

# How can you help?

A Parents' Guide

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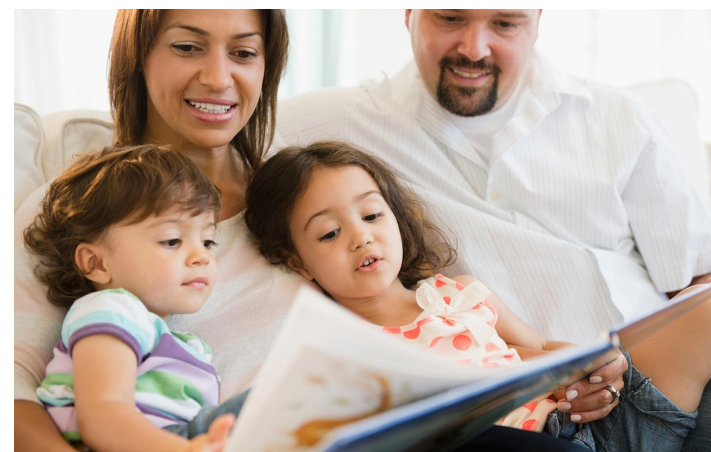
Mellor Primary School Early Years Unit

# Welcome to Mellor Early Years Class

Parents are a child's first and most important teachers. A child learns more between the ages of 0 and 4 than at any other time of life.

As parents you will have numerous opportunities to provide your child with situations which will stimulate their natural curiosity and build a keen desire to learn and discover.

As your children take their first steps towards school, we are often asked what parents can do to help their children. We hope the ideas in this leaflet will help you prepare your children and help them through their early years at Mellor Primary School.



('him' and 'her' are used variably throughout this document)



Encourage your child to play with others, perhaps in a Nursery, Play group or Mums and Toddler group. Leave her with a friend once or twice for a short while to give her the confidence to be without you for short periods of time.

Children sometimes worry about aspects of schooling that adults often consider insignificant e.g. the location of the cloakroom, toilets, dining hall. During your school visit please explore these areas as well.

Bring your child into school for the first few days, then encourage her to say good-bye at the Early Years' door. Most children are happy to do this as it makes them feel grown up. Remember, lengthy farewells can be more upsetting to a child.

Talk to your child about starting school, there are lots of story books on this subject. Please prepare him so that school will be a happy and rewarding experience.

## Language

A child learns a lot from speaking with, listening to, answering and asking questions.

Ideas to develop language skills:

- Answer children's questions simply and clearly, if you don't know the answer find out together using a friend, books or the Internet.
- Talk about what you see around you, seasons, colours, changes.
- Point out text in the environment, posters, signs
- Play language games, I-spy, Whispers, Snap & Happy Families
- Read and discuss stories, "What might happen next?" "Why do you think that?",
- Ask your child questions that require more than "yes" or "no". "What do you think?"

- \* "Who?"
- \* "What?"
- \* "When?"
- \* "Where?"
- \* "Why?"
- \* "How?"

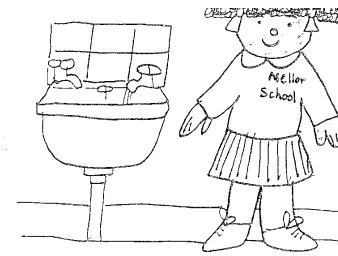


# Books

- Surround your child with lots of interesting and colourful books — both story and factual.
- Try to read to your child every day.
- A child's initial enjoyment of books is from sitting comfortably on a parents lap to be read to.
- Don't worry if they want the same book again and again. Story repetition encourages the reinforcement of story language and the sequence of the story.
- Your child will eventually become aware of the relationship between the print and the story.



- Once your child has started at Mellor Primary school they will be choosing and bringing a school library book home with them each week.



5. Wash and dry her hands.



6. Use a knife and fork.



7. Tidy/clear away her toys



8. Use a handkerchief



9. Share her toys and be prepared to take turns

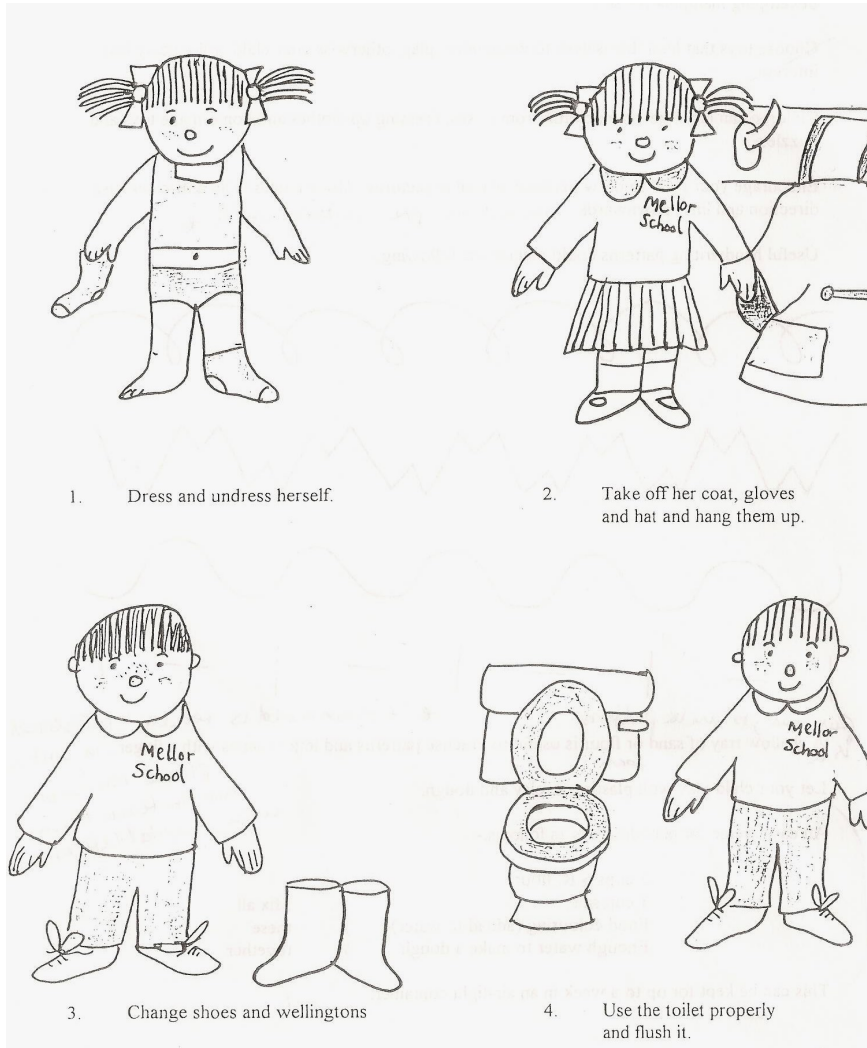


10. Say her name and address



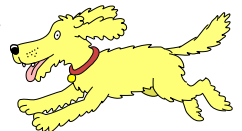
# Independence

When your child starts school it would be helpful if she could do some of these things.



## Hints for Reception 'Reading' Books

- When he first brings his 'reading' books home from school, do not expect your child to know all the words.
- Keep the reading time short, enjoyable and stress free for both you and your child.
- Much of this early reading is memorising. At this stage go along with him. It is more important to get the sequence and tone of the story than recognise each word.
- Let your child use the pictures as a clue to guess what the words say. Later use this skill alongside the recognition of the first letter of the word.
- To begin with, if your child is stuck on a word, simply say the word, then it will stay in context and be more likely to be remembered.
- Revisit the book over the week - repetition is great practice and will build confidence.
- Continue reading other books and comics.
- As your child's confidence grows, and if they would like to, there are extra reading scheme books to take home in the cloakroom area between Reception and Year 1 classrooms.



## Maths Skills

Children are surrounded by mathematical experiences. It is important to make the most of them to prepare your child for school.

- Count everything! Stairs up to bed, toys, books, cars or animals in a field. If possible touch each item as you count.
- Point out numbers in the environment. Children begin to recognise personal numerals first, e.g. their age, house number
- Sorting objects by colour, size, weight & shape
- Play simple games such as ludo, snakes & ladders
- Sing counting songs
- Water play gives lots of opportunity to use vocabulary like full, empty, too much, same as
- Baking with your child gives them the experience of balancing, weighing, counting, time and ordering.



## Manipulative Skills

- Encourage lots of drawing, painting using large crayons, brushes and large pieces of paper.
- To encourage pre-writing skills draw patterns as well as pictures - zig-zags, waves, anti-clockwise circles & downward lines.
- Threading, jigsaws, Duplo and other construction toys help build up developing manipulative skills.

An easy recipe for play dough that can be kept for up to a week in an air-tight container.

Mix together :-

3 cups of S.R. flour

1 cup salt

Food colouring (added to water)

Enough water to make a firm dough