



Top Tips for Getting Ready for Primary 1

Starting Primary 1 can feel like a huge step for some children and it is easy to fall into the trap as a parent of worrying that your child should be reading or writing and therefore, are not ready for Primary 1. We certainly do not expect children to have these skills. Reading, writing and developing a deeper understanding of number are amongst many things we teach the children throughout their year in a Primary 1 classroom. Please, please do not worry or place unrealistic expectations on your children or yourself. At this stage, the most important thing is for your child to feel safe and secure, so they can take risks in the classroom whilst learning. The first few weeks of Primary 1 will be a very soft and gentle start for the children, as it always is. We know they have missed some time in Nursery due to Lockdown and appreciate they need to be eased into a formal education carefully. We will be giving lots of opportunities for play and learning through play and will be guided by the needs of the children. Listed here are the most important ways that you can help your child to prepare for Primary 1, although we would like to reiterate that happy, relaxed and reassured children are the top priority.

Self-help skills

- Can they get dressed into their blazers, coats and shoes by themselves - buttons and zips are important and can take lots of time when all children want to do is to go out and play. Make it fun, how fast can they do it each day? Can they beat their best time? If you don't have school uniform yet, don't worry, keep practising with 'home' clothes.
- Can your child put their shoes on the correct feet? Pop half a smiley face on the inside of each shoe and if the shoes are on the right feet, the face meets, just like magic!
- Practise using a knife and a fork at the dinner table. Do they know which hand to use?
- Can they use the toilet independently? For boys, visit a urinal if you are out and about and talk about the difference between urinating in the urinal and passing stool in the toilet. Girls need to practise lifting up skirts and dresses to their tummies or to prevent accidents and splashes and spills.
- Try packing and unpacking a rucksack for an adventure. The children will need to do this everyday in Primary 1. Can they find a special place for each thing?

Social skills

- Play games that involve taking turns and sharing.
- Walk past the school and talk about what might happen in the playground or classrooms or PE hall....exciting!

Literacy skills

- Retell a story in their own words using a favourite book. Can your child suggest an alternative ending?
- Can they recognise their own name? This can help your child find their labelled belongings in a busy classroom.

Numeracy skills

- Have fun counting things and count everything, including your stairs, the number of pillows on the bed to the number of cuddly toys
- Go on a number hunt or be a shape detective either around the house or outdoors. Can your child spot different numbers on doors, number plates and buses?

Fine Motor Skills

- Encourage your child to play with a range of construction resources. Lego develops great fine motor control and strength! Hama beads take great skill too!
- Explore a range of writing materials on a giant scale! Large pieces of paper or playground chalk encourages creativity and bigger movements help to refine the smaller more detailed movements which are needed to hold a pencil. Have fun creating giant treasure maps or taking a pen or a pencil for a walk on a big piece of paper.
- A whiteboard and pen is much easier than chalk on a pavement. If your child doesn't wish to engage with pens and paper, try using a whiteboard....the results are immediate and satisfying.
- Enjoy threading pasta or beads and buttons from around the house or enjoy using Hama beads. The intricate movement helps to strength those little fingers in just the right way for Primary 1.
- Cutting is great fun! Holding scissors correctly and safely, manoeuvring paper and cutting along lines all takes time and practise.

Most importantly, remember to have fun 😊!