



Parent Guide Maths in EYFS

Empower every child as a
mathematician



Discover the fun of maths with your child!

This guide gives an overview of EYFS maths along with practical ideas, resources, and activities to enjoy maths together at home. It aims to help your child develop a love for mathematics—not just as a subject, but as a way to explore and understand the world around them.

Maths at Whitecote

At Whitecote we ensure every child truly understands mathematics. We break learning into small, manageable steps so that no child is left behind. Our approach helps children build confidence while developing fluency, reasoning, and problem-solving skills—so they not only learn maths, but love it too!

Early Learning Goals in Maths

There are two Early Learning Goals for mathematics: Number and Numerical pattern. This is what most children in Reception are expected to be able to do by the end of their first year at school.

Your child will explore numbers up to 10, quickly recognise small amounts, and learn simple number facts like doubles. They'll also practise counting beyond 20, comparing quantities, and discovering patterns in numbers—like even and odd numbers and ways to share fairly—building confidence and enthusiasm for maths along the way.

Fluency

Representing Number

In Reception, children learn that numbers can be shown in many ways—not just as numerals. Through games and hands-on activities indoors and outdoors, they practise recognising and making different amounts, building a strong understanding of numbers.



Counting

Counting is more than saying numbers! Children learn to count each object carefully, know that the last number tells them the total, and discover that objects can be counted in any order without changing the amount. It's all about exploring numbers and having fun along the way!

Recognising Amounts

An important skill for children is recognising small amounts without needing to count. This is known as subitising. At first, this is done using concrete objects, but as children progress, they learn to recognise groups of dots or objects in different arrangements and 'see' how many there are in their mind.

This skill is especially useful when children start adding and subtracting. Simple tools like dice are a fun way to practise recognising amounts before moving on to more varied arrangements.



Understanding That the Total Stays the Same

When children first start using numbers, they may not realise that the total number of objects doesn't change when the objects are moved. We help children practise this idea using a variety of objects, and tools like a tens frame are especially useful for moving counters around while seeing that the total stays the same.

Reasoning

Reasoning helps children explain their thinking, which makes it easier for them to understand the maths they are doing. It encourages them to think about how to solve problems, explain their methods, and consider different approaches.

In Reception, reasoning might include:

Deciding if statements are true or false, for example, "Adding one to a number always makes it smaller."
Spotting mistakes in sequences, such as "1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10."

Explaining how they know an answer or how they worked it out.

This develops children's confidence and helps them become thoughtful, independent mathematicians.

Problem Solving

Problem solving helps children use their maths skills in new situations and think creatively about how to find solutions. It encourages them to spot patterns, make predictions, and consider the best approach rather than just following steps.

In Reception, problem solving might include:

- Spotting, following, and creating patterns
- Estimating amounts of objects
- Predicting how many times they can do something in a minute
- Sharing objects between groups, especially when the number of groups changes but the total stays the same
- Finding different ways to make numbers, for example, 5 could be $5+0$, $4+1$, or $3+2$

This approach helps children become confident, independent thinkers and develop a deeper understanding.

Making Maths Fun at Home

You can help your child enjoy maths in everyday life:

Count objects like steps, coins, or cutlery.

Spot numbers in the environment, like doors, clocks, or plates.

Play games with dice, dominoes, hopscotch, or invent your own.

Ask questions like "How many altogether?" or "How many more?"

Encourage creative number ideas, e.g., five toes, six sides on a dice.

Do lots of baking – great for measuring and more/less.

Read books with maths themes, such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* or *One is a Snail, Ten is a Crab*.

These fun activities help children practise numbers, spotting patterns, and problem solving—building confidence and a love for maths.



Online Resources

NumBots: NumBots is all about every child achieving the "triple win" of understanding, recall and fluency in mental addition and subtraction, so that they move from counting to calculating. Your child will receive a log in to access these games at home

ictgames: A range of free games focusing on counting, ordering numbers, and basic addition and subtraction

<https://ictgames.com/mobilePage/eyfs.html>

Twinkl Go! EYFS Maths Games: A collection of interactive games, perfect for reinforcing classroom learning at home

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/twinkl-go/eyfs-twinkl-go/maths-eyfs-twinkl-go>