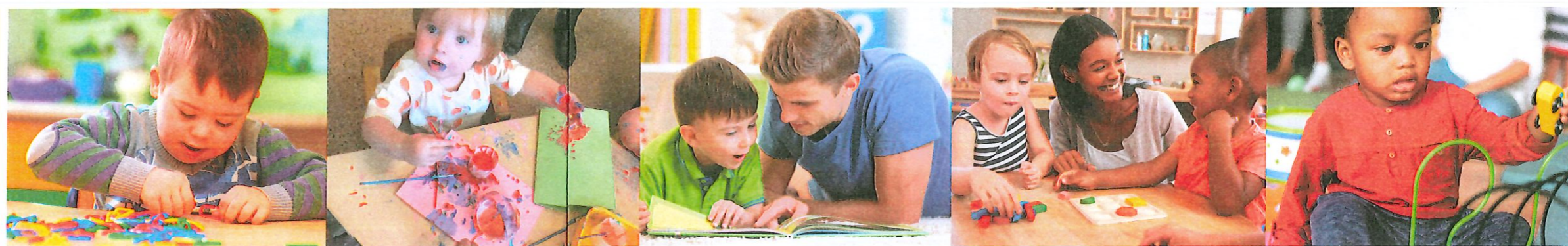


# Ready to START school



An easy guide to help your child to be ready for school

- Ready children
- Ready families
- Ready services

Parents and carers can help their children to be ready for school. This will help them to do well in the whole of their education.

There are lots of people who can help and support you and your child. You can ask for help from your Health Visitor Children's Centre, child's nursery or school.

**ST HELENS**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Start the day! Help your child to be ready for school, with your support.

- Children love helping to get ready for the day.
- Put on their clothes and let them help.
- You will need to make a bit of extra time in the morning to do this.
- They could practise pulling on their underwear, pulling on their jumper and practise getting them the right way round!
- The more practice they have, the easier it will be and the less time it will take.
- Make sure you give them praise for trying.
- You can help them to be school ready by making sure their clothes and shoes have labels in them.
- Choose clothes depending on the weather.
- Teach them how to put their coat on independently.
- Practise fastening zips and buttons.
- Teach them to recognise their own coat, hat and bag.

Together you and your child can do this and there's lots of support out there to help you both prepare for school.

- Talk to your child, but also spend time listening to them.
- This can be simple things like what you are doing around the house; "Let's put our coats on." "Let's get ready for tea."
- Put down your phone when talking with your child.
- Talk to your child about what they can see/hear/smell/feel and taste: "It's sunny today."
- Take your child to meet other children and make opportunities to play together. Children's Centres have lots of activities, where you can meet other children and parents/carers.
- Read stories or share a book and talk about the pictures. Your local library has lots of books to choose from and they are free to borrow!
- In the evening, talk to your child about their day.
- Encourage your child to take turns, but remember adults need to do the same.
- Praise your child for following instructions.

Allow your child to express their feelings about going to school. They may be worried or excited. Talking together is good.

- Talk to your child about what they can expect when they arrive at school, giving simple explanations.
- Encourage your child to try new things and ask for help when they need it.
- Let them know it's ok to say how they are feeling - happy or sad.
- Show them how to ask for help.
- Give them a chance to ask for help with your support, e.g. picking items in a shop or helping to pay.
- Help them identify who to ask for help: friends, brothers and sisters and teachers.
- Play alongside your child, talking about what you are doing.
- Read stories about starting school, e.g. Colour Monster Starts School.

Ready to try different foods, activities and experiences.

- Try new foods together and talk about the names of different foods, including fruit and vegetables.
- Let your child help with simple tasks, when preparing food, washing vegetables and putting out plates and bowls.
- Show your child how to use a knife, fork and spoon.
- Give your child a child-size portion of family meals.
- Give praise for trying new foods and feeding themselves using a fork, knife or spoon.
- Try out new activities using pencils, crayons and paints.
- Don't worry about the mess; it's all part of learning.
- Use items you have around the house to enhance your child's play.
- Spend time out of the house experiencing new things. This can be as simple as going to the park, shops or play centre. Talk about what you are doing, who you will see when you get there and what your child is looking forward to.

Teaching your child to go to the toilet on their own will prepare them for when they are at school and need to use the toilet.

- Talk to your child about using the toilet and washing their hands.
- Make sure your child is wearing clothes that are easy to manage when they want to go to the toilet.
- Let them practise going to the toilet at home and tell them it's ok to go the toilet in school.
- Show your child how to wash their hands and remind them to do this, after going to the toilet and before eating.
- Give your child praise when they try to do this independently.
- Reward charts can help with this.
- Ask for help from your Health Visitor or Children's Centre.