

Maths at Home

As parents/carers, most of the opportunities that you have to 'talk maths' with your child will be at home. Having certain everyday items around your house will increase the chance for maths to crop up in conversations.

A prominent clock in the kitchen (or somewhere obvious to the children). If you can have an analogue and a digital clock, this is even better as being able to compare and understand the times on the two clocks will become an everyday habit to the children.

A traditional wall calendar. Calendars are a good way of getting familiar with counting days, but they also have subtle patterns in them. One of the columns will usually be the 7 times table. You can find other patterns by looking at the numbers along the diagonals, in square clusters of four, and so on.

Board games that involve dice and spinners. Familiarity with dice and spinners not only helps with counting but also builds an understanding of chance. And spinner games can also feature in a lot of maths problem solving questions.

A pack of traditional playing cards - and a few games up your sleeve (such as snap and Blackjack). Card games are a natural way of learning about sorting and chance.

Measuring jugs with scales. Your child will encounter these in school, so having them at home makes the children more comfortable with the idea. Collecting empty shampoo bottles etc will allow the children to create their own measuring jugs.

Dried beans, pasta or sweets. These are useful for counting large collections to investigate how many are left over if you scoop a large handful and divide them into twos, threes and so on.

A tape measure and ruler. Involve your child when measuring up for furniture, new curtains, DIY etc. If you make sure you hold the zero end of the tape, the children have to do the reading.

A family size bar of chocolate (the type that has four rows of eight chunks) This is great for talking about fractions and is a great motivator and good for rewards too.

Fridge magnets numbers and symbols. An impromptu way of bringing mathematical equations and questions into your home. Why not put a mystery question (eg $15 - 6 = ?$ or $2 \times 5 = ?$) on the fridge each night for the children to answer in the morning when they get up?

