



Pre-reading skills

Presentation for Parents July 2025



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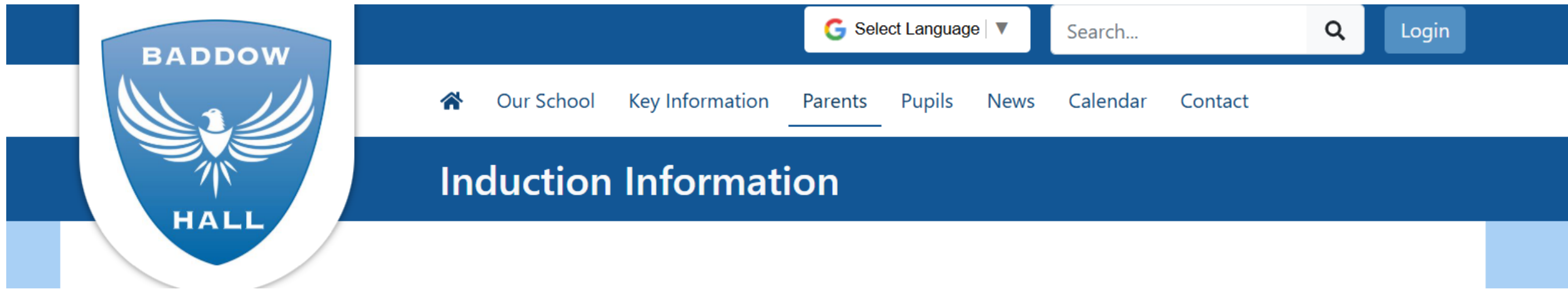




Our vision is for every child to make the best possible progress.

School Website

The presentation has been added to this page of the website.



What are pre-reading skills?

Pre-reading skills are the skills children need in order to help them to become a reader.

Many of these skills are learnt naturally, during the course of childhood, at home and in the nursery or preschool environment.

What research tells us...

- Children's brains experience the most growth in their first five years. In these early years, stimulation from books, and using books, stories and rhymes as a focus for playing, talking, and singing enhances the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional growth and development of children that extends far beyond childhood.
- We know that if children experience early shared reading they are more likely to continue to read as they grow up. Reading for pleasure in the early years has four times more powerful impact on a child's progress across the curriculum at age 16 than parental education or socioeconomic status.
- Children with strong pre-reading skills are more likely to become fluent readers by age 7.

Typical language skills development

Babies (by 12 months)	Toddlers (by age two)	Nursery age children (by the age of four)	School age (by the age of five)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicates through babbling, crying and gesturing• Responds to familiar words like 'bye-bye'• Start to understand simple words• Start to use simple words	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start to put two or three words together into simple sentences like 'Show me your nose'• Learn two or three words a day on average• Start to ask lots of questions that helps them to remember and learn words	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start to learn more complex meanings of words• Start to ask lots of questions about what words mean• Express their thoughts and feelings clearly to adults and children• Make careful choices about the words they are using and conform with grammatical rules on, for example, tenses and plurals• May still find some sounds difficult to use but are understood by most people• May stumble over words and sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Able to understand and talk with new people using well formed sentences• Ask lots of 'why?' questions• Understand longer and more complicated sentences• Use and understand most everyday words that adults use• Explain what has happened, and why, in an interesting way

End of Reception - Early learning goal

- Children at the expected level of development will: Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs; - Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending; - Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.
- Children at the expected level of development will: Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary; - Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories; - Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

End of Year 1 - Phonics screening check

- The checks consist of **40 words and non-words** that your child will be asked to read one-on-one with a teacher. Non-words (or nonsense words, or pseudo words) are a collection of letters that will follow phonics rules your child has been taught, but don't mean anything – your child will need to read these with the correct sounds to show that they understand the phonics rules behind them.

End of Year 2 – Key Stage One assessment

No longer statutory

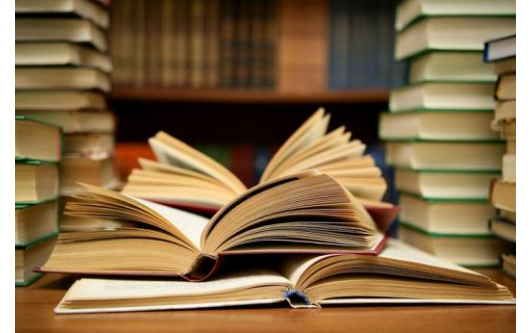
- The pupil can: read accurately most words of two or more syllables, read most words containing common suffixes, read most common exception words.
- In age-appropriate books, the pupil can: read most words accurately without overt sounding and blending, and sufficiently fluently to allow them to focus on their understanding rather than on decoding individual words, sound out most unfamiliar words accurately, without undue hesitation.
- In a book that they can already read fluently, the pupil can: check it makes sense to them, correcting any inaccurate reading, answer questions and make some inferences, explain what has happened so far in what they have read.

6 areas have been identified as pre-reading skills:

1. Print motivation
2. Print awareness
3. Phonological awareness
4. Vocabulary
5. Narrative skills
6. Letter knowledge

1. Print motivation

Being excited about and interested in books



What can you do?

- Make sure book sharing time is fun.
- For children with short attention spans, keep it short, but read more often.
- Read books you enjoy.
- Choose books about things that interest the child.
- Read with a natural, but cheerful voice.
- Be a role model.

2. Print awareness



Understanding that print on a page represents words that are spoken, knowing how to follow words on a page, and knowing how to hold a book.

What can you do?

- Allow children to handle the book and turn pages.
- Use your finger to point out words as you move across the page.
- Pointing out signs in your environment.
- Read books with large bold print.
- Introduce the cover and talk about the author and illustrator.

3. Phonological awareness



Understanding that words are made up of smaller sounds. Hearing and playing with smaller sounds in words. Phonological Awareness comes before phonics.

What can you do?

- Encourage your baby to babble, changing the beginning sounds.
- Sing songs.
- Clap along with the song.
- Use rhythm sticks and shakers.
- Do action rhymes.
- Learn nursery rhymes.
- For older children, substitute a non-rhyming word in place of the rhyming word and see if they notice the difference.
- Read books with rhyming texts.
- Play “Say it fast; say it slow.” Butterfly Butt er fly Turtle Tur tle

4. Vocabulary

Knowing the names of things, feelings, concepts, and ideas. Knowing the meaning of words and connecting words to objects, events, or concepts in the world.



What can you do?

- Any book will help with this, but choosing ones with words not used in daily conversation and nonfiction books are especially helpful.
- Label things.

5. Narrative skills

Being able to describe things and events. Being able to tell and understand stories.

What can you do?

- Talk with children about what you are doing.
- Ask them “What?” or other open-ended questions that cannot be answered with a simple “Yes” or “No.”
- Ask, “What happens next?”
- Allow young children time to respond.
- Be patient.
- Tell stories.
- Encourage pretend play.
- Let them help you tell flannel board stories.
- Read stories with a beginning, middle, and end.



6. Letter knowledge

Understanding that letters are different from each other. Recognizing letters and knowing that they have different names and sounds.

What can you do?

- Let babies play with shapes.
- Allow children to handle letter shapes.
- Learn the alphabet song.
- Read alphabet books and books about shapes.
- Books where you have to find things.
- Help your child identify the first letter in his/her name.
- Then find that letter in books, on signs, and other things in the environment.



Brain Development

Babies are born learning. From birth to age 3 are critical years for the development of language skills that are foundational for future learning success.

Parents are a child's first and most important teacher.

Language

The number of words that a child knows when he or she enters kindergarten is the most important predictor of a child's success or failure.

Reading aloud grows your child's vocabulary and introduces many words and concepts that you might not use in everyday conversation.

Knowledge

Books are a pleasure, yes, and they are also informative. You and your child can learn something new when you read aloud.



Why Read Aloud?

Love of Reading

Parents that read aloud demonstrate that reading is important, that reading is pleasurable, that reading is valued.

Bonding

Is there anything better than sharing a good book with a child in your lap?

Literacy Skills

Vocabulary. Phonics. Familiarity with the printed word. Storytelling. Comprehension. Reading aloud is invaluable for building literacy skills.

20 is plenty!

Children who read for 20 minutes a day will...

Improve
focus and
concentration

Have a world of
imagination and
creativity
opened to them

Have
stronger
writing skills

Improve and
strengthen
memory

Be exposed to
1.8 million
words a year

Have a
broad
vocabulary

Have better
general
knowledge

Improve
test results

Improve
communication
skills

Encourage
a love for
learning

Learn how to
develop
empathy

Improve
critical
thinking skills

Have
reduced
stress levels



We have put together a selection of activities that you might like to complete during the summer before you start school.

Make pizza bases from packet bread dough or from scratch. Have a selection of toppings. How many did you pick? Read the instructions together and talk about what to do.	Set up a jigsaw table with a jigsaw to do over the summer. Discuss the picture, colour, shapes and the types of pieces you are looking for. You could even do a few puzzles over the summer!	Go on a 'sign and print hunt'. Ask your child to point out signs they see when you are out walking or driving. Read the sign or print to your child and talk about what it says and means.	Play Bingo taking turns to be the caller. You could use numbers or pick names/words to have on your bingo cards.
Play "Say it fast; say it slow." Choose a word and then say it fast and slow. For example: Butterfly Butt er fly Turtle Tur tle	Take part in the library summer reading challenge. For more information, visit your local library or visit the following website: Summer Reading Challenge	Play different board games with your family (<u>e.g.</u> Snakes and Ladders, Ludo). Talk about the	Help your child identify the first letter in his/her name. Then find that letter in books, on signs, and other things in the environment.
Write a postcard to someone about a holiday or a trip you take. Your child can tell you what they'd like to write. Enjoy posting the card to someone special.	Have a Teddy Bear's Picnic outdoors or a Picnic Day indoors. Talk about the foods you will need to make and prepare. Sing songs on the picnic and play I spy.	Draw a character game. Draw the head and neck, fold to cover and pass to the next person. They draw the shoulders to waist, fold and pass it on. The last piece is to draw the legs and feet. Unfold and see the character you have created. You could give your character a name and make up a story about them.	Practise the alphabet song! You could play an alphabet game where you give an object for each letter of the alphabet. This would be a good game for a long car journey!

Great Baddow Library



Big School Meet Up



Event Description

Big School Meet Up – Get ready for big school! A fun relaxed session with a storytime, activities and a chance to meet other families with children who are starting school in September.

When

10:00AM - 11:00AM
Wednesday 27 August 2025

 [Add to Calendar](#)

Where

Great Baddow Library
27 High Street Great Baddow
Chelmsford

[Google Maps](#) 

Bookings

There's no need to book your place for this event. Just meet us at Great Baddow Library.

Phonics meeting

- TBC – September

