates to number of people

Simple picture domino and picture lotto games.

Counting

Objects (steps, buttons on clothes) and actions (jumps, claps)

Shopping (we need two tins of beans, five apples etc.)

Skittles game - How many are up/down?

Board games e.g. short ones such as Orchard games to 20 (snake and ladders to 100 can be boring when you are three)

Hide and Seek – counting whilst somebody goes to hide

Baking – counting out each spoonful of ingredients

Looking at Numerals

Bus / house numbers

Shoe sizes

Prices in shops

TV/Microwave/remote controls

Countdown calendar for exciting events

Mobile phones

Calculators

Dice

Coins

Clocks

Spinners

Shape, space and measure

A Key element of mathematical learning is recognising and identifying patterns

Look for shape and pattern in the home and environment e.g. windows, doors, brickwork etc.

Make repeating patterns e.g. with laundry pegs red, yellow, red, yellow / actions hop, jump, hop, jump. Talk about the pattern.

Using positional language when playing Hide and Seek e.g. **under** the table, **behind** the curtain etc.

Discuss quantities when baking e.g. need **more** flour / **less** sugar / that's **enough**

Inset puzzles, jigsaw puzzles, different construction sets, stacking beakers, Russian dolls

Count strides to **measure** the garden/ line of Lego bricks to **measure** toy car and teddy. Encourage children to **estimate** before testing.

Find things **taller** and **shorter** than child, parent, teddy etc

Use time concepts e.g. **before, after, next, later, now, today, yesterday, tomorrow.**

Use of e.g. Sand timer/ electronic timer - **How many** times can you e.g. run up and down the garden, draw a circle, before the sand runs through/ buzzer rings

On the Park - apparatus is good for positional/ directional language - **Up/down/ along/ over/ on top/ under/ forwards/ backwards**

Encourage the use of directional language e.g. hide a toy for the child to find following your instructions (directional/ positional) e.g. **Move forward. Stop. Turn. Stop. Look Up.** Change roles- child to give you instructions.

Baking and Cooking

This covers so many concepts - measure, volume, capacity, size, how many we make, how many are eating, etc..

Have fun! 😊