

Starting school - Parents and Carers Guidance during COVID 19.

As parents, your role in supporting children at school is an important one. We appreciate that you are working hard to support your child's home learning and you may have to continue for a while longer due to COVID19. Here are some practical things to help your child succeed in moving to a new school or setting and helping him/her develop positive self-esteem and confidence.

- ❖ Start to introduce routines into your daily life at home. Routines give children a sense of security within their environment. When life is organised and consistent at home, children feel safe, secure and looked after, especially during stressful times
- ❖ Self-help skills - Ensure your child can dress themselves, manage practically in the toilet - wiping, hand-washing. Encourage your child to try on their new uniform if they have one. If your child is not yet toilet trained and you think they are ready, start this process
- ❖ Show your child how to wash their hands properly, this is essential when your child starts their new childminder/setting/school <https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/coronavirus-resources/>
- ❖ Familiarise children with the daily journey to the new childminder/setting/school. It helps children to visualise where they will eventually be going. Look out for displays in the providers window and information
- ❖ Read the prospectus/information booklet and share with your child. It is important to share as much information as possible with your child to reduce anxiety about moving on. Have a look at the website and share photos and video with your child
- ❖ Complete the 'All About Me' form from the childminder/setting/school. Share photographs of your child, family pets etc, information about your family and culture. Share as much information as possible about your child (include any specific needs, support by any professionals/services). At this difficult time your child might need some additional support to settle – it is important to discuss this with the new setting
- ❖ Inform the childminder/setting or school about information relevant to COVID19 – self-isolating family members, shielding members, any underlying conditions that should be considered at this time
- ❖ Home visits will not be possible. Arrange with the childminder/setting/school a virtual meeting (skype, What's App, Zoom). If this is not possible ensure you have a conversation on the telephone
- ❖ It is important you do activities at home to support school readiness. Read stories about starting at the childminders/setting/school/. Play games, it is important to structure some games, but also have free time. Encourage your child to do physical activities to build their muscles and to promote mental health and well-being e.g. hopping, skipping, scissor skills
- ❖ Sign up to the local library, there are online books, physical books and music available for free

The School Readiness webpage has lots more information that can help your child be ready for school <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/education-and-learning/get-children-ready-school>