

Transitions: Supporting your child on their journey from Early Years setting to Reception Class

Starting school is an exciting time for children and their parents, although change can be a daunting prospect for many of us, especially for young children.

It is likely that the transition journey for your child this year will be slightly different from what you had originally hoped or planned for; however, your child won't know this and will most likely take things at face value. There are lots of things that you can do to help prepare your child for the move to school.

If your child's school is close by, incorporate the route you plan to take to school during your daily walk. When you get to the school gates, talk about where your child's classroom might be and where the playground is. Talk about the things you see on your journey; "left at the postbox and up past the shop".



Go on this journey together

Make finding out about your child's new school a journey of discovery for you both. Look at the School's website, Facebook page and prospectus.

Talk about the photographs together; using the teachers' names, helping them visualise these new important people in their life.

Sharing books

Read books about starting school with your child. Stories are a great way of introducing new things to children.

I am too Absolutely Small for School (Charlie and Lola) by Lauren Child

Starting School by Janet and Allen Ahlberg

Topsy and Tim Start School by Jean and Gareth Adamson

Come to School too, Blue Kangaroo! by Emma Chichester Clark

Talk to your child about the things they will need when they go to school. Build the excitement for your child by looking online for school shoes and uniform.

This will help to reinforce to your child this change is something to look forward to.

Talking about feelings

How do you feel about going to school?

What are you most looking forward to?

What do you think School will be like?

Are you worried about anything?



Be prepared

Start practicing the school morning routine - for you and your child.

Consider introducing a visual timetable which includes pictures, symbols or photos of key morning tasks; brushing teeth, getting dressed, eating breakfast and walking to school.

Visit for some further ideas

<https://connectability.ca/visuals-engine/>

Talk about your own experiences

Share your own happy and exciting memories of being at school. Share photographs of you and other family members in their school uniforms.

If you have older children remind them to talk positively about school when in front of their younger sibling.

Becoming familiar

If you already know other children who will be starting Reception at the same time as your child, why not arrange a Facetime or WhatsApp chat with them.

This may help your child to become familiar with the concept that they will be starting school with their peers, some of which they may already know.

The countdown to school

Together with your child create a 'timeline' to help them understand how many days are left until they start school. You could mark off each day – or even add fun things to do and see as the countdown progresses.



Learning new skills

Help your child to learn new skills which they may need when at school.

When having school lunches children need to balance a dinner tray with drinks and meals – practice this by making it into a game at home.

Other 'games' you could play are racing to change in and out of their 'PE Kit' or having a go at opening lunchboxes and food packets. Keep it fun!



Building Independence

School readiness is not all about your child's reading, writing and numeracy skills.

Support your child to practice independence skills such as putting their shoes on, using the toilet and washing their hands, using a tissue, getting dressed and undressed. Do not worry if your child can not complete all these tasks independently, some children may need lots of time to learn these skills.

This is me...

Ask your child to help you complete an 'All about me' which will go to school.

Ask them to draw a picture of themselves and write down their replies to the questions on the document.

It is important that children feel that their contributions are valued, explain to your child that what they have to say to their new school is important.

Key Points

- Be honest with your child, acknowledge their feelings. Dismissing their worries could cause confusion and added worry. It is OK to feel a bit worried about new things.
- Keep positive, especially in front of your child. Not all of us remember school fondly. Try not to let your own feelings about school impact upon your child negatively.

Useful Links

Talking to your child about their feelings:

[How to talk to your child about emotions - CBeebies - BBC](#)

The Hungry Little Minds project:

<https://foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Hungry-Little-Minds-Launch-Toolkit-updated-version.pdf>

Some more practical ideas for parents:

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zrynnrd?xtor=CS8-1000-%5bDiscovery_Cards%5d-%5bMulti_Site%5d-%5bSL09%5d-%5bPS_CBEBIES~N~~A_PlanningForTransitionWhenSchoolsAreClosed

PACEY's guide for parents:

[Being school-ready | PACEY](#)

Getting ready for school:

[Getting ready for primary school | Oxford Owl](#)

Supporting children with SEND - Council for Disabled Children:

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachemnt/Supporting%20Children%20with%20LD%20%26%20ASD%20with%20COVID%20Isolation.pdf>