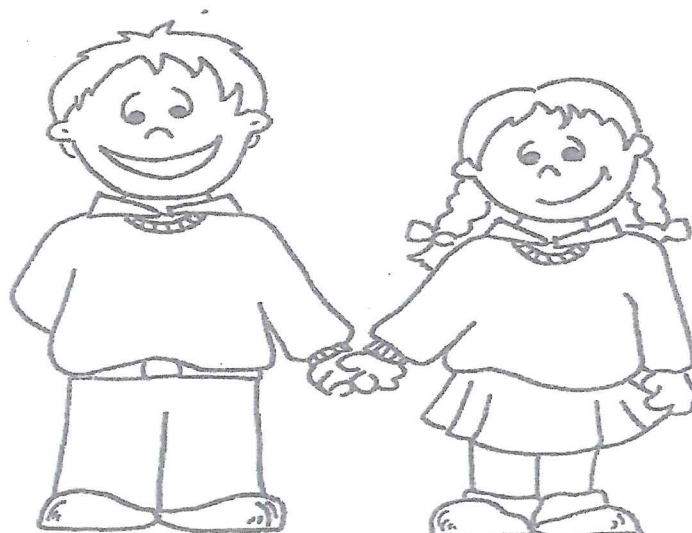


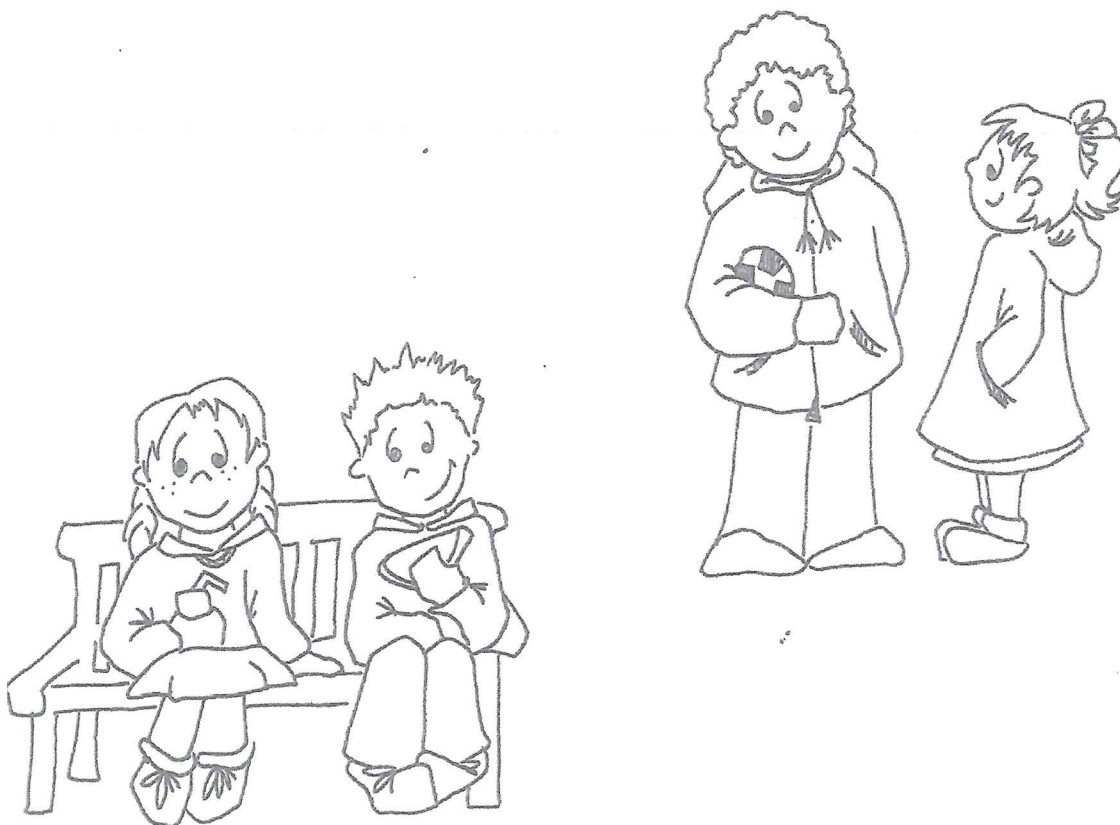
**A GUIDE FOR PARENTS/CARERS TO
LEARNING IN THE EARLY YEARS
FOUNDATION STAGE**



PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR SCHOOL

Starting school should be an enjoyable experience for every child and it is imperative that every effort is made to ensure this happens. As a parent/carer you can help make your child's transition into school a successful one by helping him/her to be able to do the following:-

- Put on and zip or button up his/her coat
- Get dressed and undressed (all uniform and PE kit needs to be clearly labelled with your child's name)
- Put on and fasten his/her shoes (buckles and velcro are easier than laces)
- Go to the toilet and wash his/her hands afterwards
- Eat his/her lunch independently, open lunchbox and undo wrappers etc.
Alternatively, should your child be having hot meals, use a knife and fork
- Recognise his/her own name
- Tidy away toys and equipment
- Use a tissue efficiently



LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

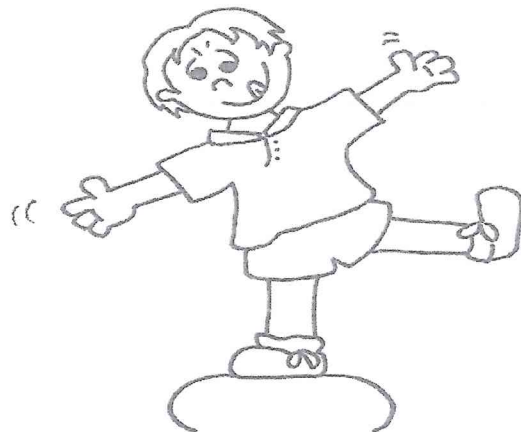
At Summerlea Community Primary School, we plan a balanced curriculum for children which promotes their all round development.

There are three prime areas of development and four specific areas of learning within the Foundation Stage:

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations and to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves.

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive, and to develop their coordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.



During a typical day, children will take part in:

- Focused adult supervised activities
- Whole class sessions
- Self chosen structured play and learning opportunities in the classroom and outdoor area

In addition, the children visit the library, ICT suite, music studio and use the hall for PE each week.

THE SPECIFIC AREAS OF LEARNING

Literacy development involves encouraging children to read and write, both through listening to others reading, and being encouraged to begin to read and write themselves. Children must be given access to a wider range of reading materials – books, poems, and other written materials, to ignite their interest.

Mathematics development involves providing children with opportunities to practise and improve their skills in counting numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, and to describe shapes, spaces and measures.

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive arts and design involves supporting children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play, and design and technology.

THE FOUNDATION STAGE CLASSROOM

The Foundation Stage classroom is organised in areas to provide children with a broad and balanced curriculum.

Writing Area

A writing area will encourage children to write for a variety of purposes and to become more confident and write independently. All children are encouraged to 'have a go' at writing. This helps the children to regard themselves as 'writers' right from the start.

Book and Listening Corner

A comfortable quiet area with a large selection of books will be provided for the children. The children will be able to experience quiet reading both individually and in small groups and be able to look at and share both picture and story books. The children can listen to a variety of story CDs and are encouraged to re-tell the stories to others.

Numeracy Area

Basic mathematical concepts can be acquired not only by planned direct teaching but also through activities, for example in the role-play area, counting and using money. Children will develop an understanding of number, shape, measure, pattern and sequence through a variety of practical activities, which together encourage their understanding of mathematical language.



I.C.T.

Two computers and an interactive whiteboard are accessible to every child in each classroom on a daily basis and the children are able to visit the I.C.T. Suite each week. They will be taught how to use simple programmes and become familiar with the keyboard, mouse and the iPads. There is a CD player in each classroom for listening to stories and music and the children have opportunities to use programmable toys.

Art and Craft

Children will be given the opportunity to use a variety of materials and equipment including paints, chalks, pastels, collage and recyclable materials. When painting, the children will be taught how to colour mix and how to use the painting equipment correctly. Children will also participate in activities such as modelling with clay, sewing and cooking.

Sand and Water

Through structured play with sand and water, children develop early concepts of capacity, weight, flow and volume. Children will develop the skills of testing and observing i.e. materials that float and sink, through the use of water.



Role Play Area

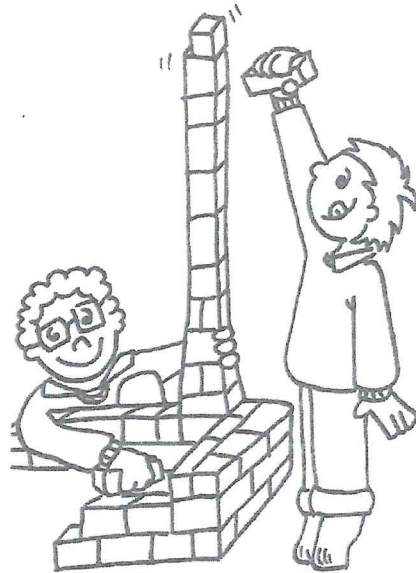
The role-play area will give children the opportunity to interact in small groups, speaking and listening to each other. The area might be used as a 'home' or 'shop' for example, linked to our topic focus. This will enable children to take on the role of another person, building their self-confidence and helping them to understand the feelings of others.

Construction

A wide variety of construction equipment will be available. Children are encouraged to build structures and objects they are familiar with. The children will also be developing their fine and gross motor skills while sharing and working with others.

Small World Area

Children are encouraged to role play with small figures, to act out stories and scenes that are familiar to them. The small world area often links to the current topic and helps consolidate learning.



Outdoor area

We have a well resourced outdoor area and operate a 'free flow' system where the children can choose where they want to learn or where they feel they learn best. As with all areas of the classroom, there are learning opportunities that encourage the children to explore, investigate, be creative, use their imagination, problem solve and support each other. We teach aspects of science, writing and mathematics in the outdoor area as well as inside the classroom and recognise that children learn more when they are engaged and happy.

Most of the outdoor equipment supports the development of gross motor skills which in turn leads to good coordination, spatial awareness and the children being physically fit and able. Play is a powerful vehicle for learning. It is through play that children learn naturally about themselves, others and the world around them. It allows them opportunities to explore and make mistakes in a safe environment.

Observing and Assessing Children

Much of our observation and assessment of the children is undertaken by working alongside individuals and groups across a wide range of experiences. From this we get to know how each child is developing in all areas of the Foundation Stage and plan for future learning.

USEFUL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S

FIRST TERM

- For times and organisation of induction days in September, please see the sheet in your Information Pack.
- Reading books and library books – your child will be given a book bag with a reading book and a reading record during their first half term of school.
- Your child will bring home different materials to support their learning of letter sounds through our phonics programme. There will be an opportunity for parents and carers to learn about how we teach phonics and reading during the first term.
- Letters are frequently put inside book bags, please check your child's book bag regularly so that important information and dates are not missed. If you have a letter or form please hand this back to a member of staff.
- Curriculum letters are sent home approximately every two weeks providing you with an overview of the learning experiences taking place in the classrooms. These letters also provide ideas for activities you can do at home to support your child's learning.
- Parent consultation evenings will take place in the autumn term for you to discuss how your child has settled into school.

USEFUL INFORMATION ABOUT RECEPTION YEAR

- At the beginning of the school day, the children will come into their classroom at 8.30am via the Foundation Stage outdoor area. (Parents are welcome to bring their children into the classroom for the first few days until he/she has settled into the routine).
- At the end of the school morning/day (11.45am or 3pm) your children will leave from the classroom's double door out to the 'outdoor area', they will be brought outside by the class teacher and only allowed to go once he/she has pointed their parent/carer out to the teacher.

If your child is part-time the morning session finishes at 11.45am.

- Your child will need to keep a named bottle in school that will be refilled with fresh water each day; they also need an extra drink in their lunchbox which can be of your choice, no fizzy drinks please. A piece of fruit or vegetable will be provided for morning snack, your child is welcome to bring in an alternative or extra healthy snack, no chocolate or sweets. Thank you.
- Children keep their PE kit in school which is taken home each half term to be washed. Please ensure all kit is clearly named. Please also check plimsols regularly to make sure they fit properly.
- Children are required to keep a pair of named wellington boots in school, this enables the children to access the outdoor area in all weathers.
- Due to the risk of damage or loss and lack of space, we restrict children to bringing in a small toy ONLY on his/her birthday to show to the rest of the class. There are occasions when children are invited to bring things in from home to support our topics.
- If on occasions your child is going to be picked up by someone other than those named on the contact list, please can we be notified (either verbally or in writing).
- Please feel free to see your child's teacher before or after school if you have any queries or feel we need to know something about your child.

*NB – During the induction days, the morning sessions begin at 8.30am and finish at 11.45am. Afternoon sessions begin at 1pm and finish at 3pm.

SOME IDEAS YOU MIGHT LIKE TO TRY WITH YOUR CHILD:-

BASIC LITERACY SKILLS

Parents often ask for ways to support their children in developing basic skills. Listed below are some ideas:

- Share books, comics and stories with your child, visit your local library
- Ask your child to find things for you when shopping, can they recognise familiar items?
- Play 'I spy' using initial letter sounds
- If your child is ready, practise writing their name using an initial capital letter then lower case letters
- Guide your child to draw a recognisable person or face
- Tell stories to each other
- Sing nursery rhymes and other songs together
- When your child begins to bring them home, practise phonics cards little and often
- Hear your child read as often as they would like. (Please see reading diary for ideas on how to support your child when they bring their reading books home).

BASIC MATHEMATICAL SKILLS

Some ideas you might like to try with your child:-

- Recognising numbers – choose a number for the week, such as 3. Encourage your child to look for this number in different places, the kitchen, at the shops or on a walk. Can they bring you 3 spoons or toys etc? Choose a different number each week.
- Counting sets – count items into the shopping trolley, count how many forks when laying the table or how many toys in the bath.
- Recognising shapes – spot things that are the same as ... cut out different shapes from paper to make pictures, talk about how many sides the shape has etc. What shapes are the tins and packets?
- Make simple repeating patterns from cut out shapes or stickers and talk about the pattern.
- When your child is ready – practise adding and subtracting amounts.
- Encourage your child to help you with weighing when cooking or shopping or can they help you to measure things in the home?