



COMPASSION, ACCEPTANCE, RESPONSIBILITY, FORGIVENESS, TRUST

Welcome!

It won't be long now before your child will be starting school. There will be many new things to learn and skills to acquire. This pack has been produced in order to help prepare you and your child for this important event. We offer ideas and starting points for activities, which you can do and enjoy together. It is extremely important that no matter the activity, it is approached in a fun and natural way. Most of the suggested activities would be opportunities that occur during routines of a normal day. Some ideas you will be aware of already, while others may be new to you, but all will provide your child with experiences that can help with a smooth transition to primary school.

If there is anything in the pack that you would like extra help with please do not hesitate to ask.



Learning through play

At the age that children start school it is acknowledged that their stage of development means that the best way for them to learn is through play. Therefore, the Foundation Stage (reception) routine is based around allowing the children to have opportunities to develop in this way. A wide range of play activities will help to develop children's language, thinking and understanding about the world. They need to experience playing on their own and with other children, playing inside and out, playing with toys and playing imaginatively.

Talking and Listening

The way we communicate with children shows them how we would like them to communicate with us and other people.

These are the foundation for successful learning in school. Children learn when we talk to them about the world around them. They are an essential element in reading and writing processes. They can be encouraged in many ways.

- Play lots of games that involve listening and remembering strings of words - see if they can help you remember your shopping list. Gradually increase the list of items to be remembered.
- On a walk or an outing to the park or the shops, STOP for a moment - what did you hear?
- Commenting on what they say gives you a chance to introduce new words.
- Listen to story tapes - talk about the story - follow the story in a book.
- Listen to singing tapes - learn the rhymes and songs.
- Ask questions that require more than just a 'yes' or 'no' answer.
- Resist the temptation of answering for your children, particularly if they don't answer straight away.
- Make sure you have your child's full attention before you ask them to things. Say their name and stop.
- Get them to describe what they have done during the day - ask questions and get them to answer.



Early Writing

General physical activity (developing our gross motor skills) is an important step in developing the body ready for finer movements. So playing ball in the garden, climbing in the park, bike and scooter riding all builds up strength and muscle control; as well as balance.

Your pre-school child should have access to crayons, children's scissors and plenty of scrap paper for scribbling freely and for doing various cutting out and sticking activities. Don't worry if they use both hands, this is very common in young children.

Playdough is a very good material for encouraging fine muscular control with the fingers. Show them that writing has a purpose; if you are writing a shopping list offer them the chance to write their own.

If, but only if, your child shows an interest in wanting to learn to write their name show them how **but use a capital letter for the first letter only.**

Again, if they show an interest in writing certain letters we would ask you to refer to the handwriting style as given in the pack so as to avoid confusion when they start school. Encourage them to use an appropriate pencil grip - between thumb and for finger, resting on the middle finger.



Early Reading

Talk with your child as much as possible. Take turns in conversation and encourage whole sentence answers. Do not over correct their grammar or language, instead repeat it back to them correctly (this is called modelling).

Nursery Rhymes are rich in language. Encourage your child to learn them, say them with you and enjoy them. Try leaving off the last word in the line of a familiar rhyme and see if they can fill in the missing word.

When you put your child to bed, allow time to read them a story. Some children like the same story over and over again so be prepared!

Look at books together and encourage your child to predict what will happen next. Run your fingers under the print as you read to your child. Re-tell or act out the story; use puppets or toys for the different characters and get your child to join in with repeating lines, e.g. 'Run, run, as fast you can...', 'I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house down.' Let your child see you using and enjoying your books. This is key for them to enjoy the books too. Their love of books will be a huge motivation when they are ready to start reading.



Join the local library and make regular visits to choose new books.

Noticing words all around us is another step on the road to reading. Point out labels and road signs. Ask them to look for things in the supermarket. Visual recognition is a very important early reading skill.



Early Maths

Maths is all around us. As children play they learn about shape and size, time and space, matching and measuring, as well as number for counting.

Sorting and matching are very important to mathematical thinking. There are many opportunities to practice these skills at home.

- Sort clean clothes into piles of the same kind. Then see if there are more shirts than trousers. Are there more vests than pants?
- Sort out socks. Does this one match another one?
- Sort out shopping into tins and packets, large items and small items etc.
- Lay the table, share out plates, knives, forks, cups.
- Sort out toys - large ones in this box, small ones in that or by colour.
- Make comparisons or order objects from smallest to biggest or the other way round.
- Compare two things - which is heavier, which is bigger etc. Which holds more? Use water and sand play with various containers - plastic bottles, yoghurt pots etc.
- Counting activities - how many red smarties, how many blue smarties?
- Count everything and anything!
- Simple board games with dice, snap or dominoes.
- Jigsaw puzzles.
- Shopping - playing or actual experience with money.
- Talk about time - 'this morning' 'this afternoon' 'yesterday' 'after lunch' etc. and days of the week.
- Help them to recognise actual numbers and look for them in different places e.g. road signs, out shopping, around the house.

Developing independence

A child will feel more confident and independent if they can do some of the following when they start school:

- Dress and undress
- Manage buckles and shoe fastenings
- Button up or zip up a coat
- Blow nose properly
- Manage a knife and fork
- Be able to use the toilet correctly

- Be able to tidy away toys, games etc.
- Be able to recognise their own belongings

Social Development

Managing relationships and feelings is a very important aspect of starting school. If your child has been to pre-school they may be well on the way to doing this, because as we know things don't always go the way that children want them to. Sharing can be hard and losing a game can produce difficult feelings, but letting your child experience and deal with them is equally important.



As parents, reassure your child that there is always an adult who can help to sort things out. We work hard to help children develop friendships and treat each other with respect and kindness. Any disagreements between children are quickly dealt with, but do encourage your child to tell an adult if they are upset.

The first few days

So the time has come and it is the first day of school. What do you need to know?

Bringing Your Child to School

You will want to see your child safely into the school playground whilst they are part-time, but soon after that we anticipate that they will be happy to go round with the other children to their classroom. There is always a member of staff on the gate in the morning who will scoop up groups of children to go round to the classroom together or who will go round with them.

If you have something you would like to tell Mrs Morrell or Miss Logue for that day, and they are already in class, please see the person on the gate who will happily pass on any message.

After-school appointments can be made through the office or by talking to a member of staff when you collect your child.

If by chance you are late one morning, just call at the office and we will help you.



Collecting Your Child

The children will be taken to the side green gate and you can pick them up from there.

Parents should wait for their children in the parent waiting area by the green gate that leads onto the main playground. The children will be brought round to you, with their coats, lunch boxes etc., ready to go home.

It is very important that you collect your child promptly in order to avoid

them getting upset if the person they are expecting is not there to meet them. Any alterations in your child's usual routine for collection **MUST** be mentioned at the office or to Mrs Morrell or Miss Logue.

If your child is showing signs of not being quite ready to stay all day this will be discussed with you and maybe part time attendance would continue in the best interests of your child.

Having lunch at school

Children have the option of bringing their own packed lunch (we strive to have healthy lunch boxes) or receiving a school dinner. All Infant children are currently entitled to a free school dinner. Please see someone at the school office regarding registering your child for school meals. Children are also offered free fruit/vegetables at snack time everyday and are entitled to free school milk until they turn 5. Please fill in the application form enclosed in the pack if you would like your child to receive free milk, as this has to be ordered in. It is really important that the school are kept up to date with any allergies that your child may have.

P.E

P.E is taught once a week in Panda Class and the children absolutely love being active and keeping fit! PE is taught on a Tuesday and the children will need to arrive at school in the morning wearing their full P.E kit (white t-shirt, black shorts, plimsols/trainers and a black or burgundy jumper/joggers if it is cold). Please ensure your child is not wearing any jewellery and that long hair is tied up. The children do not need to bring in any other uniform to change into for the rest of the day, and should wear the correct school uniform for the remainder of the week. As well as our weekly PE slot, the children are given daily opportunities to run around, climb, ride bikes etc. both inside and outside.

Every child is different

We understand that your children are exceptionally special and individual characters and no 2 children progress in the same way. If there are particular concerns that you have about your child, we hope that you will tell us about these when you meet Mrs Morrell and Miss Logue during home visits.

**We look forward to welcoming your child to
Burham CE Primary School.**