

Have you got
a pre-school child?

Are they

Ready for School?

If pre-school children can:

- Learn and play
- Talk, listen carefully and follow instructions
- Go to the toilet and wash their hands...

...they'll be off to the best possible start.

We can help you make sure your child is ready for school.

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READY FOR SCHOOL
IN DERBYSHIRE



The 10 keys for unlocking school readiness*

- I can settle happily without my parent or carer
- I can tell grown-ups and friends what I need
- I can take turns to play and share when I'm playing
- I can go to the toilet on my own and wash my hands
- I can put on my own coat and shoes and feed myself
- I can tell a grown-up if I'm happy, sad or cross
- I know that what I do and say can make others happy or unhappy
- I am curious and want to learn and play
- I can stop doing what I'm doing, listen and follow simple instructions
- I enjoy sharing books with grown-ups

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I can happily settle and play with others without my parent or carer.



Perhaps the most important 'skill' is to separate from parents/carers and accept school as a fun, exciting and engaging place to be.

While this may not describe every parent's/carer's memory of being at school, it's important that children begin this journey feeling secure and confident about the new experiences, new skills and new friends to be had!

How you can help:

- Try not to talk about your own worries and concerns when your child might be listening.
- spend time together talking about school - answer their questions, find out how they are feeling and talk to them to help put them at ease
- It may feel like a scary and uncertain time for you, but talking about school in a positive and enthusiastic way will help your little one feel excited about the changes ahead.



I can tell grown ups and friends what I need.

Speaking and Listening is an important part of children's development and learning.

Being able to talk to and listen to each other is a key skill.

How can you help:

- Chat with your child when you're out on a walk - talk about what you can see and give them time to chat to you back in a way they are comfortable with
- Listen to your child's questions and help them to answer them
- Talk to them about things you are doing to help them learn and give them time to ask and answer questions
- Provide opportunities for chatting, playing and interacting together
- Spend time together talking about the things you know and give your child time to talk back to you about their family and friends



I can take turns to play and share when I'm playing.

Taking turns is an important part of communication development for young children. When children learn to take turns, they learn the basic rhythm of communication, that back-and-forth exchange between people. They also learn about taking turns and communication through serve and return interactions.

How can you help:

- Play listening games together, for example Simon Says
- Help your child to use some of their toys to make up a story
- Visit groups together, for example, libraries, play-groups or nursery where they can meet other children and interact with them



I can go to the toilet on my own and wash my hands

While many children will have attended a nursery, pre-school or childminder, entry to a primary school still marks a shift in expectations as well as independence and being able to manage their own personal care should be top of the list of things your child can do as they start school.

Wiping their own bottom, managing their own hygiene, blowing their nose will make a typical school day run more smoothly for everyone.

How you can help:

- Allow opportunities for your child to wipe their own bottom, washing their hands and nose at home.
- While you can check afterwards and praise their attempts, it's important that children routinely try as these skills can only be developed over time and with practice.

I can put on my own coat and shoes and feed myself.



Early on in every child's school experience they will be expected to be responsible for their own belongings. In a busy classroom, there will be up to 30 identical sweatshirts/ cardigans, 60 very similar shoes and a variety of outdoor coats, bags and wellies!

How you can help:

- By dressing themselves each morning your little one will be familiar with their uniform and will then manage toileting and changing for outdoor play with more confidence.
- Remember to **name EVERY item of clothing clearly and ensure that your child knows where to look for their name.**
- Encourage your child to carry their own belongings on the journey to school, as this will help them to remember what they brought each day – and what they need to bring home again!
- Having meals at a table together, using a knife and fork prepares the children to eating at school. Encouraging them to attempt to cut up their own food, giving lots of praise and showing them how to do it.

I can tell an adult if I am happy, sad or cross.



It's important for young children to build a positive sense of themselves, to know who they are and what they like, and to be able to express the things that make them unique.

How can I help:

- Mime an emotion and see if they can guess what it is.
- Get your children pulling faces to match the feeling you call out.
- Sing 'If You're Happy and You Know it,' but change the emotion for each verse. For example, 'If you're sad and you know it, make a frown.'
- Play snap and matching games with pictures of different feelings.
- When you read stories, point out the emotions characters are feeling.

I know that what I do and say can make others happy or unhappy.



It is important to help children understand that others have emotions too and that how they act can affect them.

How can you help:

- Talk about others' feelings and name feelings in the moment
“ I can see that you're feeling frustrated, let's.....” .
- Read stories about feelings.
- Be a role model.
- Use pretend play.
- Be patient.

I am curious and want to learn and play.



Encouraging your child to ask questions and discuss possible answers. Alongside this, the confidence and ability to ask an adult for help can only benefit both your child and the classroom teachers.

How you can help:

- Encourage questions with “That’s a good question”, “What do you think?”, “What do you think will happen if we do that?”, “How can we make that happen?”, and always admit it if you don’t know — it can be fun to find out together!
- Encourage your child to try out their ideas for themselves, even if you can see it won’t work
- Allow opportunities to play, create imagination and build curiosity
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I can stop what I'm doing, listen and follow simple instructions

Being able (and willing!) to following directions is such an important skill, as so much of the school learning will rely on these skills, and being able to concentrate and focus on the adult talking will help your child to take on board the information they will need for a successful day.

How you can help:

- Playing games like 'Simon Says' and 'musical bumps/statues' are great for developing listening skills.
- Tuning out background noise is a learnt skill and as children start school this is often something still to be developed, so help by turning off the television or other background noise while your little one plays.



I enjoy sharing books with grown ups.

Sharing books and stories with children is essential to their learning, development, language and communication.

Reading to your child every day gives them the best start to school life.

How you can help:

- Spend time together reading, telling stories or singing songs
- Make sure that a bedtime story is part of your daily routine!
- Share a book and talk about it, e.g. the characters (multiple times is fine - memory) isn't just about the words - point to the pictures and relate them to something your child knows
- Role-play with puppets, small world etc.
- Look for print in the environment
- Can they recognise their name?
- And lastly – make it fun! It doesn't matter how you read with a child, as long as you both enjoy the time together!