



## **Starting School with a Smile!**

Help your child get off to the best start in school by working your way through these hints and tips!

- ★ Talk to your child about starting school e.g. what have they enjoyed when/if they have visited, what are they are looking forward to or any worries. Drive/walk past school, look on school website together.
- ★ Read books together about starting school. Why not try 'I Am Too Absolutely Small for School' Charlie & Lola by Lauren Child, 'Starting School' by Janet & Alan Alberg, 'Harry and the Dinosaurs Go to School' by Ian Whybrow & Adrian Reynolds. Try your library.
- ★ Online resources - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/collections/starting-primary-school/1> may be useful.
- ★ If you already know some families who will be attending the same school as your child why not try and arrange a playdate over the holidays (if this is possible during the lockdown lifting). If not, enquire at your local play centre who host new school starter sessions. 'New school starter' Facebook groups are often set up by parents wanting to make connections.  
Before starting school you need to establish a good bedtime routine. Following the 'Bath, Book & Bed' routine can be really helpful. Read more about it here: <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/supporting-you/families/bath-book-bed/#?!?sortOption=MostRecent&pageNo=1>
- ★ It will really help your child if they can master these self-care skills before they start school; going to the toilet, washing their hands (ask school if they have a format they are using during lockdown), dressing and undressing (uniforms and PE kits), feeding themselves, using a tissue, tidying up. Don't worry if they can't do everything perfectly!
- ★ Try not to bombard your child with endless talk about school as this can make some children anxious. Try to see school in a positive way and avoid making negative comments but don't over hype it as it may not live up to expectations! If you have an older child at school explain they will be in a different classroom.

- ★ Practise the school morning routine, including getting dressed and eating breakfast in time to leave. Spend time with your child teaching them how to use cutlery. This will make lunch time a lot easier for them.
- ★ Play some listening games to help with following instruction such as, 'Simon Says' or play simple board games to help your child develop their understanding of taking turns and following rules.

- ★ Teach your child some useful phrases to help them make friends e.g. 'Please can I join in?' 'Do you want to share?' 'Would you like to play?'
- ★ Once your child starts school be prepared for some changes in your child's behaviour. It is normal for children to find school extremely tiring and this may result in them being clingy, argumentative, excitable or prone to tantrums.

- ★ Limit screen time (tablets/phone/computer) and offer activities such as; drawing and painting, playing with letters and numbers, singing songs and rhymes, playing outside, meeting friends, going on visits etc.
- ★ Most children soon settle in to school life but all children adjust in their own time so don't worry if it takes your child a little longer. Teachers at school will be able to support you and your child should you have any difficulties.



'Parents create the environments and experiences in which learning happens, which makes them the first teachers their children will ever have.'

