Children need to understand what is meant by 'How many are there?'

**Counting**

As you count objects together touch each one. This helps children to understand they are counting one thing at a time. Also, only count up to five at first and do not progress until your child can do this successfully. Gradually add one more number at a time. Counting opportunities arise with everyday objects such as cutlery, toys or even biscuits. Ask your child to guess how many objects there are before counting them together. It is important to build confidence through positive comments.

**Counting Games**

**Throwing games**
Games which involve throwing a number of objects, such as rolled up socks, in a waste paper bin or cardboard box can give good counting practice.

**Counting trays**
Use paper plates for this activity. Write a number on the plate. Provide a pile of dried pasta or bricks and show your child how to count the appropriate number onto each plate before he or she has a try. Underline 6 and 9 to avoid confusion.

**Counting everyday objects**
You will find many daily opportunities to count aloud together. Cooking is a wonderful way to introduce a child to practical maths and extend vocabulary. You can count baking cases, spoons of sugar or chocolate button decorations. Later you can use buns for simple addition and subtraction sums.