



# Nursery Ready?

Starting Nursery is an exciting time. It can be a daunting time, too. But with a little preparation and encouragement, most children will settle in easily, ready to learn and discover. You are your child's greatest teacher and role model. The most valuable things you can do for your child at the moment are to **HAVE FUN** and **PLAY** with them. Playful interactions through the days and weeks ahead will help to prepare your child mentally, physically and emotionally for life in a busy classroom.

The aim of this guide is to provide an understanding of how you can help your child to be ready for Nursery; here's some top tips taken from the guidance 'What to expect, when?' (DfE, 2015)...

## Communication & Language Development

Communication is a fundamental life skill. Children need to be able to speak, listen, understand language and communicate effectively. There are lots of ways you can support your child's communication at home including...

- Talk to me about the sounds we can hear when we go to the shops or the park.
- Make the sounds of animals and things when you're sharing a book with me.
- Play games with me where I have to follow instructions like "roll the ball" or "throw the ball".
- Let me help you with unpacking the shopping by telling me to find different things like "find the apples" or "find the crackers".
- Show me and give me choices about what I can have to eat, like "yoghurt or banana?".
- Research tells us that reading to your child is the most important way you can support your child's early learning. So make time for bedtime stories too.

ICAN provide an online "Progress Checker" tool which allows parents to see how your child is getting on with their speech, language and communication development. It should give you an idea of how your child is developing. <https://ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/progress-checker-home/>

Sometimes children need extra help to support their communication and language skills. While this does not necessarily mean there is a long-term difficulty, a little extra support from a key person – in partnership with parents – will enable them to thrive.

If you are worried you can get support or advice from your Health Visitor or Children's Centre.

Personal, social & emotional development is recognised as one of the building blocks of success in life. It supports children's development by helping them to interact effectively and develop positive attitudes to themselves and others.

## How You Can Help Me With My Learning

- Share photos or videos of me doing things and talk with me about what I'm doing.
- Use my dolls or teddies to show me how to pretend to look after a baby or use my cars to show me how to pretend to go on a journey. Talk to me about the things you are using and what you are doing with them.

Support children's growing independence and a 'can do' attitude as they do things for themselves.

- Let me help you to share out the sandwiches and fruit onto plates, so that everyone has something to eat.
- Get me into the habit of hanging up my coat, putting my toys away, clearing the table to prepare me for doing these things at Nursery.

Many settings use a piece of music to indicate tidy up time and motivate children to help.

- Help children with self-care by leaving a last small step for them to complete e.g. pulling up their trousers from below the waist, zipping up their coat once the zip is secured.

## Physical development

Children learn through sensory experiences and through being active learners. Sensory experiences come through feeling, smelling, hearing, looking at and listening. The active learning experience comes through the choices we give children in what they do. No one else can have experiences for the child; children must do this for themselves.

## How You Can Help Me With My Learning

- Give me a little bag to carry something in when we go shopping.
- Give me a bucket to put interesting things in when I'm digging in the mud.
- Give me rolling pins and cutters to see what I can do with them when I'm playing with the dough.

Have you heard of the 'flip trick' for putting a coat on? Put your child's open coat, upside down in front of them (with the hood nearest their hands in the armholes and flip the coat over their head! Or, try the 'superhero trick'. Get them to pop the hood on their head and reach behind to push their arms into the sleeves.



Also help your child to know which shoe goes on which foot by drawing half a picture (like a smiley face) into the left shoe and the other half of the picture into the right shoe - when the shoes are placed correctly the picture will look complete!