

## Mathematical development in early years using routines

**Maths opportunities take place throughout the day in all areas of your early year's provision. By identifying and utilising these opportunities you can make the most of them to develop children's mathematical understanding and knowledge.**

The more opportunities children have to see maths in all they do, the more they will use their skills and knowledge and the more confident mathematicians they will become.

Below are some simple suggestions to integrate maths across the areas and routines you use every single day.



### Steps or stairs

Consider numbering your stairs or steps and counting these as you travel up and down with the children. This could include the steps up to the slide. This is a simple addition but children will hear and see numbers and start to connect these further.

### Toilet cubicles/cots

Number the different cubicles or cots you have in the setting. Children will start to use the numbers as they get older and it will encourage you to use more mathematical language every day with the children and babies.

### Visual routines

From an early age using visual routines showing key parts of the day will help children to start to have a basic understanding of time and sequence. As the children get older they can create their own visual routines and order the activities for themselves.

This approach will also help children who may be struggling to settle and those who require additional support to make sense of their day, e.g. when they are going to be picked up and when they will have their lunch.

## **Mealtimes**

Preparing for mealtimes and during mealtimes, there are plenty of opportunities to integrate maths. Consider, when you set up the tables, encouraging children to work out how many seats they need, how many more do they need etc.

During mealtimes or snacks if you are cutting items up for children you can use mathematical language, e.g. halves, quarters. When pouring drinks ask if they want half a cup or a full cup, talk about how much is left in the jug. If you are sharing food out, ask the children to problem solve and work out how many pieces they need.

## **Getting dressed**

During the day children will be getting dressed and undressed in a variety of different ways, e.g. coats and shoes for outdoors, babies and toddlers for nappy changes etc.

This is an opportunity to include maths even from a young age. Babies and toddlers may have clothes removed temporarily for nappy changing or changed during the day if they get wet or dirty.

Counting buttons fastened, counting legs and arms into clothes as well as counting shoes and socks on will encourage children to hear and see more opportunities to count and use numbers. For older children, as they prepare to go outside talking about pairs of shoes/socks/gloves will help instil more maths language, as well as counting buttons on their coats.