

Some tips to help you build your child's confidence so that they start school confident, curious and ready to learn:

Do lots of talking! Talk to your child about what they are most looking forward to at school and encourage them to ask questions.



Sharing stories: this is so important, not only is this quality time spent together but also encourages the love of reading.



Play turn-taking games, e.g. board games, card games or beat the goalie all encourage waiting for your turn and sharing resources

Make a visual timetable of the morning routine so your child knows what to expect

Practise fine motor skills, such as using cutlery, scissors and more.



Flip coat trick: Place your coat upside down by your feet, put your arms into the holes and hold on to it. Flip it over the top of your head and arms in.



Sticker in their shoes trick: Cut a sticker in half and place each half in each shoe. When putting them on, the sticker is complete (make it an image they know such as a character)



Get the new school uniform and try it on!

Label everything! Honestly, everything! Imagine having between 30-60 jumpers aged 4-5 without any labels! If it is labelled, it can usually be returned.

School dinners or packed lunch: What will this look like? Practise carrying a tray or opening packets.



Talk to your child about when they should wash their hands and how to wipe their nose.

Toileting: Practise wiping, discuss with your child what to do if they have an accident and teach them to flush the toilet.

When dropping off

DO

- Be positive about it and give yourself plenty of time to get ready and get there – stressing about running late is not helpful for either of you
- Show your child you're happy and that you trust the staff by your energy and body language
- Give them a hug and a kiss and hand them over to a member of staff
- Keep your voice light, say bye bye/see you later and then leave.
- Believe us when we say they'll be fine, we wouldn't leave them sad and crying all day and will tell you if they may need a little longer/more support
- Personalise strategies to support your child, e.g. Draw a heart on their hand and say to press it if they miss you.

DON'T

- Let them see if you are upset
- Hesitate, linger or hang around, even if they start crying – this just makes them sad and upset for longer and makes it more difficult for the staff to comfort them
- Be tempted to sneak off without them knowing, this will only make them worse and not trust that you are actually coming back
- Try to sneak a peek through windows or gates – they may see you and get upset
- Worry if they cry, we've been doing this a long time and are great at distracting, comforting and getting them busy

Remember it is ok for you to feel a bit anxious; they're your most treasured possession and it's a big thing to hand them over to others. And for your children, allowing them to feel sad sometimes is ok too. It gives them the opportunity to learn how to process their feelings and deal with emotions in other situations, turning your child into a well-rounded and resilient little person.

When picking up at the end of the day

Remember your child has had a very busy exhausting day and the last thing they want to happen is to be bombarded with a million questions about their day. Try some of these instead: Did you go outside today? Did you eat your lunch today? These types of questions have 1 answer: Yes or No.

And please remember, **every child is different** and starts school with their own unique abilities.

Recommended Books

We hope a few of these books will help ease any anxieties about starting school and remind your children about all the fun they'll have in their new classroom.

