



Recognising their own name



Going to the toilet independently



St Paul's Cray
CE Primary School

Helping to get your child Reception Ready

Starting school is an exciting time for young children and their parents. It can be an anxious time too as there are a lot of changes ahead. Parents often ask us how they can help their child get ready for school. We have written this guide to help.

We want you and your child to feel happy and confident when you join our school. There are a few key skills to concentrate on which will help your child to settle in. Read through this leaflet with your child and practise anything they do not feel confident about.

If you have any questions about anything in this leaflet or any other worries about your child starting school, please let us know.

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Recognising their own name

We will be teaching letters in the alphabet and basic reading, but it will help your child if they can already recognise their name so they can find their own coat peg, etc. Encourage your child to practise this before they come to school by showing them what their name looks like, and by helping them write it. You could try writing their name on items at home, and asking them to see how many times they can find and read their name.

Ben is excited to recognise his name above his coat peg and straightaway hangs his coat up.

Going to the toilet independently

We encourage children to be more independent in Reception, so your child will go to the toilet by themselves. They will need to be able to wipe themselves and flush the toilet when they have finished. Then they will need to wash and dry their hands. If your child does not usually go to the toilet by themselves, help them practise before they start school. We will be there to help if needed, but this is an important step to independence for them.

Danny goes to the toilet all by himself and is now washing and drying his hands. He is so proud that he can remember everything he learned when he practised at home.



Fastening and unfastening coats, jackets and shoes

Your child will need to take their shoes and coat or jacket off and on during the school day. To help your child feel more confident doing this, make sure that their clothes are easy for them to take off and put on. So think about clothes with easy fastenings or big buttons, and Velcro fastenings instead of laces for shoes. You can also have practice sessions before they start school to check that they can manage zips and buttons. Your child might enjoy practising putting on and taking off their uniform, ready for when they start school. Do remember that all uniform must be labelled with your child's name. We regularly find stray uniform that we cannot return, as it is not labelled with a child's name.

Amina is getting ready to play outside. Amina's coat has lovely big buttons that are easy for her small fingers to fasten and unfasten. In no time at all, she is outside playing with her friends!



Using cutlery and good manners

At meal-times children will be using cutlery to eat their food. We also encourage good table manners. Adults will always be available to help, but your child will feel more confident at meal-times if they can use a knife and fork independently. Help your child to practise using cutlery correctly at home and encourage good manners.

Ben, Danny and Amina are all using their knives and forks to eat their lunch. They were practising this at home and are really proud to show they can use cutlery properly now they are at school.

Using tissues to wipe and blow their nose

Children often have colds in their early school years. Please show them how to wipe and blow their nose. Teach them to use a tissue whenever they have a runny nose. Coughs and sneezes spread diseases, so children need to be able to use a tissue to wipe their nose, throw it in the bin and then wash their hands. This helps stop the spread of germs and will help them breathe easier.

Amina is very good at blowing her nose and she knows it helps her breathe better. She also remembers to throw the used tissue in the bin and to then wash her hands.



Establishing routines at home for mornings and bedtimes

We know that getting children ready for school in the morning can be a very busy and stressful time for families. We recommend establishing regular routines in the weeks before your child starts school as this will help everyone. Setting regular times for going to bed with teeth cleaning and story time ensures your child settles down for a good night's sleep. A well-rested child will be ready to get up on time in the morning. Establish a getting-up time that allows everyone in the family time to use the bathroom, get dressed, have breakfast and clean their teeth so you can still get your child to school on time.

Danny's mum is so proud of him. Danny wakes up with plenty of time to have breakfast and clean his teeth before they leave for school in the mornings. Now they have a good routine, Danny is never late for school and never has to miss breakfast because they are running late.



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