



Getting ready for School



Starting school is a major event in your child's journey to independence and maturity, and it can be liberating as well as daunting for both of you. There are some things that can help prepare your child, and yourself for this major milestone.

Boost your child's confidence

Starting school can be a very anxious time for your child and anything you can do to boost your child's confidence and remove their fears will make the transition more enjoyable. A child that feels confident about going to school will do better than a child who is nervous.

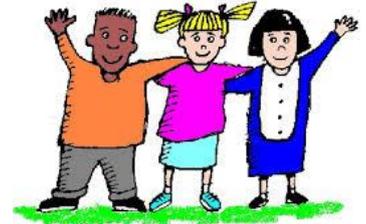


- Make an effort to talk positively to your child about school. If you tell your child "You are really going to enjoy school" then they will probably believe you.
- Talk to them about how exciting it will be to meet other children, play on the playground equipment and to be learning new things at school.
- Tell stories about what you enjoyed at school and the fun things you did.
- Do allow your child to tell you about any fears that they might have. Don't dismiss any fears - things that seem obvious or silly to an adult can seem like terrible obstacles to a young child.
- Find stories in the library where the characters go to school such as Topsy and Tim, Spot goes to school, Ilama Ilama misses mama.

Prepare your child to build relationships

Being at school is about being with other people - other children and of course adults in the shape of the school staff. Starting school for the first time means coming face to face with a number of unknown children.

- Take your child to fun public areas where they are likely to meet a number of other children - such as play parks. This will get them used to other children.
- Help your child learn how to share and take turns.



Building practical skills

In the run up to school here are some things that your child should be able to do when they start school. Please encourage your child to be independent.

- Be able to put on and take off their coat.
- Dress your child in clothes that allow them to be independent such as zips, velcro and avoid buttons and laces that they can't tie!
- Go to the toilet independently, flush the toilet and wash their hands.
- Drink from a cup.
- Tidy away toys.
- Use a tissue.
- Respond to instructions given by an adult
- Ensuring your child goes to bed at an appropriate time and has a substantial amount of sleep.



Helping your child with Maths at home

Count everything!

To help your child to develop an understanding of number and shape you can

- count steps as you walk
- count peas on a plate
- count people
- find numbers on cars, houses
- Point out numbers and set your child a challenge to see how many they can find!



- Guess who has the most sweets, potatoes, chips or sausages.
- Sing counting rhymes together.
- Let your child explore the coins in your purse; Sort coins into groups and talk about who has the most.
- Compare their shape and size.
- Teach your child to recognise simple shapes; Squares, circles, rectangles, triangles. Point out different shapes around the home.
- Count how many circles you can find on your walk to the shop.

Talk about time during the day



Talk to your child about the different times of day, week or year

- Time to get up
- time for nursery
- time to eat
- time to go to bed etc
- Talk about the days of the week and what you do on those days.
- Talk about tomorrow and yesterday.
- Talk about the months in the year
- The four seasons
- Special times e.g. Christmas, Easter, Birthdays, Diwali, Chinese New Year etc.

Sorting

Sorting cutlery into a cutlery tray and laying the table, pairing up socks etc. are all good activities that help to develop matching skills. Sort toys or everyday objects by size, shape, colour, weight etc.

Use Mathematical Words

How many?

First next last pointed round tall short

High low same different deep shallow heavy light.

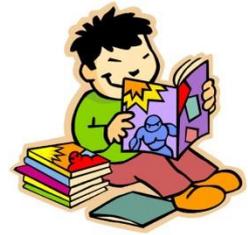
Full empty hard soft wide narrow thick thin.

Longer shorter bigger smaller heavier lighter.

Re

Reading to your child has been proven to have many benefits for your child. Show your child how to use a book properly

- Which is the right way up?
- Where does the story start?
- Which side of the page do you start from?
- Talk about what is happening in the pictures.
- Ask your child to point to different objects and describe them in words.
- Follow the words and pictures with your finger as you read or talk to your child.
- Where does the story end?



Read everything and anything!

- Labels on packets
- road signs
- road and house names
- shop names
- If not already a member, join the local library, it's free and exciting for children to choose new books each time they visit.
- Remember picture books without words are proper books!
- Children like repetition and will often go back to their favourite stories or rhymes again and again.
- Talk to your child about which stories or rhymes they like best.
- Nursery rhymes, poems and songs are important for memory development and the enjoyment of rhythm within words.
- Use role play of characters, how they would speak such as the troll from the 3 Billy Goats Gruff, what does he say? What type of voice would he use?
- Encourage your child to act out and sing favourite rhymes or songs.
- Make up simple stories or rhymes with you child.



Early Literacy

- As most writing will be in lower case letters it is useful if you can use these at home. A good start is for your child to write their name correctly, starting with a capital letter followed by lower case letters; William
- Meaningful conversations with your child by answering in full ALL of their WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY, and HOW questions!
- Asking your child to explain their thinking e.g. Why do YOU think the water is brown?

- Making and having an alphabet chart at home and pointing to the letters as you sing the ABC song. Take turns with your child to be the pointer and/or singer.
- Picking one alphabet letter per week and looking for it everywhere (books, store signs, bus logos, etc.)
- Practising the sound the letter makes and words that start with the sound e.g. 'A' is for a, a , alligator.
- Practising how to form that letter using a variety of tools (using your bodies, drawing it in sand, making it with play dough, pieces of sticks, fabric...ANYTHING!)