

How to help prepare your child for school

Teachers' tips for helping your child start school with confidence:

Social skills:

Help your child to share and take turns. Make sure they understand that some behaviour that happens in the course of sibling rivalry, such as snatching and pinching, is not appropriate at school. Show them how to say hello and thank you, while making eye contact with the person to whom they are speaking.

Life skills:

Make sure your child knows how to dress and undress, use the toilet and be responsible for their own belongings. Use Velcro-fastening shoes for a while if they cannot tie their own laces and avoid belts, which can be tricky when they need to go to the toilet.

Make sure lunches are healthy and not so big the child cannot possibly cope with them. Cut fruit into easily handled pieces and include things which are easily opened (you may need to snip the corners of packets).

If your child walks to school, join a "walking bus" and make sure they know the safest place to cross the road.

Gross motor skills:

Practice running, hopping, skipping, jumping and ball skills.

Fine motor skills:

Try making a scrapbook, cutting with scissors, holding a pencil and building with blocks.

Academic skills:

Encourage your child to listen and show a growing ability to concentrate. Look at and identify letters for their own name.

Literacy:

Enjoy time reading books together. Talk about how the words tell the story and ask simple questions about the story when it is finished.

Writing skills:

Give your child opportunities to hold and draw with a pencil. Encourage them to write some or all of their name. Write stories under their pictures.