



Getting Your Child Ready For School

Fitzmaurice Primary School



Overview

This information booklet will guide you through a number of areas including how to get your child ready for school; what we expect from you as parents; expectations for behaviour at school; and how to get help for your child if they need additional support.

Ready to Learn: What it looks like

In this section you will find information about what we expect children to be able to do when they start school and tips on how to help your child develop these key skills. Expectations are broken down into the different areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.

■ Communication and Language

Your child should be able to:

- Speak in sentences, including linking two sentences together by using ‘and’ or ‘because’
- Tell you what they have been doing or thinking and what their plans are
- Make comments and ask questions about what they have seen, heard or done
- Listen to instructions and stories

You can help them achieve this by:

- Scaffold and extend children’s sentences. If your child says “Milk all gone” you say, “Yes, the milk has all gone. You have drunk it all”
- Play alongside your child, talking about what you are doing to encourage them to do the same
- Give your child time to comment or ask questions when sharing a book

■ Personal Social and Emotional Development

Your child should be able to:

- Come to work with an adult on the first time of asking, regardless of whether they are interested in the activity or not
- Be able to cope with meeting new people
- Cope with not getting their own way
- Be able to say how they are feeling or what they need and go to a grown up when they need help



You can help them achieve this by:

- Getting your child to try new things. Don’t always give them a choice about the task, sometimes it is good to just tell them that they are going to give a new task a try. If your child always has the final say on whether you do something as a family they will find it hard to adapt to a school setting where many tasks are non-negotiable
- When the current lockdown restrictions are lifted, keep up with play dates and trips to the park. Your child doesn’t have to be super-confident but should have the social skills to hello to someone they are meeting for the first time and play comfortably alongside them
- Talk to your child about how you and they are feeling and talk about strategies they can use themselves to cope with feeling cross or sad, rather than trying to change the situation that is making them feel cross or sad (these feelings should be coped with rather than avoided or organised away)
- If your child is still having toddler-type tantrums when they don’t get their own way they may find the school setting challenging. Model self-regulation to your child.





Say how you are feeling and how you are going to calm down. “Oh, this is making me cross, I think I need to do some deep breaths”. Teach your child some calm down tricks at a time when they are already calm. This could include, deep breathing, counting to 10 or belly breathing (lie down with a cuddly toy on your tummy and do deep breaths watching teddy move up and down as you breathe). A fun song with Elmo from Sesame Street about belly breathing can be found on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mZbzDOpyIA When your child is having a meltdown, sympathise with them “I can see that you are feeling...I wonder if some belly breathing might help?”

■ Physical Development

Gross Motor Skills

Your child should be able to:

- Walk, run and jump confidently without wobbling or bumping into others
- Catch a large ball
- Be able to use some climbing and play equipment



You can help them achieve this by:

- Stopping relying on pushchairs or carrying to get your child to where you want to go. Walking somewhere with a 3 or 4 year old will take longer – schedule in extra time to do this rather than relying on pushchairs or other vehicles
- When the current lockdown restrictions are lifted, by taking your child to the park and open spaces so that they can run freely, have a go on play equipment and keep active
- Play ball games

Fine Motor Skills

Your child should be able to:

- Hold a pencil using a thumb and two fingers – see diagram
- Use a pencil to draw horizontal and vertical lines, circles, crosses, and by the age of 4, squares and diagonal lines
- Write their name or at the very least some letters in their name



You can help them achieve this by:

- Giving your child a range of mark making materials – crayons, chalk, felt tips – and a range of surfaces to write or draw on e.g. patio, paper
- Strengthen your child’s hands by: moving on from playdough play to plasticine or clay; using pegs such as hanging clothes on the washing line; moving from Lego Duplo to standard Lego, ensuring that your child is pushing together and pulling apart the bricks themselves
- Giving them lots of opportunities to write their names – capital letters on the first letter only



■ Health and Self Care

Your child should be able to:

- Dress themselves, including taking jumpers on and off and zipping up their own coats, putting on shoes and gloves etc.
- Go to the toilet independently including wiping and washing hands
- Use cutlery when eating a meal



You can help them by:

- Giving them time to complete tasks such as dressing and giving lots of encouragement and praise when they do
- Support with modelling and encouragement to be independent with toileting – talk them through the task rather than taking over when they get stuck
- Eat all together so that using knives and forks is modelled to them



▪ Literacy

Reading

Your child should be able to:

- Recognise their own name; words that are special to them such as 'mummy' and 'daddy'; and familiar words such as signs and advertising logos
- Know some nursery rhymes by heart and be able to name some rhyming pairs
- Turn the pages in a book carefully and in the right direction
- Be able to hear and say initial sounds in words e.g. house begins with h, mummy begins with m. This should be the letter sounds not the letter names



You can help them by:

- Pointing out text where you see it – Sainsbury's/McDonalds signage, road names and other street signs with text
- Sing songs and say nursery rhymes together. Read Rhyming books such as those by Julia Donaldson
- Share books together, talking about pictures and stories
- Talking about sounds in words

Writing

Your child should be able to:

- Make marks that stand in for writing, saying what their writing means
- Write their own name

You can help them achieve this by:

- Giving them lots of writing materials and reasons to write – notes to mummy, shopping lists, birthday cards etc.
- Asking them what their writing says





Maths

Numbers

Your child should be able to:

- Count out loud to 10 and back down to zero again
- Count objects accurately to at least 5 touching each object once for each number name
- Recognise some familiar numerals e.g. their age on a birthday badge; their house number; bus numbers
- Count out an amount from a larger group e.g. get me 6 forks from the cutlery drawer



You can help them achieve this by:

- Singing songs such as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or building rockets and counting down from 10 to blast off
- Getting them to count how many blocks they have used in their tower
- Getting them to help with everyday tasks – pass me 3 pegs, get me 4 plates for the dinner table
- Looking for numbers on your daily walk

Shape Space and Measure

Your child should be able to:

- Comment on the size or general shape of things – e.g. this is round, tall
- Begin to recognise and name simple 2D shapes – circle, square, rectangle and triangle
- Recognise shapes in their everyday environment

You can help them achieve this by:

- Talking to them about everyday objects
- Make representations of shapes whilst out on a walk e.g. make a triangle with sticks
- Point out shapes that you can see e.g. square or rectangular windows, triangular roofs



How to help your child once they are in school:

- Hear them read, preferably 5 days a week but at least 3 times a week
- Help them with any homework such as sound practise and handwriting
- Attend parent workshops about each subject to find out about how we teach certain skills and the specific support you can give your child
- Contribute to your child's learning journey by noting down new skills and achievements that you have observed at home

Behaviour in School

Our School Rules are Ready, Respectful and Safe. These school rules are all intertwined:

- **Ready to Learn** means that they are able to sit on the carpet and listen to the teacher and that they come to school knowing and expecting that they are going to learn. It is not nursery, they are not just here to play. Children should be listening to teachers and willing to work with the teacher when asked. Children give things a go and try their best.
- **Respectful** means that they treat teachers and their classmates with respect. We listen to each other, we use respectful language, we do





not shout to get what we want. Respectful also means we are respectful of resources: we treat our resources with care, and we tidy them away again.

- **Safe** means we do not engage in behaviours that are not safe for ourselves or others.

Our Behaviour Policy

At Fitzmaurice Primary School we praise loudly and grizzle softly. We consistently look for positive behaviours, we respond to children with calmness and non-judgemental kindness and have clear shared boundaries.

Children who are not making the right choice will be given a reminder about the behaviour we want to see; a caution that continued poor behaviour choices will result in a time-out; a time-out with a scripted conversation about why they are having time out; followed by a restorative conversation that resets the relationship between adult and child, and makes clear the behaviour we expect to see.

Young children may sometimes use physical action to get what they want – e.g. pushing and hitting – as they are developing their communication and self-regulation skills. The Early Years curriculum recognises this as one of the targets for Managing Feelings and Behaviour is ‘Beginning to be able to negotiate and solve problems without aggression e.g. when someone has taken their toy’. This means that pushing in a line and some forms of aggression are age-appropriate forms of behaviour. However children exhibiting these behaviours will still be dealt with in line with our behaviour policy and you will be informed about it. Your child’s teacher will talk to you if such behaviours form a pattern and we will work together to support your child to make good choices.



Accessing Further Support for your Child

There may be times at school where your child may need support, for a whole range of reasons, either in the short term or long term. We have a whole team of people who can help you and your child, from our SENCo Team (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators); Family-School Link Worker, and our Emotional Literacy Support Assistant and Nurture Group. You can find our support team on the ‘Who’s Who’ section of our website in the Additional Support section. If you have any worries about your child, talk to your child’s teacher and they can support you to access the team.