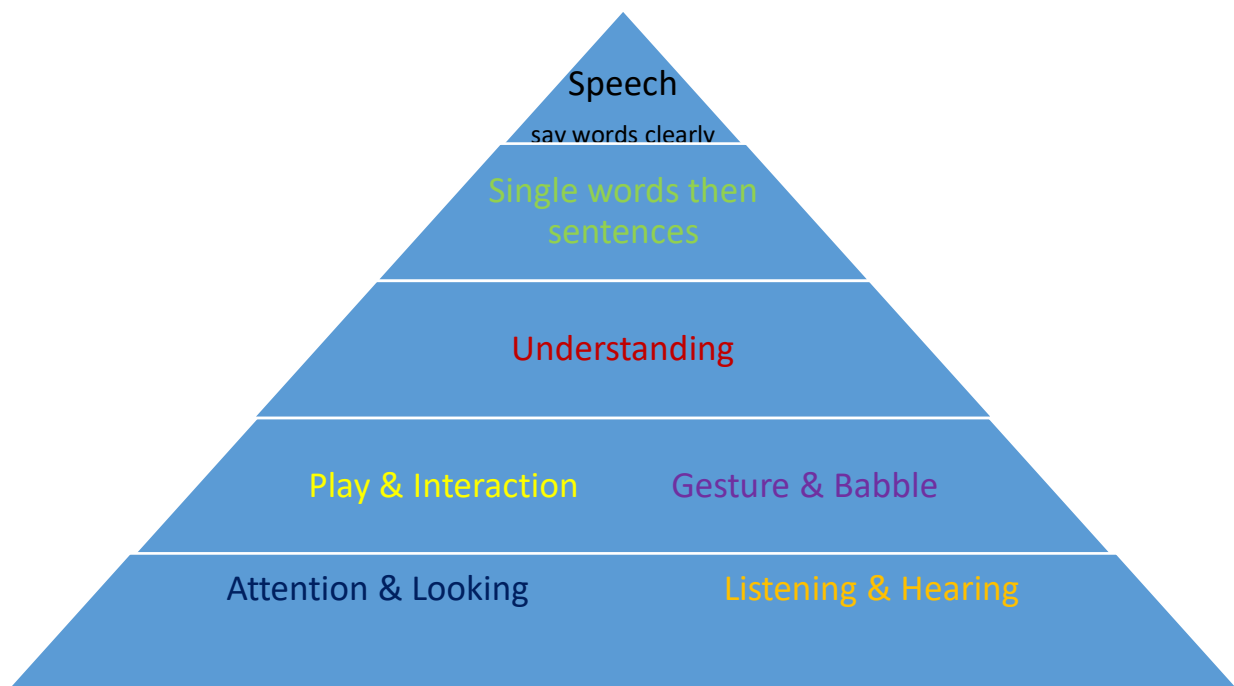


Getting Ready for School

You are your child's most important teacher – research shows that parents have the biggest influence on their child's learning, both before they go to school and once they are at school. Engaging with your child's school and being involved in their learning will give them the best start to their many years at school.

Lots of research and feedback from teachers tells us that making sure children have **good language skills** is one of the most useful things we can do to make sure they are ready for school. The main way that children are taught in school is through spoken word, so it is important that children can understand what is being said to them and that they can let others know what they want, need and feel.



Attention and Listening

Listening = Learning!

Having good attention and listening skills is really important for being ready to learn in school. Have some **quiet times** during the day when you can play with your child. If you are not watching the **TV, turn it off!** This will reduce background noise and allow your child to tune into your words.

To help your child develop their attention and listening skills through fun games and activities you can play:

- Musical bumps/statues
- Shake and stop/ready steady go
- Simon Says

Vocabulary

Being a good communicator helps children learn in school, develop their reading and writing skills, make friends, and enjoy life to the full!

To help your child understand and use more words you can:

- Talk to them about what you/they are doing and **name the things** they are seeing/doing
- **Link words together;** letting them know that they are all part of a group, such as; body parts, animals, clothes, toys, furniture etc.
- **Repeat, repeat, repeat.** Children have to hear words lots of times to understand what they mean and then to use them.

Phonics

Phonics is how schools teach children to read, write and spell words. To start with children are introduced to letter sounds.

To help your child get ready for phonics you can:

- Play the attention and listening games suggested earlier
- Play rhyming games
- Sing nursery rhymes

Reading Stories



To share books with your child you can:

- Read anytime and anywhere!
- Sharing books is a wonderful way to develop words and communication
- Bring a story to life using props and exaggerated voice
- Take every opportunity to share books with your child including play time, sitting on the sofa together, bedtime
- Try and introduce a bedtime routine which includes a bedtime story every night - just five minutes a day can make a big difference

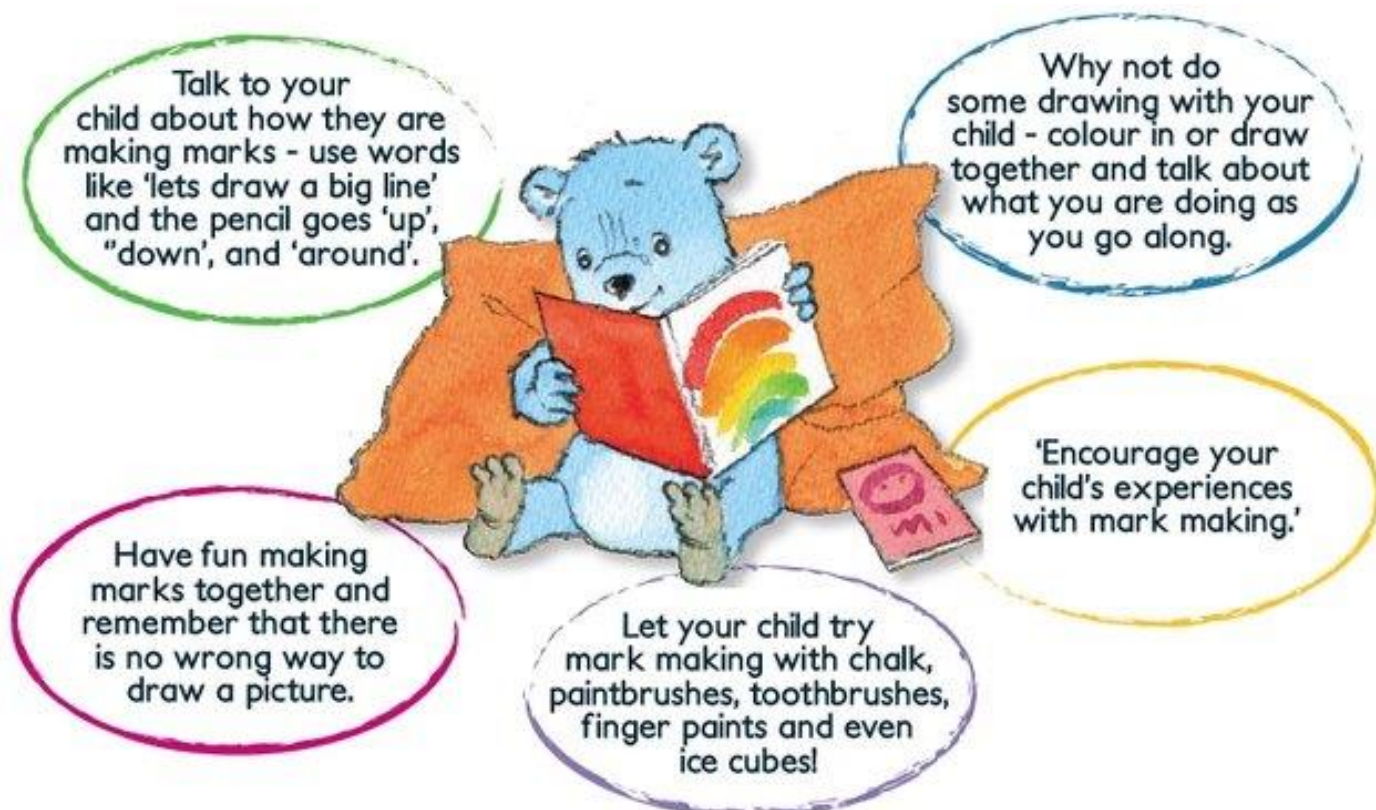
Nursery Rhymes

Nursery rhymes are an essential part of **developing good language** and ultimately **good reading/writing skills**. They help to **develop attention** and **listening** skills. They make playing with sounds and actions sociable and **fun** which are important language skills. Children learn lots about voice, rhythm, speech sounds and words from the repetitive format of nursery rhymes.

To enjoy singing nursery rhymes with your child you can:

- Sing songs you know well, especially those with actions
- Focus on only one or two favourite rhymes at a time – **children enjoy the repetition**
- Try to be at the same level as the child, '**face to face**' or '**side by side**' so that your child can see your face and actions
- **Pause part** way through to give the child the opportunity to take the lead – they may do an action, make a sound, or fill in the words
- **Rhyme** is an important step to learning to read because the child starts to think about the **sounds of words and not just the meaning**
- Sing together with your child: in the bath, at the table, sitting on the sofa, in the car/bus, anywhere!

Mark Making



To encourage your child to explore mark making:

- In the beginning, mark making is more about motivation than ability and we want to show children that writing is fun!
- Value and encourage all the efforts the child is making in making marks, to increase their confidence and self-esteem
- Give children the opportunities to make marks in the way that interests them
- Your child will develop their finger strength through other games too; like lego or playdough, so don't worry if they don't like drawing/painting

Independence and routine

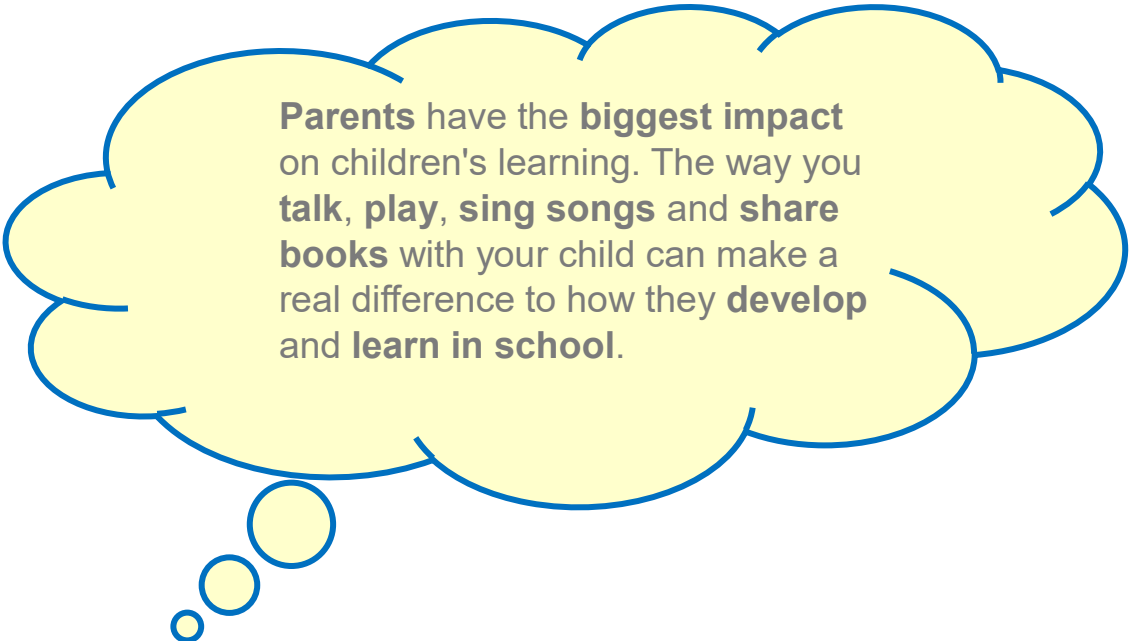
Going to school is your child's first big step to being independent. Being able to do things for themselves makes children feel proud and confident. It will help them at school if they can do these things on their own;

- Dressing – getting changed for P.E.
- Meals – all KS1 children are eligible for a free school meal, if they can use a knife and fork on their own this will make them more confident
- Toileting

A good bedtime routine, plenty of sleep and a healthy breakfast will make sure your child is ready for a busy day at school. Get them used to this before September

What can you do now?

- Play some of the attention and listening games with your child
- Share books together
- Get a good bedtime routine and a healthy breakfast every day
- Encourage independence; toileting, dressing and feeding
- Enjoy mark making activities
- Sing nursery rhymes together
- **Talk to your child about what you/they are doing**



Parents have the **biggest impact** on children's learning. The way you **talk, play, sing songs** and **share books** with your child can make a real difference to how they **develop** and **learn in school**.