



Getting Ready for Primary 1

Starting school is exciting for children and their parents or carers. You may also have some questions about how to get ready for school, so we have written this guide to help you prepare your child for the best possible start.



The key skills in this leaflet will help your child settle into school happily and confidently. We recommend you read it with them and practise anything they feel unsure about.

Getting dressed and undressed independently

By the time your child starts school, they should be able to take off and put on their own coat, jumper and shoes. To help your child feel more confident, choose clothes with big buttons, easy fastenings, elasticated waists, and shoes with Velcro fastenings.

Help them practise with their buttons, zips, shoes and coats at home. Your child will be excited to wear their new school uniform, so it will be a fun game to practise putting it on by themselves before they start school.

Buttons can be tricky, so Sam is practising doing up the buttons on his school polo-shirt before he starts Primary 1.



Enjoying books and reading

Your child will be learning to read in Primary 1. Their teacher will read them stories, and they will spend time looking at books with their friends and teachers. You can encourage your child to enjoy books before they start school. Share books together and talk about the story and pictures. You can also let your child hold the book and turn the pages.

Ella enjoys reading books at school. At home, she loves listening to her parents read books to her.



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Recognising their own name

Your child's coat peg, tray, uniform and books will be labelled with their name. They will be able to find them more easily if they can recognise their name.

You can help your child to start recognising the letters in their name by showing them what their name looks like. They can also begin to practise writing the letters of their name, remembering to start with a capital letter and then use lower case.

Sofia has found her name card at school. She found it quickly because she learnt to write it at home with her parents.



Using the toilet independently

Children will go to the toilet independently when they are at school. To help your child feel more confident, encourage them to practise using the toilet by themselves before they start school. They should be able to flush the toilet and remember to wash and dry their hands afterwards.

If your child has an accident at school, an adult will help them. It is a good idea to bring in a spare set of clothes in case your child needs them. Please remember to label their spare clothes.

Sam has been to the toilet by himself. He remembered to flush it and then wash and dry his hands.



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Using cutlery independently



At lunchtime, children will be using cutlery to eat their food. We also encourage good table manners. There will always be adults to help your child, but they will feel more confident if they can use a knife and fork before they start school. Help your child to use their cutlery correctly at home and encourage them to say “please” and “thank you”.

Sofia finds it easy to cut up her food by herself. She was pleased she had lots of practice at home before she started school.

Following simple instructions



Your child should be able to follow simple instructions when they start school. The teacher will be giving instructions to your child and to the whole class. Your child should listen carefully to the adult speaking to them. They should also look at the adult to show that they are listening.

You can practise this at home by giving your child simple instructions. Praise them when they look at you and follow your instructions.

Ella's teacher is asking her to do an important job. Sofia knows she must listen carefully and looks at her teacher to show she is listening.

We hope this helps with getting your child ready for school. If you have any questions or worries about your child starting school, please let us know. We will be happy to help.



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