

School Readiness

Preparing your child for starting school



Getting ready for school is an exciting time for children and their parents and carers, visiting school, shopping for uniform and knowing who your new teachers are going to be.

As the time for starting school approaches some children will be ready and take the move to school in their stride but others will need a little more help and encouragement from the adults in their lives.

In Blackburn with Darwen we have worked with Children Centres, Health, Childminders, Nurseries and Schools to agree what we mean by '**school readiness**'. These providers told us, in order to make sure that children are able to enjoy school and get off to a good start they need to:

- **have well developed personal skills** - things like being able to put their coat on or feed themselves.
- **have a level of emotional and social maturity** - are happy to leave you and are used to playing with groups of other children
- **have the ability to communicate, pay attention and learn** - being able to talk to their teachers and sit for a story
- **be healthy and well** - so they have had all their injections and any health problems are being managed

We have put some ideas, hints and tips together in this information sheet about things that you can do to help you to prepare your child for starting school. Keep it on your fridge or on a cupboard door so you can use different ideas each day.

Your child's nursery or childminder may also share with you a document called '**What to expect, when?**' This has lots of information about children's development and what parents and carers can do to support them. You can also download this from the following website:

https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2015/09/4Children_ParentsGuide_Sept_2015v4WEB1.pdf,

Your nursery or childminder will work in partnership with you to help you get your child ready for school, but there are other services that can offer advice, guidance and support such as your Health Visitor or your local Children's Centre.

If you would like any help and support you can contact your Health Visitor or Children's Centre on:

01254 585000

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	<p>Attend all health checks and immunisations</p> <p>Children will develop and learn if they are fit and healthy so make sure you keep up to date with all health checks including eye and hearing tests. And don't forget those immunisations especially the boosters!</p> <p>Speak to a Health professional or your child's key worker if you have concerns and are worried about your child's development or health and wellbeing</p>
	<p>Good morning and night time routines</p> <p>As early as possible try to establish a good morning and night time routine so that your child is not tired and has a positive and calm start to the day.</p>
	<p>Allow your child to be independent</p> <p>Encourage your child to follow your instructions to put their own coat and shoes on and off, going to the toilet, washing their hands and feeding themselves independently.</p>
	<p>Provide play opportunities and experiences</p> <p>Allow your child to gain new experiences of the world and opportunities to play in different environments, and with different resources as this will develop and extend your child's curiosity.</p>
	<p>Talk, read and sing with your child.</p> <p>Allow time to ask your child questions and listen to their responses, read stories, look at books and sing songs with your child as much as possible to develop their speaking and listening skills ready for school.</p>

Many parents think that their child needs to be able to read, write their own name, recognise numbers and letters or do sums to be ready for school. This is a myth. Some children may be able to do these things but it is more important is that they feel confident to have a go and try new things.

I will be ready for school when...	How can you support me to do this?
I can put on my own coat and fasten it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold my hood and encourage me to put my arms in sleeves. • Put the hood on my head so I can do the rest. • Show me where to position their hands to use my zip.
I can go to the toilet by myself and wash my hands afterwards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's play a game where we teach a favorite toy how to use the toilet. • Let me choose my own knickers or pants in the shops. • Give me plenty of praise when I go to the toilet and wipe all by myself. • Let me watch you wash your hands and tell you what to do next.
I can confidently say goodbye when I am left with an adult that I know will look after me.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave me with other familiar adults for short periods of time. • Let me talk to your friends whilst you are there. • Take me to visit my new Teacher and meet all the adults working in my new class.
I have made good friends and can happily talk to other children and adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take me to Toddler and Children Centre Groups. • Let me play with other children in the park and on outings. • Let me talk to other adults when you are there.
I can share and take turns in a group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play games with me where I have to wait until it's my turn to go. • Make sure I take turns at the park and on outings. • Talk to me about why I need to share my toys.
I can sit and listen for a short while.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read stories with me and look at books. • Let's listen to songs together and sing. • Play hide and seek games where I have to listen to your instructions.
I can answer a simple question about a story.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When we are sharing a story ask me how it might end. • Ask me about the different pictures I can see on each page.
I can tidy up after myself and look after my things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show me where things are kept so I know where to put them back. • Play tidy up games with me. • Let's tidy up and clean together.
I am happy to speak to others about my wants, needs and feelings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read books like Owl Babies and Peace at Last so we can talk about how the different characters are feeling. • Ask me questions about how I feel. • Tell me how you are feeling.
I can follow simple instructions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play games with me like find the teddy where I have to follow your instructions. • Teach me how to make a sandwich saying first get the bread etc..... • Let's follow some instructions to bake a cake.
I can retell a past event (something that has happened to me).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask me if I remember certain dates/experiences. • Show me photographs and let me talk about what I remember. • Let's make a scrap book after we go on day trips so I can look back and remember.
I can feed myself and enjoy a range of healthy foods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach me to use a knife, fork, and spoon and make sure I don't just eat with my hands. • Provide a variety of meals so I can experience a range of foods. • Let me help you prepare meals so I can talk about foods and you can teach me new things.
I can dress and undress myself as well as putting on and taking off my shoes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show me my new school uniform and let me practice buttons and zips. • Show me how to take off my clothes and put them in a pile on a chair ready for PE lessons. • Buy me some Velcro fastening shoes that I can put on and take off by myself.
I can follow rules at home and nursery and will be able to do this at school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure I know what I'm allowed to do and not allowed to do. • Tell me boundaries and make sure I keep to them. • Let's make some house rules together.
I enjoy listening to stories and singing rhymes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read me a bedtime story before bed. • Sing songs with me and rhymes that I can make actions to like Heads, shoulders, knees and toes and wind the bobbin up etc.... • Make up stories whilst we are walking so I can listen to them and tell you one too.
I can hold a pencil and enjoy making marks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let me help you peg out the washing. • Let's play with playdough so I can use my finger muscles. • Let's draw pictures on the path and paving stones with chunky chalks.