



St Joan of Arc School™
Growing together

Joining in school prayers



Helping to get your child **Reception Ready**

Parents or carers with children starting school often ask us how they can help their child prepare. We have written this guide to help.

To help you and your child get ready, we have included a few key things to practise before they start school. This will help them settle into school happily and confidently. Read this leaflet through with your child and practise anything that they need help with. If you are worried about anything or have any questions, please let us know. We are here to help.

Growing together



Recognising their own name

Enjoying books together



Using cutlery and eating independently





Joining in school prayers

Prayer is an important part of our school day. We lead the children in prayers to say thank you to God, to ask God for help and to give them a quiet time during the busy school day. We say prayers in the morning, at lunchtime and at home time.

You can support your child by including prayer in their life outside school by saying a 'grace' before meals and a prayer at bedtime. Bedtime prayers also gives your child a time to tell you about things that have made them happy or any worries they have about that day.

This is the prayer we say at home time:

**"God our Father, I come to say
thank you for your love today.
Thank you for my family and
all the friends you give to me.
Guard me in the dark of night
and in the morning
send your light.**

AMEN"

Tayo and his mum are saying a prayer to say thank you for the day that they have shared. It is a very special time of day for their family.

Using the toilet independently and practising self-care

Your child will use the toilets without adult supervision when they start in reception. This means that they will need to use toilet paper, flush when they have finished, and wash and dry their own hands. If your child does not usually go to the toilet by themselves, help them feel more confident by practising before they start school.

Everything in our toilets is just the right size for small children, and most children happily use them by themselves. However, if your child has a toilet accident, they just need to let a teacher know and they will receive help. Remember to supply spare clothes in case they are needed.

It is also helpful to show your child how to use tissues when they have a cold to prevent illness spreading. It is a good idea to put some tissues in their school bag so they are always to hand if needed.

Lucas has used the toilet all by himself. He remembers to wash his hands with soap and warm water and will dry them before he goes back to his classroom. His family helped him practise lots at home before he started school.



Recognising their own name

Don't worry if your child does not recognise written numbers or letters before they start school as we will teach them.

But it will help them settle in more quickly and confidently if they can recognise their own name when they see it written on things like their coat peg and belongings. They will also label their own work so it is helpful if they can write their name as well.

Before they start school, help them practise writing their name. Start by writing their name out for them and ask your child to trace over it. This will also get them used to handling pencils. Remember to use a capital letter for the first letter and lower case for the rest. Label some of their belongings so they get used to seeing what their name looks like.

Selam's mum is helping her to write her name. She has written it and now Selam is writing over it.

"This is fun, Mum," Selam says. "Next time, I will write it all by myself."



Enjoying books together

Books and a love of reading are a very important part of your child's learning. Introduce your child to books as soon as possible so that they know how to handle them and get used to listening to stories.

When you read to your child, talk about the book as you go along. So, for example, ask them about what they can see in the pictures.

We will send a reading book home with your child every night. We ask that you read it with them and make a note in the reading notebook. It only takes a few minutes each day but is one of the most important things you can do to support your child's education.

Tayo brings a book home from school every day. He loves reading it with his mum.

"There are three goats in this picture," he says. "Well done," says his mum. "Let's see what is going to happen to them."



Using cutlery and eating independently

Your child will use cutlery and feed themselves at meal times when they start school. The cutlery will be the right size for small hands and everything is set up to help them as much as possible. Adults will always be available at meal times if children need help but your child will feel more confident if they can use a knife and fork independently.

Help your child practise using cutlery correctly at home and encourage good table manners.

Lucas is eating his lunch at school. He cuts up his food with the knife and picks it up with his fork. He knows about good table manners and is kind and helpful to his friends.



Getting dressed and undressed independently

As well as getting dressed for school each day, your child will be taking off their coat and shoes and changing for PE when they are at school.

To make this easier for your child, check that their clothes are easy for them to take off and put on. We recommend clothes with easy fastenings or big buttons and shoes with Velcro fastenings rather than laces.

It is a good idea to have practice sessions before they start school. Most children really enjoy dressing up so before they start school, make a game out of trying on their uniform.

Selam is trying on her school uniform. She has done it all by herself and feels very grown-up.

"I can't wait to start school and wear my lovely uniform," she says.



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