

Getting Ready for School

This handout has been drawn up for parents to help improve the transition process for children starting school.

This handout will help to support your child so that they are ready to start school with a smile in September.



Preparation

Starting school is an exciting time for young children and their parents, but at the same time, it can be a daunting time. Within any year group starting school children will have a wide range of abilities and will come to school with an array of different experiences. Your child's reception teacher will be skilled at helping children progress at their own level and pace.

Children do not need to be able to read, write or do sums before they start school. What's most important is that they are confident, social and have the practical skills they need to enjoy school.

By being at the kindergarten children moving on to school have experienced an and built on an array skills and are already well on their way to succeed. They are 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.

Skills Needed for School

To support you in getting your child ready for September we have provided a list of things that it would be helpful for your child to be able to do when they start school.

Communication and language

- Have strong social skills- Encourage your child to use simple sentences to express their wants and needs. Use open questions to develop vocabulary.
- Share and take turns
- Follow simple instructions
- Recognise and read their own name (this does not mean they have to be able to write it).

Emotional development

- Tidy up things they have used
- Lose at a game (this may seem a strange request, but many children go to school never having lost a game due to very kind family members letting them win. It can come as quite

a shock when they get to school and another child wins, some children find it hard to cope with this first experience of losing).

- Can cope emotionally with being separated from their parents-make sure to attend the open day sessions at their child's new school, giving them a chance to meet their teacher and friends.
- Parents to encourage a positive outlook about starting school
- Confident in talking to other children when playing
- Shows confidence in asking adults for help
- Confident in expressing when they feel sad, angry or lonely
- Independently play on their own

Self- Care



- **Going to the toilet**

Support your child to be confident about getting to the toilet in time and wiping properly.

- **Washing their hands**

Chat about the importance of good handwashing with soap and water, especially after going to the toilet and before eating. A good way of showing how germs can linger is to let your child cover their hands in paint (pretend germs!) and then try and wash it all off.

- **Dressing and undressing**

Let your child practice putting on their school clothes, taking them off and folding them neatly in preparation for PE lessons, especially if there are fiddly fastenings such as shirt buttons and zips, Clothes with elastic bands and shoes with Velcro are easier for children to master. Teach children the trick of always putting labels at the back. If they have trouble putting on their coat use the flip trick shown below (the butterfly children love putting on their coats this way)

- Put their coat upside down on a table or the floor, they can then put their hands in the armholes and flip their coat over their head...give it a try!



- Another trick to help children put their shoes on the correct feet is to put matching stickers or designs with permanent marker on the inside rim of each shoe. Then your child can place their shoes down so that the sticker/design are touching each other....hey presto correct feet!!!



- **Feeding themselves**
Free school meals will be available to all children from reception to year 2, but many schools will offer the option of packed lunches too. Children having school dinners need to be able to use a full-size knife and fork and carry a plate or tray. If your child is taking a lunchbox, make sure they can open it as well as any containers inside.
- **Using a tissue**
Introduce the routine of 'catching it, bin it, kill it'. Catching their sneeze or runny nose in a tissue, putting it in the bin straightway, then washing hands to kill germs. Encourage children to cough into the crook of their elbow or again into a tissue. Some children find nose blowing difficult. To help play a game to practice nose control- by blowing a feather in the air.

Your child's reception teacher will not expect all children to come into school already reading and writing. However, there are many early skills that can be done now to build a strong foundation for supporting your child for when they do start doing reading, writing and maths.

Such as:

- Developing language skills – so much of the Early Years Curriculum is language based, it is really important that every child is able to communicate and develop a good vocabulary. Great ways to help with this are to just chat about things you see in the garden or on your daily exercise, sing songs and rhythms, share books together and introduce new words each day.
- Develop gross motor skills (big body movements and a strong core) – lots of large outdoor play and climbing opportunities will strengthen gross motor skills. Doing yoga activities will support a strong core (cosmic kids' yoga on YouTube is great for this as well as a good old dancing session). Further activities to develop gross motor skills could be games involving throwing and catching, large chalk drawings and homemade obstacle courses.
- Jigsaws – good for pattern spotting and supporting hand eye coordination and are great for developing pre reading skills.
- Singing nursery rhymes – we know children respond really well to music and they love joining in with pop songs. However traditional nursery rhymes are great for helping children understand the rhythm of language and begin to hear the difference between sounds. This will really help them when they start to learn letter sounds at school.
- Developing fine motor skills (small body movement) through activities such as playdough, baking, threading, doing up buttons, using scissors.

How to develop your child's numeracy and literacy?

Numeracy

Out and about

- Count forwards and backwards from given numbers.
- Count the number of red cars.
- Read the numbers on letter boxes.
- Read speed limit signs and numbers in number plates. If your child cannot read two-digit numbers, simply get them to recognise the digits.
- Use positional language such as left, right, forwards and backwards.

At home

- Incidental, everyday learning experiences can help young children build fundamental understandings of mathematical ideas that will enable them to acquire important mathematical skills upon school entry. Simple tasks that will build prerequisite ideas include:
- Cook- measure quantities required and discuss how long it takes to cook different items. This will develop important measurement skills.
- Set the table and discuss the number of plates, knives and forks required. This promotes one-to-one correspondence which is required for counting.
- Sort the laundry according to different colours or sizes or match socks- this also promotes one-to-one correspondence.
- Use cups in the bath and find out how many cups fill larger containers. This develops understandings related to volume.

- Play card games such as 'snap' or 'memory' to match numbers and groups of objects. Play board games.

Reading

Parental involvement has been shown to be a key predictor of a child's literacy ability. In fact, early involvement results in more profound and positive affects in terms of a child's academic performance. We know that reading skills and habits can be developed in the early years between birth and age five. There are many things that parents can do at home to cultivate essential pre-requisite reading skills

- Provide access to a variety of books and reading material (newspapers, comics, timetables, magazines)
- Engage in songs, rhymes, chants and oral stories
- Develop 'print awareness' by Identifying the cover, author and illustrator of books.
- Identify the components of a book (cover, title, words, sentences)
- Show children how you read from left to right and top to bottom
- Discuss unfamiliar vocabulary with your child.
- Discuss the plot of stories. Predict what will occur next.
- After reading a story, ask questions to check your child has understood the story.
- Read non-fiction books on topics that are of interest to your child. Encourage them to recall facts from the book.
- Re-read familiar stories- allow your child to join in and retell the story.
- Encourage your child to retell stories.
- READ, READ, READ with your child every day!

Connecting with Your Child's School

Radnor Park Kindergarten connecting with schools

Summer the Butterfly Room Leader will make first contact with your child's school at the end of May and speak to the reception teacher. This first point of contact will be to discuss the children due to attend the school and if possible, ask for the children to be paired up with a familiar friend. We will also ask for photos of the school, reception teacher and of the classroom.

It is important to share information on your child's development and current interests with their new school upon starting.

To enable this, during the month of June and July, the Butterfly team, will be writing up your child's last progress assessment. This will provide a helpful baseline for your child's reception teacher and towards supporting the transition process. Once completed Chloe will send a copy to you and a copy to your child's designated school.

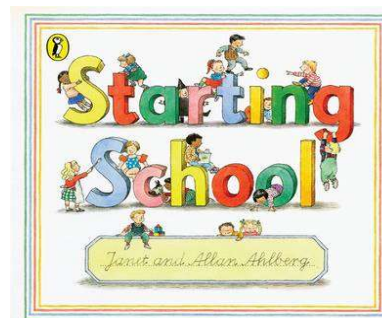
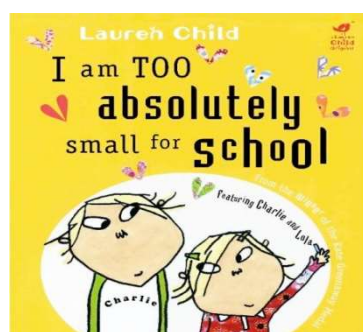
Schools connecting with parents

Your child's reception teacher will organise a home visit and contact you about an induction visit for children to meet their teacher and spend time in the classroom.

Final tips

- 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 are unsure or worried about?
- Look at the school's brochure, prospectus or website and talk about the pictures. Some schools are adding virtual viewing of their classrooms onto their websites.
- 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 seems anxious about school, try focussing on things they'll like best – maybe the sandpit, playhouse or new friends. Perhaps they have some friends from kindergarten who will be starting reception at the same time.
- Practice the school morning routine, including getting dressed and eating breakfast in time to leave.
- Where possible, practice the school run so that you're both prepared for the school morning journey.
- Play some fun listening and doing games to help with following instructions, such as, 'Simon says' or 'Can you find'.
- Help to develop your child's independence and a 'I can do' attitude by giving them a few everyday responsibilities. Perhaps they could lay the table, feed a pet or put their own laundry away.
- Teach them some useful phrases such as 'Can I join in' or 'Do you want to share?'
- If your child has a particular worry – perhaps about wetting themselves, not liking the food, or if they hurt themselves – talk about these concerns with your child and with the reception teacher. Provide reassurance by discussing what to do and who to tell in these situations.
- favourite security blanket or toy, try to get them used to being without it during the day.
- Talk to the class reception teacher to find out if your child is allowed to bring their item in and leave it in a tray or on their peg.

Picture books about going to school that may be helpful.



As well as

Going to School. From the Osbourne Book of First Experiences by Anne Civardi and Stephen Cartwright

Harry and the Dinosaurs go to School by Ian Whybrow and Adrian Reynolds

I want my Mummy by Tracey Corderoy

Lucy and Tom start school by Shirley Hughes

Topsy and Tim Start School by Jean and Gareth Adamson

All about me sheet

The 'All about me' sheet invites parents and children to share what they would like the school to know about them, the school can use the sheet as an opportunity to appreciate, value and build on children's unique experiences.

Enjoy making this book together

There are headings on some of the pages but you can add your own page if you want to. There are also some ideas of information you may like to include but just include what you think it is important. You can put photos and drawings in too.

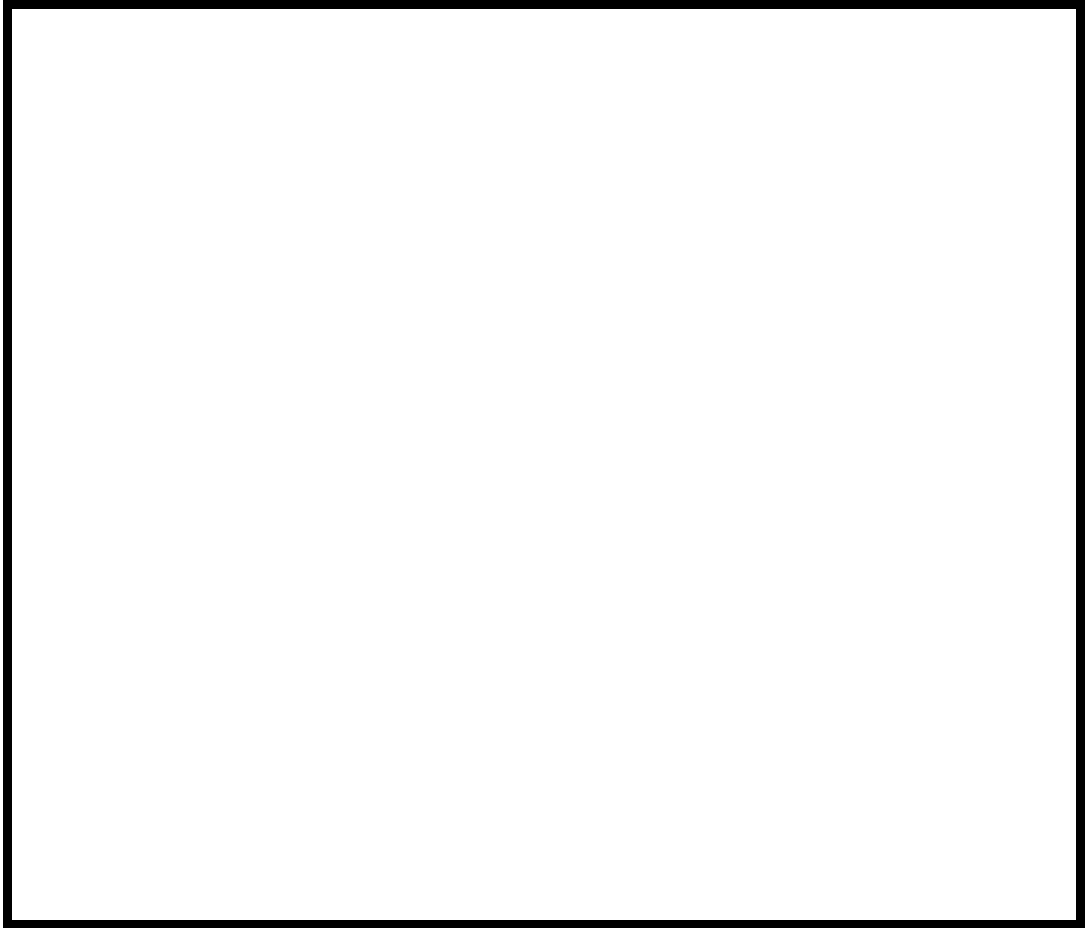
My all about me



Hello my name is:

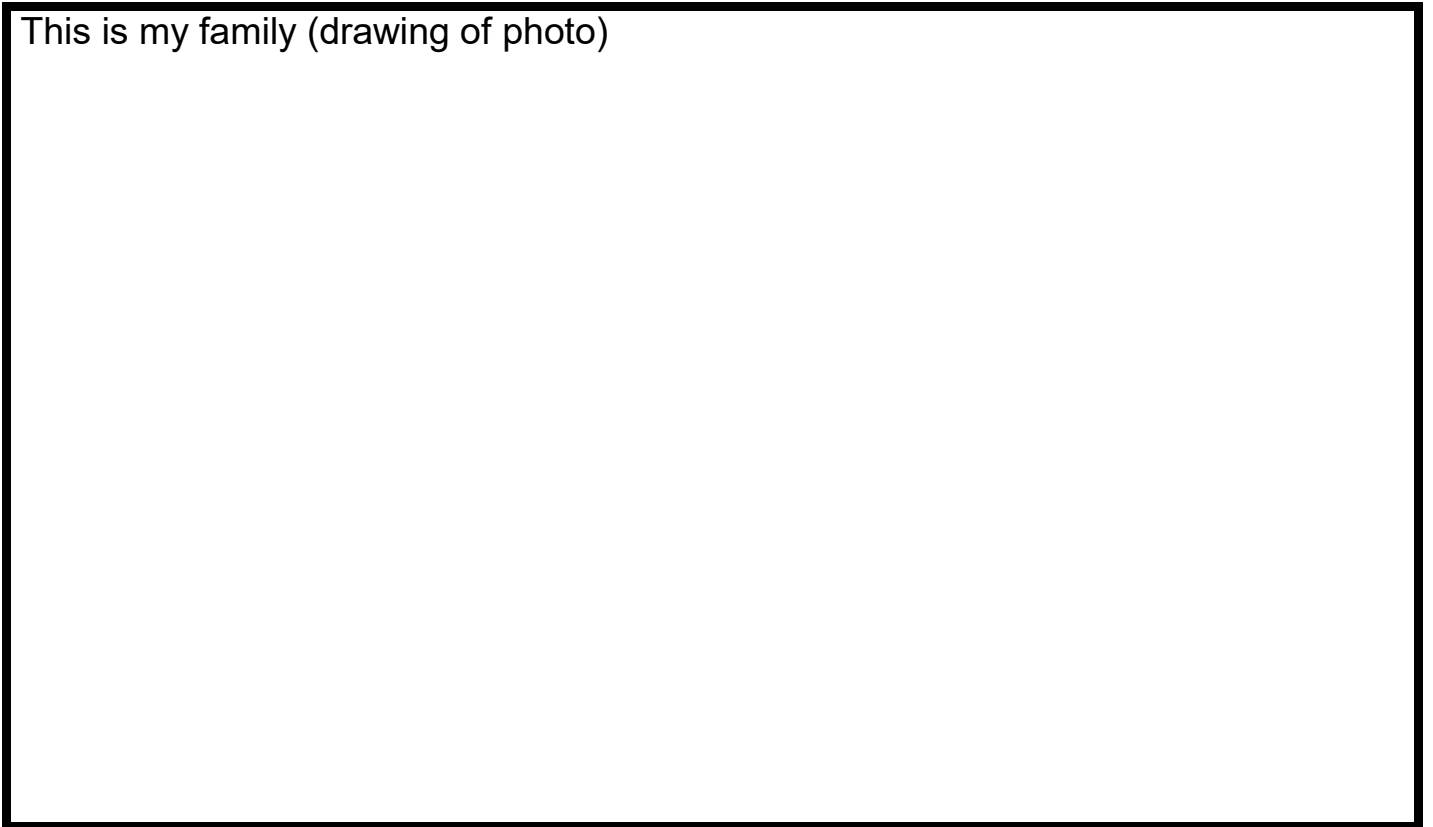
I preferred to be called:

This is me

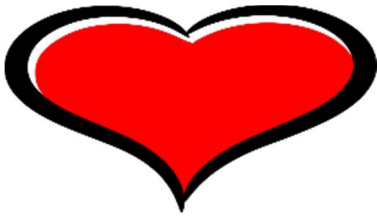


My birthday is:

This is my family (drawing of photo)



I live with:.....
.....
.....



Family pet:

Special people in my life:

My favourite activities:

Things I like and enjoy

My favourite toy:



My favourite book:

My favourite song:



What motivates and excites me:

Things I don't like or may worry me

Things I don't like:

Things that can upset, frighten or worry me:

My medical needs



Medical needs or allergies:

Additional information my teacher may need to know:

How I feel about starting school

What I'm looking forward to:

Worries or concerns I may have:

Things I may need help with:

What helps to make me feel secure and confident: