

MY READY FOR SCHOOL CHECKLIST

- ✓ I am happy to be away from my parents or main carer
- ✓ I can go to the toilet, wipe myself properly and flush unaided
- ✓ I know when to wash my hands and wipe my nose
- ✓ I know how to ask to go to the toilet so that everyone will understand me
- ✓ I can put my own shoes, coat, cardigan or jumper on and off by myself
- ✓ I can feed myself and have a drink by myself
- ✓ I have tried on my new uniform and new shoes

Even better if:

- ✓ I like interacting with other children
- ✓ I enjoy learning about and exploring new things
- ✓ I like to read stories and look at picture books
- ✓ I have a good bedtime routine so I'm not tired for school
- ✓ I can share toys and take turns
- ✓ I am able to sit still and listen for a short while
- ✓ I am happy to tidy up after myself and can look after my things
- ✓ I can follow instructions and understand the need to follow rules
- ✓ I am able to ask for help if I need it

Starting School



DON'T WORRY

Your child doesn't need to be able to read, write or add up before they start school. Children start school with a wide range of abilities and our teachers are skilled at helping children progress at their own level. What's most important is that you and your child have fun together in those preschool months and years – sharing stories, singing songs, playing games and talking.

SOME THINGS TO TRY

- ✓ Chat with your child about starting school. What do they think it will be like? What are they most looking forward to? Is there anything they're unsure or worried about?
- ✓ [Look at our school's website together and talk about the pictures.](#)
- ✓ Find photos of you and other family members at school and chat about happy memories from your own school days.
- ✓ [Read books together about starting school.](#)
- ✓ If your child has a particular worry, talk about these concerns with your child and with the class teacher. Provide reassurance by discussing what to do and who to tell in these situations.
- ✓ [If your child has a favourite security toy, blanket or dummy, try to get them used to being without it during the day.](#)
- ✓ If your child has naps, try phasing this out. Maybe offer a down time after lunch rather than a nap.



THE FIRST FEW WEEKS

Many children settle into school life easily, while others take longer. Don't worry if your child is tearful and clingy for the first few days – it's quite normal. Although you might feel terrible leaving them, they will most likely be playing quite happily within a few minutes.

After School

If your child seems exhausted at the end of the day, let them have some quiet time or even a nap when they get home. If they're starving hungry, a healthy snack and drink can help restore energy.

Let your child get used to school life before introducing after-school activities. It's a good idea to keep the first few weekends quiet, too, as they will likely need time to recharge, just as we do when we start a new job or a big project.

Keep Talking

Keep talking to your child about their feelings about school and put aside some special time to chat about their day. Walking to school or, if you have to drive, parking a little bit further away, can be an excellent opportunity to talk about their experiences.

Establish a friendly relationship with your child's class teacher. They're always available to chat at the end of the day and important messages can be shared in the Home-School Diary, which is provided by the school. Your child's teacher will be able to reassure you about most issues that come up. If you do have any concerns, raise them early to prevent them from developing into bigger problems.



SELF CARE

Going to the toilet



Support your child to be confident about getting to the loo in time and wiping properly, using toilet paper rather than moist wipes.

Do you have a different phrase for going to the toilet at home? Teach your children to ask using standard English – “Can I go to the toilet please?”

Washing their hands

Chat about the importance of good handwashing with soap and water, especially after going to the toilet or before eating food. Make sure that your children can wash their own hands and dry them

Feeding themselves

Free school meals are available to all children from Reception to Year 2 and children having hot school dinners need to be able to use a full-sized knife and fork and carry a tray.



If your child is taking a lunchbox, make sure they can open it as well as any containers and packets inside.

SELF CARE

Dressing and Undressing



Let your child practise putting on their school clothes, taking them off and folding them neatly, especially if there are fiddly fastenings such as buttons and zips.

Clothes with elastic waistbands and shoes with Velcro® are easier to handle for young children.

Teach your child tricks such as putting labels at the back and holding cuffs to stop sleeves riding up.

Tidying up

Get your child into the habit of hanging their coat up, putting their toys away, clearing the table, and so on, to prepare them for doing these things at school.



Why not turn it into a game? We often use a piece of music to indicate tidy up time and motivate children to help. Try this at home and ask which song your child would like. ‘Mission Impossible’ is a popular one!

YOUR FIRST WEEK CHECKLIST

- Remember that the children have a staggered start in September. Ensure that you know when your child needs to be in school and make sure that you are on time.
- Drop your child and pick them up from their classroom door – go through the blue gates to the right as you enter the school site. It is helpful if you let your child know who is picking them up each day.
- Ensure that your children are dressed in their school uniform and have a named water bottle and a coat. A second set of uniform, including underwear, in a small bag is also helpful in case of toileting accidents.
- You can order free school lunches for your child during the home visit but, if you want to provide a packed lunch from home, make sure that your child knows what is inside and that it is nut-free.
- Please put name labels on absolutely everything! Show your child where the labels are and make sure they are sewn or stuck somewhere that's easy for them to find.



BEING PREPARED

If your child has already spent time in a childcare or preschool setting, they're probably already well on the way to having the social and practical skills they need to succeed at school. They're used to spending time apart from you, mixing with other children, taking instructions from and communicating with other adults, taking some responsibility for tidying up after themselves and looking after their own belongings.

Don't worry if your child hasn't attended a childcare setting or preschool. Playing with other children, whether friends and family members, or other children at the park or soft play area, is all good practice for forming friendships with classmates at school. Often children who don't know one another will make friends very easily, but if your child struggles, teach them some useful phrases such as "can I join in?" or "do you want to share?".

School Routine



As the start of term approaches, try to get into the school routine, so your child gets used to getting up, going to bed, and having meals and snacks at the times they will on school days. Bath time and stories instead of TV and tablet games all help children to wind down before bedtime. Making time in the evening to chat about your day for 10 minutes can be a lovely routine for sharing fun times and any worries. Nutritious meals and plenty of sleep will help them to concentrate, learn and thrive at school.