



Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you to those of you who were able to attend our information session about the Early Learning Goals this morning. I have summarised the key points and messages below, as well as attaching a copy of the Early Learning Goals just in case you missed anything!

- In a few weeks you will receive your child's first school report which will include details of their attainment and progress against the 17 Early Learning Goals which were revised as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum; implemented from September 2012. We have a statutory duty to assess all children against the Early Learning Goal statements in each area of learning at the end of their Reception year in school and report them to you as parents and also the Local Authority.
- Your child is assessed against these goals in a completely informal way as part of our everyday practise and teaching over the next few weeks, with our final judgements having to be made by the end of June. Many of you will have noticed that we are now adding these statements to the observations of your child in their Tapestry Learning Journey. This means that within that particular observation we are seeing your child demonstrate aspects of the attached goals.
- We use everything that we know about your child, their progress, skills and knowledge and how they learn to make these judgements. All adults in Early Years and who work with your child are involved in this process.
- All judgements are made using a 'best fit' approach but the skills that we see need to be used with consistency and a good amount of independence over a period of time. A child needs to be demonstrating the majority of the statement for us to be able to say that they have met it.
- We have to report to you whether they have met the 'expected' level for the Early Learning Goal in each area, 'exceeded' the Early Learning Goal or are still working towards it; this is called an 'emerging' level. There are a separate set of criteria to use for making an 'exceeding' judgement in any area of learning.
- The Prime Areas of Learning - 3 Communication and Language Goals, 2 Physical Development Goals and 3 Personal, Social and Emotional Development Goals, along with the 'Specific' Early Learning Goals for Reading, Writing and Maths are the Early Learning Goals which make up a 'Good Level of Development' judgement for children.

- All children develop and progress at their own rates and all have their own strengths and areas to develop. Some children are not yet 5 whilst others are nearly 6; some have only been learning and speaking English for a very short time; every child is different and we value ALL their achievements. We are delighted with the progress all the children have made and always aim for them all to achieve the best that they can by the end of their time in Reception, even if this means that they have not met all the Early Learning Goals. We always view every child as a unique individual and continue to do so as part of this process; it is something we are very passionate about and committed to as an Early Years team.
- If your child does not meet some of the Early Learning Goals, don't panic! They will continue to be given the support and appropriate learning experiences to enable them to continue to make progress as they move into Year 1. Likewise, if your child exceeds some of the goals they too will be challenged as they move on into Year 1, although not all of the ELGs tie into the Year 1 curriculum. We also carry on teaching the children and they continue making progress after the end of June when the Early Learning Goal judgements have to be finalised and sent off the Local Authority!
- We use nationally agreed examples of children working at the expected levels to help us ensure our judgements are the same as those being made in all other English schools for children at the end of their Reception year. We also work very closely with other local schools, meeting to 'moderate' our judgements as well as being regularly 'moderated' by Early Years advisors from the Local Authority. The outcome of our most recent 'external moderation' in 2016 was extremely positive with the quality of the evidence and learning experiences highly praised as well as the accuracy of our judgements.
- We also have a statutory duty to include within the end of year report a summary of your child's 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' which underpin all aspects of learning and you will have regularly seen attached to observations we upload in your child's Tapestry Learning Journey.
- Once you have got your child's report there will be an opportunity for you to discuss anything that you do not understand or that you might be concerned about (we hope there won't be!) at a parent's evening appointment. If there is anything you would like to ask about or discuss now please do just ask one of us.

Ways you can help support your child:

- Reading, writing and number are often some of the goals that children can find most challenging to meet, and expectations have increased considerably over recent years.
READING: Try to make sure that you are hearing your child read at home regularly, practise those phonic and tricky word cards too, especially the digraph cards. The more they read and the more they practise the better they will get!

WRITING: We are practising spelling and writing lots of the tricky words correctly now so this is another thing you could practise. Let them have a go at writing using their phonics, remembering to get them to carefully 'segment' the words into their sounds before writing them down. If your child is a confident writer they might like to have a go at writing their own little stories or retelling a familiar one - some children are tackling the Billy Goats Gruff this week!

HANDWRITING & LETTER FORMATION: Encourage your child to use the correct letter formation whenever they write, they are very good with the rhymes for each letter now which really can help them remember how to form them correctly. You don't have to practise with paper and pencils, paintbrushes in water work just as well, as do fingers in shaving foam or sticks in mud!

NUMBER: Children need to work securely with numbers to 20: recognising the numbers to 20, being able to put them in order, knowing which number is 1 more or 1 less than a specific number and being able to count 20 objects is something you can really help your child with at home, as well as finding doubles and halves of small amounts. Encourage them to use skills of counting on and counting back from a larger number when adding up or taking away and well as practising writing numbers correctly. We will keep sending home our maths challenges so please do try to make time to have a go at them with your child.

And finally.....

LISTENING & ATTENTION: Turn off those distractions, limit time on electronic devices and always try to make a quiet time everyday with your child where you can really concentrate on an activity together, share a story, play a game, complete a puzzle or just talk and having a conversation; life can be so noisy and busy these days that children have far fewer opportunities to develop and practise the very important skills of listening and attention.

We hope that you find this information useful and that you will enjoy reading your child's first report in July. We are delighted with the fantastic progress that all the children have made during their first year at school.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Miss Emma Cother

Early Years Assistant Headteacher