



## School readiness tips for parents and carers

When children first start school, our staff are on hand to ensure they settle nicely in order to develop at their own pace. A key part of this involves encouraging your child to become independent.

The following tips will help your child become more independent. Have fun with them!

- ✓ Play games to encourage turn-taking, waiting, sharing and coping if you lose a game. Board games, card games and sorting games are good for this and will also develop language.
- ✓ Sing nursery rhymes together. Share a book together, let your child retell parts, turn the pages and talk about the pictures.
- ✓ Walk like an animal – elephant, penguin, frog etc. Use different surfaces, steps or slopes. Walk as much as you can, avoid using the buggy where possible to build strength, balance and stamina.
- ✓ Strengthen little hands by squeezing sponges, painting and drawing, fastening containers, using pegs. Play with dough, help with cooking and gardening where safe, fold the laundry.
- ✓ Help them become independent when dressing – show them what to do, ask them to copy. Let them do a bit more each time.
- ✓ Send them to school wearing shoes / trainers without laces until they are able to tie laces independently.
- ✓ Help your child become familiar with their lunch or snack box if they have one, be able to open or close it, be able to use cutlery and drink from an open cup as well as they can. Eating at a table can be unusual for some so it is worth letting them experience this too.
- ✓ Encourage independent toileting, working at the child's individual level and at their pace.
- ✓ Practise putting on and taking off their school uniform. Don't forget the shoes, socks and buttons! Piling up clothes in one place will help avoid losing anything.
- ✓ Practise the route to school. Talk about what the routine will be, for example get ready for school, walk to school together, say goodbye to mummy/daddy/carer, play and learn at school, home-time, walk back home, etc. Remember to tell them what **you** will be doing whilst the child is at school, and that you will see each other again after school.
- ✓ Give your child a photo or memento of home so that they feel connected to their most familiar environment and will be reminded that you will be reunited soon.
- ✓ If your child has a comforter such as a dummy, blanket or bear get them used to putting it in their bag when they are not using it. This is a good way for them to independently know where it is and how they can access it if they need it.

The following document, although a little date, is a handy guide to help parents understand early child development:

[http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2015/04/4Children\\_ParentsGuide\\_2015\\_FINAL\\_WEBv2.pdf](http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2015/04/4Children_ParentsGuide_2015_FINAL_WEBv2.pdf)

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