

After 1 year at school

The New Zealand Curriculum: Reading at school

Your child will be learning to:

- understand and talk about the stories they read
- share favourite parts with others
- use groups of letters they know to check or work out some new words
- recognise and use many commonly-used words
- read smoothly
- enjoy reading and solving problems as they read.

Reading at home - Make reading fun

- Reading at home should be fun and easy – something you both look forward to; a time for laughter and talk.
- Share the reading, take turns or see whether your child wants to read or be read to today.
- All children like to be read to, so keep reading to them. You can read in your first language.
- Visit the library together to help them choose books to share.
- Read emails from family or whānau aloud.
- Play card and board games together.

TIP: Talk a lot to your child while you are doing things together. Use the language that works best for you and your child.

Talk about reading

- Talk about pictures in books.
- Talk about the learning they are doing and what they are most interested in.
- Sing waiata and songs, make up rhymes together – the funnier the better.
- Be a role model. Let your child see you enjoying reading and talk about what you are enjoying.
- Share favourite books, point out words on signs, shops and labels, read poems and play word games like "I Spy" and "Simon Says..."

TIP: If your child is stuck on a word wait a few seconds, give them a chance to think. If they are still stuck, help them to try to work the word out by saying "read the sentence again and think what would make sense". Ask "could it be...?" (and give a word that might fit). The pictures also help them check they have got the right word. If they still can't work out the word, tell them and praise their efforts. Remember, reading should be fun.

Make it a special time together

Reading is a great chance for you and your child to spend special time together. Make reading:

- quiet and relaxing
- a time to sit close to your child
- 10–15 minutes without interruption, away from the TV
- an enjoyable, interesting and special time
- a time to praise your child for making an effort.

TIP: Help your child to link stories to their own life. Remind them about what they have done when a similar thing happens in the story.

The New Zealand Curriculum: Writing at school

Your child will be learning to:

- show they can plan what they want to write about through talking, drawing or perhaps in words
- link their story to their everyday experiences
- use many words they know from their reading.

Writing at home - Make writing fun

- Help your child write an alphabet letter, then go letter hunting in your house or in a book to find that letter.
- Let your child see you writing – you can use your first language.
- Encourage them to write shopping lists or make birthday cards.
- Water and a paintbrush on a dry path and a stick on sand are fun ways to write letters and words.

TIP: Don't worry if your child's letters or words are sometimes backwards or misspelt at this age. The important thing is that they have fun writing at home and are making an effort.

Give them reasons to write

- Write to each other. Write notes to your child and leave them in interesting places, like their lunch box. Ask them to write a reply.
- Help them email, text or write to family, whānau or friends.

- Show them how letters and words are formed.
- Work with them to put labels on special things – like the door to their room or their toy box.

TIP: Display their work. Be proud of it. Share it with others.

Talk about their writing

- Talk about the letters in your child's name and where the name comes from.
- Help them create a scrapbook with pictures.
- Encourage them to write stories under the pictures and talk to you about them.
- Ask them to write about pictures they draw - on paper or on the computer. Get them to tell you the story. Write or type the story under their writing if they want you to.

TIP: Talk about what your child writes. Be interested. If you don't understand what your child's picture or story is about, ask them to explain.

Encourage writing

- Have felt pens, pencils, crayons and paper available.
- Put magnetic letters on the fridge – ask what words they can make with the letters.

The New Zealand Curriculum: Mathematics at school

Your child will be learning to:

- solve mathematics problems up to 10, then up to 20
- count forwards and backwards with numbers up to 20, then up to 100, and know the number before and the number after any given number
- explore patterns, shapes and measurement
- organise and share objects
- talk about where they are, how they got there and where there are going – "I am in front of the tree", "I am behind you"
- find out interesting facts by asking and answering questions (eg how many chairs are there in the classroom?).

This is a small part of the skills and knowledge your child is learning in order to meet this standard. Talk to the teacher for more information about your child's learning.

Focus on number

During your child's first year at school, 60–80 per cent of mathematics teaching time will focus on number learning.

Mathematics at home - Talk together and have fun with numbers and patterns

Help your child to:

- find numbers around your home and neighbourhood – clocks, letterboxes, speed signs
- count forwards and backwards (microwave, clocks, fingers and toes, letterboxes, action rhymes, signs)
- make patterns when counting "clap 1, stamp 2, clap 3, stamp 4, clap 5..."
- do sums using objects or in their head (eg $2 + 3$, $4 + 1$, $5 + 4$, $6 + 2$)
- make up number stories – "you have 2 brothers and 2 sisters. There are 4 of them".

TIP: Mathematics is an important part of everyday life and there are lots of ways you can make it fun for your child.

Use easy, everyday activities

Involve your child in:

- preparing and sharing out food – "one for me and one for you". Ask, "How many for each of us?"
- talking about time – "lunchtime", "storytime", "bedtime"
- using words in everyday play like "under", "over", "between", "around", "behind", "up", "down", "heavy", "light", "round", "circle", "yesterday", "tomorrow". You can get library books with these words and ideas in them too
- asking questions like "How many apples do we need for lunches? What do you think the weather is going to be like today/tomorrow? What are we going to do next?"

TIP: Use lots of mathematics words as your child is playing to develop their understanding of early mathematics ("over", "under", "first, second, third", "round", "through", "before", "after"). Use the language that works best for you and your child.

For wet afternoons/school holidays/weekends

Get together with your child and:

- play with water using different shaped containers and measuring cups in the sink or bath

- bake – talk to your child about the recipe/ingredients using words like "how many?" "how much?" "more". Count how many teaspoons of baking soda are needed, how many cups of flour, how many muffin cases
- play dress-ups and getting dressed, use words like "short", "long", and ask questions like "what goes on first?", "what goes on next?", "does it fit?"
- create a 'sorting box' with all sorts of 'treasure' – bottle tops, shells, stones, poi, toys, acorns, pounamu (greenstone), cardboard shapes, leaves. Ask questions like "how many?", "which is the biggest group?", "which is the smallest?", "how many for each of us?"
- do jigsaw puzzles, play card and board games and build with blocks.

TIP: Being positive about mathematics is really important for your child's learning – even if you didn't enjoy it or do well at it yourself at school.