



Helping my child get ready for starting school 2020

What is this document all about?

Starting school is a key transition in a child's life and we have experienced unusual and unsettling times during the Coronavirus pandemic. We need to appreciate the difficulties and anxieties the lockdown may have created and help to support our children to be confident and look forward to starting school.

Transitions can be difficult for many children and it is important to be aware that some are more vulnerable than others. Creating a smooth transition into school is vital to ensuring the child gets the best possible start in their new setting.

It may be that the transition to school will look different this year and we want to help to support you and your child through this time and make it as smooth and enjoyable as possible.

Children often pick up on how their parents are feeling. This special edition of 'Helping my child get ready for starting school in 2020' is designed to support you with ideas, reduce any anxieties and feel confident that you have shared all the information that you wanted, to help the school begin to get to know the individual needs of your child.

The 'What to Expect When' document referenced at the back of the booklet will give you more information about the learning and development expectations for your child. Remember, your child is unique and their starting points may be different to other children.

Personal, social and emotional development, alongside communication and language, are a key focus to support your child's confidence and wellbeing as they prepare to start school.

Transition is not just an experience for the individual child but for everyone around the child. Your child's confidence, security and happiness are the priority.



How can you help me to be ready for school?



Help me to understand what is special about me

Encourage me to be independent e.g. hand washing, getting dressed, at mealtimes etc.

Encourage me to be curious about the world around me



Model listening and following simple instructions in day to day things

Share stories with me every day and encourage me to talk about my favourite parts



Encourage me to use language to express what I need or how I feel

Play games with me to help me be active and physical every day

Help me to join in conversations by listening to me and asking for my ideas



Help me to understand how others might feel

Sing number songs and rhyming songs with me



A
picture
of me

What can I do to help my child get ready for starting school?

Listen to their questions and help them answer them

Embed regular routines e.g. bed times, meal times etc.

Talk to them about what they eat and how it keeps them healthy

Play games with them to keep them physically active

Talk to the school to find out what they expect from your child when they start

Praise them when they talk about how they are feeling

Encourage them to talk about new experiences/ Information

Talk to them about how others might feel

Point out letters and numbers around them

Take them to the library and encourage them to talk about things we read together

Keep in touch with their friends that they will start school with

A
picture
of me

Top tips for parents and carers



Be prepared for starting school in 2020

- Talk about starting school with your child to find out what they are expecting and how they feel
- Look at the school's website or social media accounts together to spark conversation about things that happen in school
- Visit the school premises with your child
- Get in touch with the school to see if they have any transition information to share
- Talk to your child about the different people they will meet and different routines
- Talk about any induction routines and things that might be new in school e.g. assemblies etc.
- If social distancing is still in place, find out routines prior to the first day to enable you to be confident about what is happening, therefore reassuring your child
- Find out what equipment your child needs and when e.g. PE kit, book bag, wellies, waterproof clothing
- Play games and read books about starting school
- Watch the film clip together from the Lancashire website about starting school
- Practise getting ready for school by trying on the uniform
- Talk about new routines involved in getting to school, after school clubs etc.
- Label your child's belongings

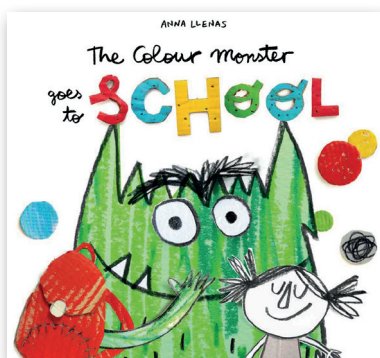
Starting School

- Create a calm excitement around starting school
- Talk to the teacher about what is unique about your child
- Create opportunities for your child to share their experiences of their day without too many questions
- Act on any concerns swiftly to minimise the impact of adversity and maximise support available

What is important to you and your child as they start school?

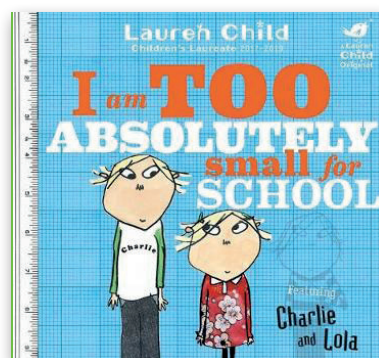


Useful Resources:



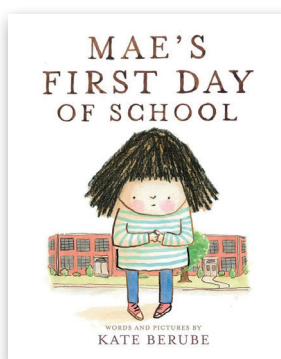
Author: Anna Ilenas

From music lessons, to lunchtime, to making new friends, the Colour Monster's first day of school is filled with exciting new adventures.



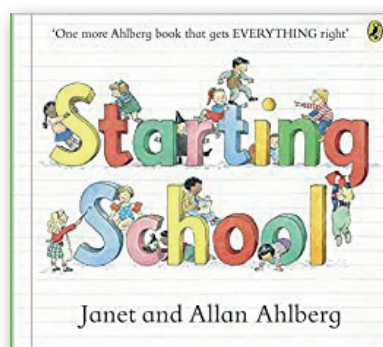
Author: Lauren Child

Starting school is the focus of this story with Charlie as the older brother helping Lola with her feelings about starting school.



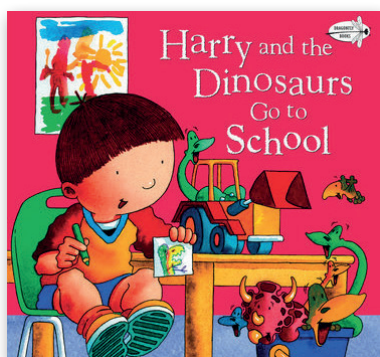
Author: Kate Berube

This picture book acknowledges the anxiety that children might have about starting school, but reassures them that they're not the only one with such worries.



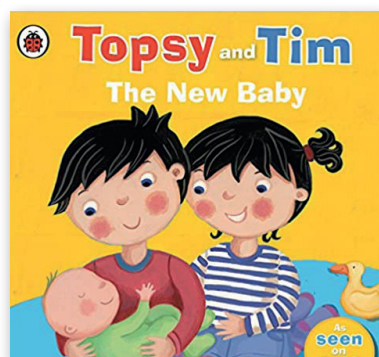
Author: Janet and Allan Ahlberg

This book reassures children who are about to start school for the very first time. The colourful pictures and large, simple text make Starting School a great book to share.



Author: Ian Whybrow

Harry's not so sure he's going to like school, but the dinosaurs come to the rescue. The book shows just how much fun school can really be.



Author: Jean and Gareth Adamson

This is for children who are just about to start school. Children will learn what to expect in lessons, in the playground - even in the dinner hall - and, more importantly, that school can be fun.

Websites with supporting information and resources for parents:

NHS, Separation anxiety

www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/anxiety-in-children/

PACEY's school ready resources

www.pacey.org.uk/schoolready



pacey
professional association for
childcare and early years

Spotlight on...

Working in childcare

- ▶ First steps to a job in childcare
- ▶ 5 reasons to work in childcare
- ▶ Childminders
- ▶ Nurseries
- ▶ Nannies

Being school-ready

I am a
PARENT
Discover our free back-to-school resources

I am a
CHILDCARER
Find free resources to help prepare children and their families for school

Whether you're a parent whose child is about to start at school, or a childcare professional, supporting a family to take this next big step, we've got information, support and reassurance to share.

Lancashire County Council website with supporting information and film clip

www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/early-years-childcare-and-family-support/family-support/getting-ready-to-start-school/

CBeebies – 7 tops tips for starting school

www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/how-to-prepare-your-child-for-primary-school



Parents' guide on what to expect in the Early Years Foundation Stage and when:
<https://foundationyears.org.uk/what-to-expect-when/>

What to expect, when?

A guide to your child's learning and development in the early years foundation stage.

HOW

ACTION FOR CHILDREN

WORKS WITH



BBC Bitesize

www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/collections/starting-primary-school/1

Hungry Little Minds

<https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk/>

Famly

<https://famly.co/blog/covid-19/sue-cowley-making-the-most-of-home-education/>

www.early-education.org.uk/news/guest-blog-returning-and-starting-school-2020-karen-wickett





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