



Encouraging self-care



Enjoying books together

# Helping to get your child Reception Ready



Starting school is an exciting time for children and their parents or carers, but there may be worries as well. Parents or carers often ask us what they can do to get their child ready for school. We have written this guide to help.

There are lots of things we will teach your child when they start school, but there are a few key skills that they should feel confident doing when they come to St Joseph's. It will help your child if you talk to them about starting at St Joseph's School and have a go at practising these skills before they start.

If you have any questions about anything in this leaflet, or have any worries about your child starting school, please let us know and we will be able to help.



Joining in school prayers



Using cutlery

## Joining in school prayers

We are a Catholic school and we pray regularly during the school day. This gives the children quiet time to talk to God, to say thank you and to ask for help.

It will help your child enjoy prayer time if they understand what prayer is and they are able to sit quietly during prayer time.

You can help by saying family prayers together at home. You can also practise saying the school prayer with your child before they start school.

Joanne, Kate and Jack are in the chapel and saying the school prayer:

"This is our school, let peace be found here.  
Let the rooms be full of happiness.  
Let love abide here, love for one another, love for God.  
Let us remember that as many hands build a house so many hearts make a school.  
Amen."



## Recognising their own name

Your child is not expected to recognise letters and numbers when they start school, but it will help them if they can recognise their own name. They will see it written on their lockers, coat peg, and school uniform and belongings, so recognising their own name will help them to identify their own things. They will also write their name on any work they do.

You can help them by practising writing their name with them before they start school. Start by getting them to trace over their name, and place name labels around your home so they can find and recognise them. Only use a capital letter for the first letter in their name. All of the other letters should be in lower case.

Jack has found his reward chart because he has read his name. He can see that he has lots of stickers.



## Encouraging self-care

When your child comes to school, they will be encouraged to be more independent. So, they will usually be expected to do things such as wipe their own nose if they have a cold and go to the toilet by themselves.

They should be able to wipe and flush after they have been to the toilet and be able to wash their hands with soap and water.

If your child is not yet confident in going to the toilet independently, encourage them to practise in the months before they start school.

It is a good idea to provide your child with a packet of tissues if they have a cold so they can wipe their own nose.

We are happy to help any child that needs it, and we will always be supportive if a child has a toilet accident.



Julia has been to the toilet by herself. She has remembered to flush and wash her hands. She had lots of practice at home before she started school. It is even easier at school, because everything is just the right size for her.



Julia and Jake are looking at a book together. They are talking about the book and enjoy looking at the pictures.



## Enjoying books together

Enjoying books together is something that children love when they start school. They may look at books with their friends, with their teacher or by themselves, or they may enjoy listening to their teacher read a story to the class. So, read to your child before they start school, and read to them every day. Please continue this when they start school. Studies have shown that children who are read to at home do well at school.

Show them how to handle a book. It is also important that your child is able to sit and listen quietly so they can enjoy a story. To help, when you read to them, stop from time to time to ask them questions about the story. This will help your child concentrate on the story and develop listening skills for when they start school.

## Using cutlery

We have lots of staff to look after the children when they have their lunch, but it will help your child if they are able to use cutlery and feed themselves independently.

They will feel more confident and grown-up. We are a very caring and kind school and we always encourage good table manners, so help your child practise at home before they come to school.

Joanne is having her first lunch at school. She feels very confident using cutlery and cutting her food by herself. She knows that if she needs any help, she can ask the kind lunchtime staff.



## Getting dressed and undressed independently

During the school day, your child will be taking off their coat and shoes, and sometimes changing for PE. Your child will find it much easier to do this by themselves if their clothes and shoes are easy for them to take off and put on. We recommend buying shoes with Velcro fastenings rather than laces, and clothes with big buttons and easy zips. Children often enjoy dressing-up games so encourage them to practise 'getting ready' for school at home in the weeks before they start school.

Jack is practising putting all his uniform on. He has nearly done it and is just doing up his zip. His grown-ups tell him how proud they are of him. Jack feels very pleased. He can't wait to start school.



**To get in touch, please  
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