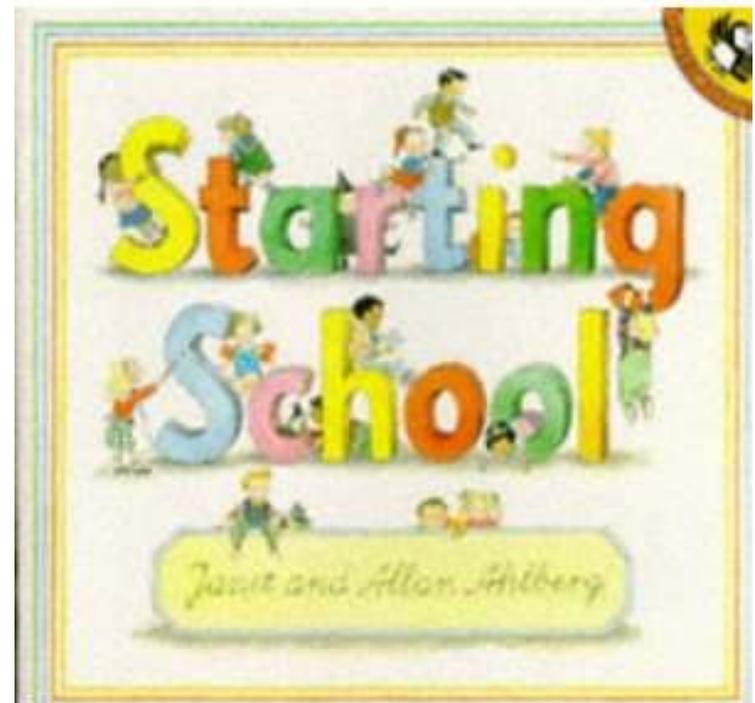


Starting School



Preparing your child for school

Starting school is an important step in your child's life. We have put together this little booklet so that you can help your child to enjoy school and ensure that it is a positive and happy experience for everyone.



Most children enjoy school and the way you talk about it will reassure them that it is a happy and exciting place to be. There are many story books that deal with issues about starting school and the common worries that children may have. Sharing some of these stories with your child can really help. Please see the list at the end of this booklet for some ideas.

Perhaps one of the most important things that you can do to help your child get ready for school is to talk to them. Ask them questions and give them time to talk with you. Always sound positive about school and listen to their questions and worries.

Read stories to your child as often as possible – as well as part of your bedtime routine. This will help them to develop their interest in stories and they will learn to join in with their favourites.

Singing traditional songs and nursery rhymes with your child is also vital and children of all ages really enjoy this. Singing rhymes and songs is proven to help children's early literacy skills.



We look forward to a fulfilling and rewarding partnership with you and your child.

Thank you for all your help and support.

Suggested 'Starting School' titles that may help:

- Starting School by Janet and Allan Ahlberg
 - I am too absolutely small for school (Charlie and Lola) by Lauren Child
 - Do I have to go to school? A first look at starting school by Lesley Harker and Pat Thomas
 - Topsy and Tim: Start school by Jean Adamson
 - Going to school by Anna Civardi and Stephen Cartwright
 - Billy and the big new school by Catherine and Laurence An-holt
 - Lucy and Tom go to school by Shirley Hughes
 - Bella goes to school by Ian Whybrow
 - See you later, Mum! by Jennifer Northway
 - Rabbit gets ready by Claire Fletcher
- Where's my peg: My first day at school by Jen Green and Mike Gordon

If you need any more help please do not hesitate to contact us.

Numeracy

Please help your child with problem solving skills by giving them plenty of opportunities for construction and model making.



Initially we concentrate on numbers up to 10 and ensure that the children understand their value, recognise the numerals and can order and add one more. Maths should be fun and children learn through practical activities and play. Using the correct language to describe shape, position, quantity and size is also important.

Creativity

Letting children use their imagination and creating their own world is very important. Playing with other children will help them develop social skills and cope with the changes they will meet when they start school.



It is also important to talk to your child about the world around them, commenting on seasonal weather changes, family holidays and special events.

We love to hear about what has happened to the children at the weekend or during the holidays so please feel free to send in photos and details of events like birthday parties. We encourage children to talk about their news with others and listen to what their peers have to say.

Practical Skills:

Clothes

Choosing uniform and shoes that are easy to get on and take off will really help your child. Encourage children to dress and undress themselves and always praise their efforts – even if the buttons are wonky! Teaching your child to zip up or button up their coat will enable them to sort themselves out when they want to play outside or for Hometime. Children feel extremely proud of themselves when they achieve this!



ALL clothes and shoes (and Wellies) must be clearly named (first and last names please) and it will really help your child if they can recognise their own name, even if they are unable to write it yet.

Toilet

It is important that the children are confident about using the toilet independently and do not need help with their own personal hygiene. Please encourage your child to flush the toilet and wash their hands properly afterwards. We will always remind the children to use the toilet before they leave the area for lunch, PE or to visit the ICT suite.

The Curriculum

The EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) follows the curriculum your child will have been experiencing at pre-school or nursery. It has four main themes: A unique child, positive relationships, enabling environments and learning and development. The curriculum is divided into six areas of learning.

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication, language and literacy
- Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development

Creative development

Whatever your child is interested in, please encourage them and praise their efforts so that they build a positive self image and have lots of confidence.

We spend time listening to sounds around us before we move onto hearing sounds in words.



When the children are able to hear the beginning, end and middle sounds of simple words, we introduce the letters that makes those sounds. Often, the first letter a child can identify is the one that is at the start of their name. When we get to that stage, we will start to play phonic games and we will let you know which letter sounds we are working on so that you can support your child at home too. We will also help you to know how we pronounce the letter sounds correctly – it can be harder than you think! The most common mistake is to make the sound too long as it then becomes too difficult to blend in a word. To listen to the sounds or phonemes please go to www.getreadingright/pronouncephonemes.htm

When your child is ready, we will send home reading books for you to share. Books without words are really important as they can encourage children to make up their own stories, using their growing imagination!



Writing

Please help your child to practise holding a pencil and making the circular and up and down marks that are needed to form letters. If your child enjoys colouring and mark making, please encourage them to write their name.



Praise their efforts and don't spend too long at any one time so it becomes a chore. Please try to teach your child to form letters correctly as it is much harder for them to re-learn this skill once they start school. We will provide you with a sheet showing the correct letter formation for our school. Please focus on lower case letters, rather than capitals.