

You Said: We Did

Thank you to everyone who attended our recent stay and play sessions. The purpose of these sessions was to share the importance of early level literacy skills and explore what literacy development looks like in early years.

We issued a questionnaire pre and post stay and play, with the results as follows.

Question	Pre Stay and Play		Post Stay and Play	
Having daily physical play opportunities will support my child's future writing skills.	Agree	97%	Agree	100%
	Disagree	0%	Disagree	0%
	Not sure	3%	Not sure	0%
Does your child engage in mark making opportunities at home?	Not at all	0%	Not at all	5%
	Rarely	9%	Rarely	0%
	Sometimes	44%	Sometimes	27%
	Often	47%	Often	68%
My child enjoys exploring books at home.	Often	67%	Often	82%
	Sometimes	33%	Sometimes	14%
	Never	0%	Never	5%
I share stories with my child.	Daily	58%	Daily	61%
	Often (4-6 times a week)	27%	Often (4-6 times a week)	22%
	Sometimes (1-3 times a week)	15%	Sometimes (1-3 times a week)	17%
	Never	0%	Never	0%
It is important that my child knows and can recite the alphabet before they start school.	Agree	64%	Agree	57%
	Disagree	15%	Disagree	30%
	Not Sure	7%	Not Sure	13%
It is important that my child can write their name before they start school.	Agree	67%	Agree	52%
	Disagree	9%	Disagree	26%
	Not Sure	24%	Not Sure	22%

A key focus within early year's literacy development is focusing on the child's physical skills. In order for a child to be able to make detailed marks on paper there is a process their body needs to follow in order to have control of a pencil. In early years this involves developing upper body strength through physical play, development of the vestibular system (balance) and encouraging fine motor development.

Staff support children to move through the different stages of mark making from early scribbles to developing an interest in letter formation. Children are supported to understand the difference between letters, numbers and words on a page. This often begins with making connections between the environmental print they observe when out and about and letters in their own names or others that are important to them, i.e. Mummy, Daddy, friends. It is important that children learn the sounds that letters make rather than the name of the letter so they can understand the blending of sounds when they come to begin reading.

Following our recent stay and play sessions 96% of parents who completed the questionnaire agreed that the sessions increased awareness of emergent literacy skills with the remaining 4% stating not sure.

Additional Comments/Feedback.

- It's amazing and surprising to see how intelligent children are when challenged. They know a lot more than you think.
- The importance of fact and fictional books.
- Helped parents and carers with how they can help encourage their child.
- Do not realise what you can use every day.
- Didn't know outside play helped physical aspects of writing
- We were able to see the different ways they could develop these skills.
- More ideas on how to help with letters, phonics and new games.
- I now know how to encourage literacy in a way that suits my child better and to relate it to everyday life.
- Mark making with various tools and resources, how different play types are an important tool towards learning to read and write.
- Just being able to see what they enjoy doing each day, the interactive board was great to develop their writing skills.
- All of them (activities) and understanding building muscles.
- Mark making lying under the table made (child) focus on her fine motor skills.

Following on from the questionnaires, feedback and the stay and play sessions we will continue to support children with their literacy skills by;

- Continuing to maintain positive relationships with families to share learning and provide a positive home/nursery link.
- Offer training opportunities to enable staff to continually develop their professional knowledge, skills and experience.