

**Torkington School Readiness Nursery**

Starting school is an exciting time for young children and their parents but it can be a daunting time, too. With a little preparation and encouragement though, most children will settle in easily at school.

What does being "school ready" mean?

* Having social skills with an ability to communicate and share with both adults and children.
* Children can cope emotionally with being separated from their parents.
* Children are relatively independent in their own personal care going to the toilet and washing hands independently, feeding themselves and putting their coats and shoes on and off.
* Have a curiosity about the world and a desire to learn.
* Children can follow simple instructions.

**How you can help**

* Chat with your child about starting school. What do they think it will be like? What are they most looking forward to? Is there anything they’re unsure or worried about?
* Look at our website together with your child and talk about the pictures.
* Be sure to visit the school with your child before they start. We will arrange a stay and play date where you can come and visit the classroom with your child and then a transition day where they will meet their new friends independently prior to starting in September so children know what to expect.
* Can do attitude! Help to develop your child’s independence and a ‘can do’ attitude by giving them a few everyday responsibilities. Perhaps they could help lay the table, feed a pet or put their own laundry away, help tidy up their toys and put their coat on.

*These picture books about going to school may be helpful:*

* *I am too Absolutely Small for School (Charlie and Lola) by Lauren Child*
* *Starting School by Janet and Allen Ahlberg*
* *Topsy and Tim Start School by Jean and Gareth Adamson*
* *Harry and the Dinosaurs Go to School by Ian Whybrow and Adrian Reynolds*
* *Come to School too, Blue Kangaroo! by Emma Chichester Clark*

**Some things to try**

* Play some fun listening and doing games to help with following instructions. ‘Simon says’ ‘I spy’ (helps with initial sounds) or ‘Can you find?’ games are great for this.
* If your child seems anxious about school, try focusing on the things they’ll like best – maybe the sandpit, play-dough, painting or new friends. Perhaps they have some familiar friends who will be starting Nursery at the same time. It’s natural to feel nervous about your child starting school, but remember that your child can easily pick up on your emotions. Try to be relaxed and positive, rather than showing your own nerves.
* Practise the school morning routine, including getting dressed and eating breakfast in time to leave.

**What do children need to know before starting school?**

* Children do not need to read and write to start school but should be familiar with reading books as part of a routine, holding them and turning the pages and using the illustrations to sometimes tell the adult about parts the story.
* They should be familiar with mark making tools such as paints, pens and chalks showing an interest in using these to make their own creations that they can then talk to an adult about after.
* Similarly children do not need to be competent mathematicians but should enjoy singing counting songs and recognising shapes and colurs in the environment. Lots of everyday activities can be turned into maths opportunities such as baking, when measuring the ingredients count how many spoonfuls you need, count objects and toys as you play, complete puzzles, going on a nature walk collecting objects and counting how many, comparing their size, colours and purpose, talk about before, now, later, yesterday, today and tomorrow. Once you think about it you will find the learning opportunities endless. In school we learn through play and following the children’s interests, try to find opportunities doing the same.