**Ways that you can help your child to be school ready.**

**Sharing books, songs, poems and stories.**

If children listen to stories, they learn new words, develop ideas and concepts, stretch their imagination and begin to understand some of the basics of reading such as knowing that words carry meaning and are read from left to right, top to bottom. If children can then begin to re-tell familiar stories, they develop an understanding of characters, main events, beginnings and endings. All these things will help them develop into creative story tellers, story writers and wonderful talkers.

**Numbers and counting.**

Use everyday opportunities to develop your child's ability to count saying 1 number for 1 object, such as counting the stairs. Counting the potatoes /apples /plates, laying the table, how many knives and forks do we need, sorting the socks into pairs etc. Keep it fun.

**Being able to get dressed and undressed on their own**

Let your child getting dressed independently. Turn putting on their socks and shoes into a game by timing how fast they can do it.

**Talking**

Children love to talk all the time. They also love to ask questions. Talk is incredibly important for young children. It helps them organise their thoughts and feelings as well as use new words. Try asking your child questions which they have to answer with more than one word, such as, ‘What can you tell me’ or ‘What do you think questions’ or encouraging inquiry by using the term ‘I wonder’. Remember to take time to **listen** to your child. Believe it or not, children who are better talkers become better writers when they are older.

**Writing their name**

Parents / carers often ask if their child should be able to write their own name when they start school. The answer is it depends on your child. If your child is asking or showing an interest in writing their name, then help them. Model how to spell and write it. Remember to use an upper case letter for the first letter and lower case letters for the remainder of the name such as 'Thomas' not 'THOMAS' or 'thomas’. At Monks Abbey, we use cursive letter formation, so if you are able, encourage your child to try to form letters in that way too. There is a cursive letter guide on the reverse of this sheet.

If your child is showing no interest in writing, please don't make your child try to do it. The best preparation for early writing is developing good fine motor skills. A child who has strong fingers, will find writing much easier. Playing with dough, using tweezers, picking up small items using their thumb and first two fingers and learning to use scissors are all wonderful ways to strengthen fingers.

**Don’t Worry!**

All children do things and develop at their own pace. The most important thing of all is that your child is safe, happy and ready to learn.

