



BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS



Kings' School Nad Al Sheba
Foundation Stage - Spring (Edition 1)





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Thank you for taking the time to read the first edition of 'Building the Foundations', a half termly publication designed to give you further insight into the world of Foundation Stage.

Within this newsletter you will also find hints, tips and fun ideas that you can try with your children at home.

The Foundation Stage Team

Physical Development

When talking about Physical Development, we often think about being physically active such as running or jumping. However, this is just one small part of what it means when we think of children's physical development. Running, jumping, skipping, hopping and throwing and catching balls support the development of our gross motor skills. Children in Foundation Stage 1 have the opportunity to hone these skills in a variety of fun activities from balancing beams, riding bicycles or just simply running around playing 'catch' with their friends.

It is the development of the large muscles that help babies hold their head up, sit up and then for children to begin to walk. These muscles are also key for example, when children begin to walk up and downstairs, first two feet at a time then a single foot on separate steps.



THROUGH THE KEYHOLE – FS1

These large milestones in a child's life (sitting up, crawling, walking etc.) are often casting a shadow over other milestones in a child's development. Alongside gross motor skills, children are also developing their fine motor skills in the smaller muscles such as the fingers. From grasping a parent's finger as a baby to holding a cup independently, these all rely on the strength in the smaller muscles. In Foundation Stage 1, further development of fine motor skills is a necessary precursor to mark making and eventually writing, where children are required to hold a pencil in a tripod grip and press down enough to make visible marks on the paper.

This term, in order to continue to help develop children's strength in their arms and hands, we have been using various fun activities.

'Dough Disco' sees children strengthening their grip and focusing on moving individual fingers at will and it is all done with playdough while we dance to some music! Similarly 'Squiggle While You Wiggle' introduces children to familiar shapes that are later seen in letter formation families. This is explored through large movements using paint, shaving foam, water (basically anything messy!) where children can mark make while exercising their large muscles.



THROUGH THE KEYHOLE – FS1

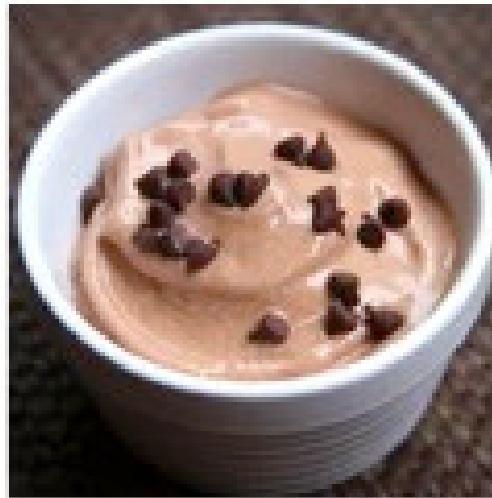


Finger Play areas are set up in the classroom and encourage children to take on challenges set for them. This could be using tweezers to pick up small objects and put them in a pot, threading buttons with various size laces or making intricate patterns with small tiles. All of these help stimulate and develop children's motor skills while also exercising their hand eye coordination. These are also games that children can practise at home.

Quick Recipe

Healthy Ice Cream*

As the weather gets hotter, why not try this great healthy alternative to ice cream...and it's easy to make too!



Ingredients

- 2 Bananas
- 1 Tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder
- Chocolate chips (optional)

Directions

- Peel the bananas, slice them, and place in a freezer bag or glass container.
- Freeze for at least two hours.
- Place the frozen bananas and cocoa powder in a food processor, and blend until smooth, for several minutes. At first it'll look chunky, but as the bananas begin to melt a little, you'll see it form a super creamy consistency.
- Scoop into a bowl, sprinkle with a few chocolate chips if you're feeling zany, and enjoy!

Early Learning Goals



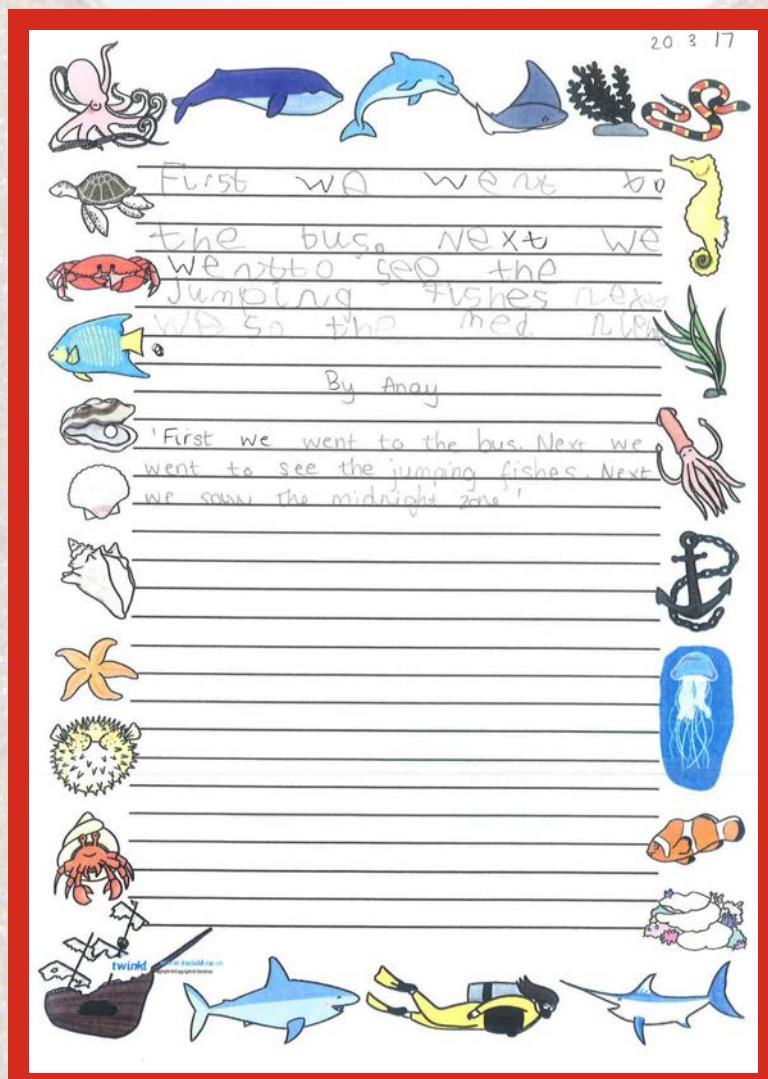
As we are fast approaching the end of the academic year, Foundation Stage 2 are beginning to put in place a transition programme for children that will support the move from the Foundation Stage curriculum to the National Curriculum 2014 that is taught from Year 1.

Strongly factored into this process is children's well being and ensuring that they are fully included in the process and understand their next steps. Alongside this, teachers plan to ensure children progress towards 'Age Related Expectations' by the end of the year. The Early Years Statutory Framework refers to these expectations 'Early Learning Goals'. By the time children leave Foundation Stage 2, it is expected that children have met the Early Learning Goals in all seven areas of learning (Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Physical Development, Literacy, Maths, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design). There are 17 goals that children are expected to reach by the end of the year.

THROUGH THE KEYHOLE – FS2

At the end of the academic year, an Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is written for children, which is shared with their next teacher and with parents through a report on Early Essence. Within this report, a judgement against the Early Learning Goals will be made and children will either be ‘emerging’, ‘expected’ or ‘exceeding’.

Teachers take into account that children learn in different ways and at different paces. This is factored into the transition period between FS2 and Year 1 to ensure that the children who are ‘emerging’ in a particular aspect of learning will continue to be supported as they start in Year 1.



5 Things to do With... TAPE!

N.B. Before sticking tape down onto indoor flooring, please make sure that it will not damage the floor! If in doubt, move the inside learning outside!



01

Create a maze with tape and draw the letters of the alphabet along the track. Can children drive their car or blow a ball with a straw through the maze, following the alphabet?

02



Throw newspaper at a giant spider's web and see how many will stick.

03



Mark out letters and see if children can balance along them. Can they guide a ball around the letter formation?

04



Tape out shapes on the floor and fill them in with blocks. It takes focus and skill to fill it just right!

05



Practise numbers with hopscotch. You can adjust the numbers to which ones the children are working on.



EARLY ESSENCE

A child spends a lot of time with their parents and we understand the importance this plays on a child's development. As a parent you may not always be aware of what your child is learning in school (unless they tell you more than "I played all day"). The same is also true that we as teachers are not aware of the learning and consolidation that happens at home. The partnership between parents and school is not one to be taken lightly when it comes to creating a holistic picture of your child and being able to track their development through their experiences in life.

This is where Early Essence comes in. An electronic tracking tool, Early Essence is used by teachers on a daily basis to gather evidence of your child's understanding in each of the seven areas of learning. This

is one of many banks of evidence that teachers use when planning for your child's next steps. As well as being used in the planning process, it is also a gateway into providing parents with an insight into what is happening at school. The photos captured (and linked to the area of learning) are shared with parents on a half termly basis so that parents are able to see not only what their child has been learning at school but also to see their child's progress as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The final piece of the puzzle is where you as parents come in. Not only are teachers able to put pictures of your child on Early Essence, but you are too. Strengthening the ties between home and school are important to gain a better understanding of what children have understood and are using at home in a different context. By adding pictures and videos of your child learning at home, you are supporting the teachers further to create a well rounded view of your child.

By now you will have had a Term 2 parent consultation with your child's teacher where you will have been shown what is available for you as parents to see on Early Essence. If you would like to know more about Early Essence and how to contribute to your child's personalised observation record, please ask your child's teacher for more information. Thank you for continuing to support us in making sure your child reaches their full potential!

TOP 10

Websites and Apps

EducationCity: Your child has their own username and password so they can access a wide range of cross-curricular activities.

Busythings: 700+ curriculum-linked, fun educational activities to play online. You can access all games by using the school home access details below:

Username: home03441

Password: flower4981

AB Maths Lite: This app provides fun games for children to learn their timetables.

Tynker: This app helps young children learn about programming.

Night Zookeeper: Children complete 'drawing missions' and create digital books based on a zoo full of magical animals.

Endless Reader: This app helps young children to learn to read using colourful monsters and activities.

Espresso Coding: Learn to code with Discovery Education Coding, whether you are a coding novice or a coding guru. You can access this using the school subscription.

Username: student45112

Password: kingsnas

Abcya: Online games for children sorted by grade level. Games incorporate areas such as math and language arts while introducing basic computer skills.

<http://interactivesites.weebly.com/>: Interactive, educational games and simulations in one place.

Bright Ninja Tells Time: Fun and interactive way to help children tell the time.

Next update will be in June 2017.



"the best by every child"