



It is quite normal to feel a little anxious about sending your child to 'big' school. As a parent you want to be sure your child is fully prepared to adapt to a classroom environment, make new friends and communicate their needs to their teacher if they need help. Research shows that children who are well-prepared for their first year at school have a much better chance of settling in and succeeding.

Here are ten things they should know to help them feel confident and settle quickly when they start in the Reception class

1	Listen and follow simple instructions	By the time they start school children should be able to follow simple instructions like 'sit on the carpet' and 'put your coat on' <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>A great way for them to practice following instructions is with games like Simon Says or by asking your child to copy clapping patterns</i>• <i>Give your child daily tasks around the house - use 2 part instructions like "pick up your toys and put them in the box."</i>• <i>Make sure they look at you when you are speaking to them</i>
2	Go to the toilet independently	By the age of four children should be able to manage their toileting needs - go to the toilet, manage their clothes, wipe their own bottom etc... this helps them to develop
3	Communicate their needs	Children should be able to clearly communicate their needs to adults at school and to their friends. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage your child to speak in complete sentences• Encourage them to explain what they are doing, how they are feeling etc...• Model how to speak clearly in sentences - show them
4	Dress and feed themselves	Children should feel comfortable managing their own clothes (e.g. zips and buttons) It is also at this age that children start learning how to tie their laces. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Help your child to practise dressing themselves each morning until they can do it independently. This includes: zipping trousers, buttoning shirts, putting on socks, putting on and taking off gloves and jackets.</i>• <i>Teach your child how to open food packets</i>• <i>Eat as a family so your child can get used to staying at the table until finished, learn to use cutlery</i>
5	Match and sort objects	Children should be able to sort objects by simple attributes such as shape, colour and purpose (e.g. food, clothes, toys...) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use books, songs and play guessing games to teach about opposites• Play sorting games with at least 2 different types of objects

6	Share and take turns	<p>There are lots of children in a class so if a child has the social skills to communicate, share, take turns and collaborate with other children they will have so many more opportunities to learn and will find it easier to make friends and enjoy school more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play games like building towers with block together taking turns to put a block on top • Play board games together • Try to give them the opportunity to play with other children • If you have more than one child at home, try to encourage them to work on tasks together at home
7	Understand and retell simple stories	<p>Children should be able to listen and understand 5-10 minute stories. Having books at home helps them learn which way up to hold a book and to turn pages correctly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Read a story every day</i> • <i>Share story times discussing favourite characters and parts of the story.</i> • <i>Go to the library and choose books based on your child's interests</i> • <i>Make up stories together</i>
8	Count to ... 50	<p>Many children will know how to count to at least 30 and tell what number comes before or after a given number to 20.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have fun counting everything - buttons on coats, stairs, how many steps it takes to reach the kitchen...</i> • <i>Point out favourite numbers such as your child's age, house numbers, number plates on cars, on the calendar</i> • <i>Show your child how numbers are used in everyday activities like following a recipe, keeping score during a game, counting measuring or weighing objects</i> • <i>Put three potatoes on your plate, get your child to eat one and ask how many are left</i>
9	Identify letters and begin to understand that letters stand for the sounds heard in words	<p>Some children know the letters of the alphabet and the correlation between sounds and letters. Children should be able to identify words that rhyme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will they join in a story with a repeated phrase? • Sing or recite songs and rhymes. • Encourage them to finish the last word of rhyming sentences to see if they can hear the rhyme • Play matching games or bingo games using letters where the children have to identify the sounds
10	Recognise their own name	<p>It is helpful and a huge confidence boost for children if they can read their own name. If they see it enough they will recognise it and have a sense of responsibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put their name of a lunchbox, ha, bag, on a toy, inside a special book..... • Would they be able to write their own name?

What to expect in the Early years, is a useful guide to parents: <https://foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/What-to-expect-in-the-EYFS-complete-FINAL-16.09-compressed.pdf>