



**Cymru**  
National Day Nurseries Association

# Factsheet

## Foundation Phase - Number Hunt

Wales

# Foundation Phase – Number Hunt

We use mathematical skills in every aspect of our lives. Babies are born natural mathematicians wanting to compare objects, introducing mathematical language from an early age can foster a passion for maths. Ensuring practitioners praise children for having a go and persevering can further foster this love of maths. We know that children learn best when they are enjoying themselves and can become actively engaged in the task, the Foundation Phase environment is perfect for helping to develop their understanding through a wide range of contexts and experiences.

Incorporating activities that aid mathematical development engages, motivates, and allows children to think critically for themselves, is vital. Developing skills such as recognising and using numbers; understanding and using shapes, and measures; developing their own spatial awareness; recognising, creating and describing patterns, and developing mathematical vocabulary is crucial for young children. These early skills are essential for encouraging problem-solving abilities in children, providing a solid foundation for further mathematical learning.

Initial introductory tasks and activities must be followed by providing further opportunities for children to consolidate their learning, through practicing their new knowledge and skills, and increasing their competence and confidence. When you are developing your planning, remember to include mathematical vocabulary at all stages, as this will further support development and consolidation. Be sure to display the vocabulary and possible enabling statements, and questions, so that all staff can use them and think about sharing with families too.

## Learning objective

- To join in with a number hunt
- To allow children to express and communicate their ideas and feelings.

## Areas of Learning - (Skills and Range)

Mathematical Development

Range:

- Experience a mathematically-rich environment that allows children to explore and develop mathematical concepts and language

- Develop practical mathematical skills in a range of contexts
- Communicate in a range of mathematical contexts for a variety of purposes and audiences.

#### Skills:

- Listen to and join in with rhymes, songs, stories, and games that have a mathematical theme
- Use counting to solve simple mathematics problems in everyday and play situations
- Demonstrate an awareness of movement during their own physical activities and begin to describe position.

Literacy - e.g., mark-making, recording progress, using specific vocabulary, understanding and using simple questions, listening and responding to instructions.

Numeracy - e.g. counting, comparing and ordering numbers, mark-making to represent numbers, completing tables, matching pairs and pictures, using mathematical language.

## Resources

#### Essential:

- Plastic, wooden or cardboard numbers
- Number line (chalk, string.)

#### Desirable:

- Themed objects
- Related storybook.

#### Activity outline

All learning opportunities should be planned with the children's individual needs, interests, and learning characteristics in mind. A 'Number Hunt' creates excitement and mystery for the children, and engages them in a number recognition activity that they may not otherwise have shown interest in. You can be as creative as you want with the hunt in order to engage your children. You could tell a story that explains why the numbers/numbered objects are all scattered/hidden around the setting. There are a range of books you could use for this e.g. 10 little.... etc. You could play a video message from a familiar face or character, explaining or asking for help. This activity is something that can be easily linked to the interests of the children in your setting and re-designed again and again whilst being adapted to further develop the skills of the individual learners.

It is also important to note that some children may require longer with this activity, so you may wish to consider grouping children by prior knowledge and skills to ensure engagement from all; avoiding overwhelming those that may struggle as this could hinder the positive attitude to 'Maths', previously mentioned, which is so important.

## Continuous and enhanced provision

It is imperative that numbers are a constant staple within your setting to ensure that children are able to see and interact with numbers during their day.

- Provide real-life number lines with real objects. e.g. pebbles, lollipop sticks, bottles, etc.
- Allow children the opportunity to add loose parts to the number lines. E.g. numbered socks with pegs attached... No. 1 sock - 1 peg, no. 2 sock- 2 pegs, etc.
- Ensure you have numbers present outside as well as inside, use the outdoor resources. E.g. numbered stones, logs, numbered 'car park' spaces for numbered play vehicles
- Make measuring equipment widely available for children to use in a range of areas, e.g. using measures to mix paint, create potions, or record heights of towers/construction
- Add numbers into children's favourite activities, e.g. playdough, sand, and water
- Offer opportunities for children to practise their mathematical and numeracy skills in the role play area with money, measuring, counting, and shape opportunities
- Maintain a good range of number-related story and counting books for children to use
- Support children to count in sequence by role-modelling using rhymes and songs throughout daily routines
- Include numbers in care routine and transitions, e.g. counting whilst hand washing
- Share mathematical vocabulary being used in the setting with parents and families to further support its use across all environments and experiences for children.

## Focused task

Ensure children have developed an awareness and the ability to recognise numbers in print.

- Prepare for this activity by creating numbered objects to be hidden that are linked to children's interests and/or the theme you are currently following. These can be printed and laminated numbers or 3D objects with numbers written on them, e.g. laminated numbered dinosaurs, teddy bears with numbered t-shirts on; numbered farm animal toys, or numbered elves
- Hide the numbers/objects outside in places the children need to search for; under things, on top of things, behind, inside. This will encourage children to search well and use positional

language. If you have limited outdoor space, consider setting this up in your local park.

**Ensure a robust risk assessment is in place for a hunt in a public place**

- Explain to the children what a number hunt is and how you are going to do it as a group.
- To ensure everyone has equal opportunity, firstly tell the children they all have to find one number each. You may wish to give children a number to match
- Introduce the positional language here to support the start of the search, e.g. “You may need to look under the benches, behind the trees” etc. **Ensure approaches your children may take are included within your risk assessment**
- Tell the children once they have found a/their number they need to come back to a specific spot, this could also be linked to the story, and place their number down
- Once all children arrive back, ask them to describe where they found their number. You could also ask them where else they looked and encourage the use of the directional and positional language with modelling e.g. “Did you find it under the bench? Or was it on top of the bench?”
- Ask the group to see if they can place the numbers in order. Consider creating a number line that matches the theme to maintain engagement levels, e.g. pieces of track for trains. Where further support is required, have an already numbered number line on the floor for the children to match their numbers too
- This is a great opportunity to ask questions “What number do we need at the start?” “Does your number go after 3?” “Which is the largest number on the line? How do you know?”
- Consider finishing the activity with a song or rhyme that includes the numbers you have been using and ask the children to stand up/sit down when their number is mentioned.

## Welsh language development

- Counting – **cyfri**
- One – **un**
- Two – **dau**
- Three – **tri**
- Four – **pedwar**
- Five – **pump**
- Six – **chwech**
- Seven – **saith**
- Eight – **wyth**
- Nine – **naw**
- Ten – **deg**
- Where is... – **Ble mae...**
- Where was your number – **Ble oedd dy rhif di**
- Which number starts – **Pa rhif sy’n dechrau.**



Extension: What is 4 + 2? **Be ydi pedwar + dau?**

## Assessment opportunities

- Reciting and sequencing numbers
- Reading and writing numbers
- Counting.

### Extension activities

- Extend the range of numbers for children to find, e.g. go from 0-10 to 0-20
- Remove numbers from the hunt and discuss with children what may be missing when recreating a number line, e.g. remove the number 7. What's missing
- Use a variety of forms to represent the number, e.g. hide written numbers and pictorial representations
- Hide bags of objects for children to count and position the bag correctly on the number line
- Give children picture clues to the location of numbers. Set children the task of finding and recording the numbers in each location on a sheet, leaving the numbers where they are, and returning with a completed table.

## Further support and NDNA resources

- Celebrate Maths through play – NDNA Activity - <https://bit.ly/3Em7uW8>
  - Interactive number line – NDNA Activity - <https://bit.ly/31wMg9C>
  - Supporting maths using rhymes- NDNA Publication - <https://bit.ly/3ly4zSN>
  - Supporting your Mini Maths Explorers – NDNA Publication - <https://bit.ly/3l9vPRc>
  - The FPEN Zone on Hwb- Techniquest-Numeracy - <https://bit.ly/3xS3ZEA>
- A resource providing themed numeracy activities for Foundation Phase developed in line with the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework.

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