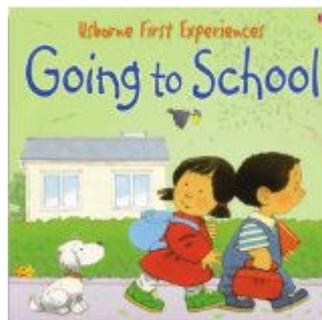


First Experiences Going to School

Starting school is a big transition for both you and your child. However, for someone little with no pre-set ideas or knowledge about what 'school' is this could also be a bewildering concept for your child.

You can help your child to be excited, enthusiastic, curious and confident about starting school by reading books about starting school with them. Children have lots of transitions in their lives. Handling this transition to school sensitively will help your child to build resilience and to be ready to take on all that school has to offer.

Reading books together about starting school will allow your child the chance to start to form a picture about what school might be like and to ask you questions. Building your child's confidence and resilience in this way will help them to explore, access the activities on offer in school and find solutions. These form some of the basic skills needed to learn.



Read the story with your child. Sometimes children will need a story reading more than once before they remember it all. This book offers large print and short text to read at the top of each page, or a more detail account of the storyline at the bottom of the page. You can chose the right level of information for you child depending on their communication and attention skills.

Activity 1:

This book is about twins (Polly and Percy) getting ready to go to school and being at school for their first day. They do not wear a school uniform.

Talk to your child about their school clothes. Will they wear a uniform? If not it is a good idea to agree with your child which clothes will be 'school clothes'.

What will they have for breakfast before they go to school?

Allow time for your child to share any feelings that they have about starting school – are they excited or worried?

Activity 2:

Plan a day for practising your school morning routine. This will help you to allow enough time on your first day but also give your child time to practise things like getting dressed into their school clothes. Will you have breakfast and then get dressed (so there are no spills on their clothes?)

How will you get to school? Will you walk, go in the car, on the bus, or perhaps your child will be in childcare so they will be dropped off by their breakfast club, childminder or nursery?

Can you arrange to travel to school and walk past the school building to talk to your child about the school. If you know which door you will go in when they first start then you can share your knowledge with your child. If you do not know then you can ask this question if you have a 'new parents' information session with school

Activity 3:

Talk to your child about Dad taking Percy's pet gerbil home. It is highly likely that pets will not be allowed in school! . If your child has a comforter then perhaps you can spend time over the summer months reducing the time that they spend with it. Your child can of course continue using them before and after the school day. As part of the Starting School Together pilot project your child will be given a Jofli Bear. The idea is that you and your child take photos, write/draw about what you do over the summer with Jofli in the logbook/diary that comes with the bear. Jofli will then go with your child for their first days in school as a familiar item from home. Jofli will also be a link for your child's key person in school to talk to your child about their summer so that they can start to form their key person relationship.



Check with your school teacher about their policy on bringing toys and comforters into school