



Best Beginnings

Supporting your child as they take their next steps

This guide is to help you and your child make the transition into the St Martin's Little Parrots nursery as smooth as possible. For some children, this will be their first time away from the family setting, or it may be the first time they have transitioned from one nursery to another. This guide talks about your child's development and how, as a team made up of the teachers in Little Parrots, yourselves and the wider school team, we can best support your child.

The guide is based on developmental milestones and things your child should be doing by this stage. Please do not worry if you feel they haven't achieved everything yet, however if you feel there is an area that causes you concern or that your health visitor has raised with you, please let us know as soon as possible and we can begin to plan how we can best support your child in that area.

The information in this booklet is based on Ages and Stages Developmental review and follows on from the 2 ½ year developmental review that you would have had with your health team.

Further information can be found on:

<https://childrenandfamilyhealthdevon.nhs.uk/speech-language-therapy/articles/early-years-therapies-toolkit/>

<https://www.eric.org.uk/>



By the age of 3 most children should:

- Understand object and action words such as “trousers” and “jump”
- Can understand and respond to 2 step instructions such as “take off your socks and put them in the basket”
- Have a vocabulary of about 300 words
- Be able to put some words together to make a simple sentence such as “Mummy gonna work” or “where doggie gone?”
- You should be able to have a simple but “proper” two way conversation with them
- You should be able to understand your child’s speech 50-75% of the time.

If you feel there are some areas above that your child struggles with, here are some simple tips:

- ✓ Read books together and talk about the pictures. Model back any words that are mispronounced in a sensitive way e.g. “it a dish” “yes that’s right you found the fish”.
- ✓ Give your child the opportunity to talk as much as possible, such as by offering choices “would you like water or milk?”
- ✓ Comment on what they are doing rather than asking questions so that children can learn these new words, such as “look, you’re making the car go really fast... its going up over the hill and back down again....”

Being an effective communicator and being able to order their thoughts using language enables children to express their feelings and thoughts and to have their needs met.



Big Muscle Movements (Gross Motor Skills)

At this stage of their development, children need to be playing and developing their gross motor movements as much as possible to support their later development. By the age of 3, most children should:

- Enjoy rough and tumble games
- Run
- Kick
- Jump
- Climb
- Climb up and down stairs using one foot per stair
- Throw a ball overhand

If you are worried about your child's gross motor development, here are a few tips:

- ✓ Play outside as much as possible – it is easier to practise big moves outside where there is

more space than running around the living room!

- ✓ Allow children to be barefoot when it is safe to do so, this helps them to work out where their body is in space
- ✓ Encourage children to lie on their tummies when reading a book or playing, this encourages core strength

Having good gross motor skills supports children to carry out every day activities with ease and pleasure. Gross motor skills also support the fine motor skills needed for writing and drawing.



Little Muscle Movements (Fine Motor Skills)

These are the skills required to manipulate objects using their fingers and hands, an essential skill for writing later on and cutting with scissors. For a three-year-old these would include:

- Drawing lines and circles on paper
- Turning pages in a book
- Turn rotating handles on a toy
- Screw and unscrew a jar lid
- Build a 6 block tower
- Help with dressing and undressing
- Feed themselves with a spoon

If your child needs extra help in these areas, simple games and activities can help, such as:

- ✓ Playing with playdough
- ✓ Completing puzzles
- ✓ Squeezing a sponge at bath time
- ✓ Playing with finger puppets
- ✓ Putting coins in a money box
- ✓ Picking up raisins from the table
- ✓ Opening and closing clothes pegs

Having good fine motor skills will enable children to have more control over tools such as pens, pencils, scissors and cutlery. They will be able to use these tools with more accuracy, making these tasks more pleasurable for them.



Toileting

Potty training varies from child to child. At Little Parrots we are happy to support you and your child wherever they are on their journey. If your child is coming to nursery in nappies, we require you to provide enough nappies and wipes for the whole day, and we need to know this prior to them starting with us – you can always let us know in September if they have started using the potty over the summer!

We have a potty in nursery and 3 child sized toilets in the classroom that the children can access whenever they wish. Even if your child is using the toilet confidently at home, it is not unusual for accidents to occur when they are in a new environment with lots of distractions! Due to this,

and the amount of messy play we get up to, please make sure you provide a spare change of clothes including socks with your child every day.

Your child might be ready to start potty training if:

- ✓ Your child can remain dry and clean for two hours or more
- ✓ They are aware when they are emptying their bladder or bowels
- ✓ They show an interest in sitting on a potty or toilet – books such as “The Mole Who Knew It Was None Of His Business” By Werner Holzwarth or “I Want My Potty” By Tony Ross are good books to get started on the subject
- ✓ They have a regular pattern to when they wet or soil their nappy.

Staying calm and relaxed during potty training, no matter how stressful it may seem, will help your child to relax and to learn what they need to do.



Any concerns?

If you have any concerns about your child after reading this guide, or if you feel there is another area that you are unsure about, please email the Little Parrots team at admin@stmartinscranbrook.devon.sch.uk (marking you email FAO: Little Parrots) or phone the school and leave a message and one of the team will get back to you.

We are really excited to be part of your child's development and we are looking forward to working as a team with you to ensure they have the best start to their school life and beyond.



