



# Helping to Get Your Child Reception Ready

Starting school is exciting for children and their parents or carers, but it can be a worrying time too. Parents often ask how they can help their child get ready for school. We have written this guide to help you.



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



### Using cutlery and eating independently

At lunchtime, children will be using cutlery to eat their food. We also encourage good table manners. There will always be staff in the lunch hall 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".

*Amelia practised using her knife and fork at home before she started school, and now she can cut up her food by herself.*

### Washing hands

Children should know how to wash their hands using soap and warm water. At home, help them get into the habit of washing and drying their hands when they go to the toilet and before eating. This will encourage good hygiene and stop the spread of germs.

*Leo has been to the toilet and is now washing his hands. He sings Happy Birthday twice to make sure he has washed all the germs away.*

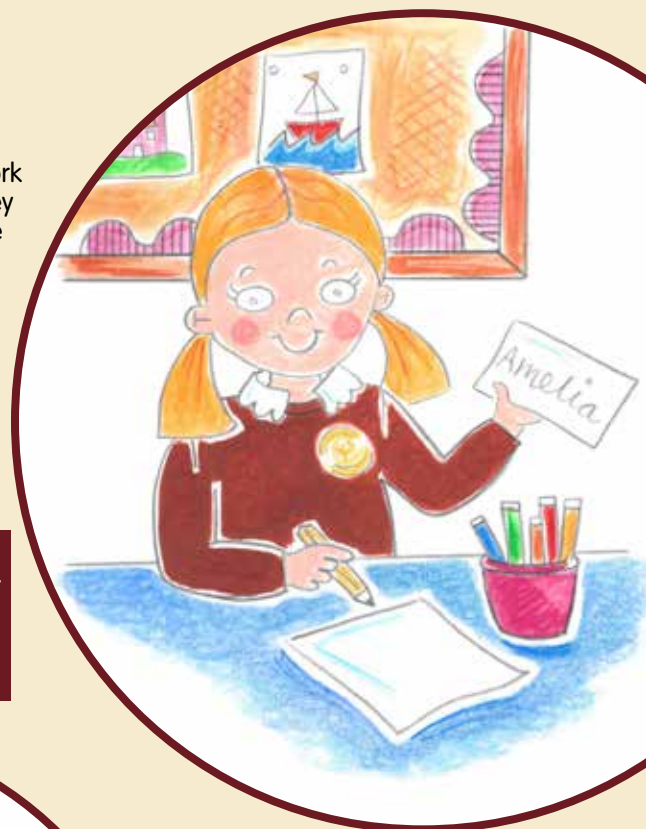


### Writing their name and knowing how to hold a pencil

Your child will need to label their work with their name, so it is helpful if they can learn to write their name before starting school.

You can help them by writing their name using an initial capital and lowercase letters. Then they can trace the letters. Encourage them to use the pencil with a tripod grip so they know how to hold it correctly when they start writing more at school.

*Amelia has used her best handwriting to write her name at school today. She can hold her pencil correctly because she has practised at home.*



### Holding scissors and cutting out

Children will use scissors in school, but they can often find this tricky. By practising at home, they can begin to develop good cutting skills.

With a pair of child-sized safety scissors, your child can have fun cutting up pieces of paper and cutting shapes and pictures out of magazines and comics.

*Jack is cutting shapes to make a colourful picture. Cutting out is getting easier because he has fun practising at home.*





## Recognising letters and numbers

Children will be taught to recognise and write letters and numbers and learn their sounds when they start school. Your child's coat peg and belongings will be labelled with their name. It will help them settle in more quickly and feel more confident if they recognise their name.

When you are out, you can look at what letters and numbers you can see, such as letters on street signs, building names, and numbers on buses and houses.

***Amelia knows this is her coat peg because she can see her name above it.***



## 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 spare clothes, uniform and PE kit.

***Jack is going to the toilet by himself. He will remember to flush it and wash and dry his hands when he has finished.***



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