

How to Prepare your Child for School



'Building a firm Foundation'



Some top tips...

Good social skills, attitudes and dispositions are necessary in school and you can help your child by practising some of these at home.

It will greatly help the teacher if your child can:

- Dress and undress. Try to buy shoes and clothes with easy fastenings and let your child practise. This will help with PE activities at school, going to the toilet, playtime and home time.
- Use cutlery or manage a lunch box, i.e. open and close it.
- Use and flush the toilet and wash his/her hands. Independent and proper use of the toilet is important.
- Respect possessions. Show your child how to treat books and toys with care and how to put them away after use.
- Share and take turns when playing.
- Have opportunities for talking and playing with other children and adults, without you being present all the time.

Talk and more talk

Children learn about language through speaking and listening. From the first day in school, your child will need to join in conversation with other children and his/her teacher. You may help in many ways:

- Ask your child questions and answer theirs.
- Watch a favourite TV programme together and talk about it.
- Encourage your child to sing songs, nursery rhymes and jingles.
- Listen to your child's stories.
- Encourage your child to listen to short taped stories.
- Listen to what your child has to say.
- Encourage your child to take turns to talk and listen while other people are talking.

Sharing books and becoming a reader

From an early age, your child can be encouraged to enjoy books with an adult, and to acquire some early reading skills:

- Look at and share books together.
- Show your child how to hold a book and turn the pages.
- Talk about the pictures and tell the story using the pictures.
- Tell and re-tell favourite stories. Your child will love to hear special stories repeated.
- Share poetry and rhyme books.
- Point out familiar signs and labels, e.g. McDONALDS, ASDA, OPEN, BUS-STOP, etc.
- Help him/her to recognise his/her own printed name.

Drawing and starting to write

We live in a world that is full of pictures and print. Writing is all around and your child sees writing everywhere in a variety of ways.

- Encourage your child to imitate your actions, e.g. writing a shopping list, messages, notices, etc.
- Always encourage early marks on paper. Don't be anxious to make your child copy letters, let them experiment and concentrate on drawing plenty of pictures.
- Give your child the opportunity to use a safe pair of scissors and to practise cutting out pictures from magazines and catalogues.
- Let your child have a box or a basket to keep a collection of writing and drawing materials in.
- If possible, let your child use paint, thick brushes and big pieces of paper. Adult paint rollers and paintbrushes with a large bucket of water outdoors is great fun!
- Help your child to make a scrapbook, e.g. 'My Birthday Party', 'My Favourite Toys', etc.
- Give your child time to talk about their drawings and to look at them closely.
- Always praise and encourage these early drawings and marks on paper. If possible, show that you value this work by providing a special place in the house to display it. If you give your child the opportunity to draw and write at home, the fine control necessary to form letters will develop.

Learning about numbers

There are many opportunities in the home and outside for your child to acquire number skills. You can help in lots of different ways:

- Give plenty of sorting activities, e.g. sorting the shopping.
- Count by placing your hand on each item as you count together.
- Show and point out numbers, e.g. on doors, shoes, telephone.
- Give lots of opportunities for noticing similarities and differences and matching things that are the same.
- Let your child help with baking by counting the spoonfuls, weighing the ingredients, etc.
- Sing number rhymes, e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, once I caught a fish alive.
- Use playdough to make 5 fat sausages and sing the rhyme together.
- Play simple number games, dominoes, snakes and ladders, etc.
- Set the table together and count the number of plates.

Having fun together

During their time in Reception class, children are encouraged to explore and create with a range of materials and media. Here are a few activities your child may wish to try at home!

- Draw a self-portrait (look in the mirror and talk about eyebrows, nose, freckles, etc)
- Knead, squash and roll dough – make a model and tell someone about it.

- Read a familiar story and recreate it with simple props.
- Build a den, inside or out – how can you get the materials to stay in place?
- Make a model out of recycled materials – shoeboxes, cereal boxes, tin foil, tubes...
- Wash your bike/scooter with a bucket of water, a sponge and bubbles.
- Make a shop and take it in turns to be the shopkeeper.
- Wash dolls clothes or their clothes in a bucket/large bowl/bath. What happens when they get wet? How do they feel?
- Cut out their favourite things from catalogues and glue onto paper – can you write a label?

Make a Scrapbook

- Use the enclosed booklet to gather pictures of important things to your child for example people in the family, places you have been, favourite toys, family pets etc.

We hope you have found these ideas useful...we are looking forward to welcoming your child to the Ashton Hayes Primary School family.