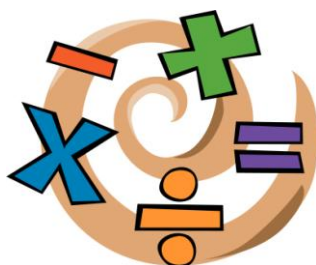**Mathematically speaking**

As well as being important to share training that we have attended with the rest of the staff, it is also helpful to share new knowledge learnt to you, as most of all great learning can happen at home.

Recently Kate attended training given by the British Association for Early Childhood Education, on developing mathematical thinking.

Evidence has shown that children are making basic errors later on in their schooling with addition and subtraction, not through a is understanding of the laws of adding on or taking away, but because a sound foundation for basic counting has not been fully learnt.

Our aim therefore is to ensure children learn to count accurately.

One to one correspondence

Children must sense that the number name is associated with an item.

Act as a role model by counting a group of items (in a row not circular) by touching and saying each corresponding number. Child listens and the adult counts.

Next ask the child to touch each item and count with you, in parallel. Child and the adult counts together.

Then allow the child to repeat and count by touching and saying numbers, checking they arrive at the number. Child counts and the adults listens

What if they get it wrong?

"Let's try again shall we?" and start again from the beginning.....

Ordinal and Cardinal

Through counting children can experience the difference between cardinal (the total number in a group) and the ordinal (the relation of one number to another). For example in a group of 9 items the number 9 is the cardinal and the positions 1st – 9th are ordinals (think of "order"). A number can only be 2nd if there is a 1st.

A playful attitude

The thinking processes which are part of play are the very ones required for later mathematical thinking. Play is problem posing and problem solving.