

Starting school

Encouraging conversations about School



The confirmation of your child's place in school is an important milestone in for you and your child. You will undoubtedly be feeling a mixture of emotions, anxious, excited and worried, which is totally understandable - this is your baby growing up and moving on. What is important is that your anxiety and concerns are not transferred to your child. They must see this as a positive new experience.

Where to start

Over the next few weeks, we will be looking at different ways to support you and your child get ready for school both mentally and physically. So, watch out for further updates.

This week we are concentrating on supporting your child with having those first conversations about school. You need to find the right time to speak to your child, preferably when they are not tired or distracted by play or visual equipment. Begin by showing them the letter of confirmation and explain to them what this letter is about. Ask them how they feel about going to school? What do they know about school? What they might need to go to school - uniform, school bag, lunchbox, etc? If possible, contact the school and find out if they have anything in place to support transitions. If you are friends with parents of children who attend the same nursery, this would be a good time to find out which of your child's friends are going to the same school. This would be helpful for you all, as you can talk about familiar friends who will be attending the same school.

These ideas will help to ensure your child is emotionally prepared for their first day.

For more support, check out 'starting school' on your UP app.

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Visit your child's school

Start a conversation with your child about their school – what is it called? Can they remember? Talk to them about who is going to be taking them to school each morning and how are they going to be travelling there. If you are lucky enough to be within walking distance – why not walk past the school? Remember to talk about road safety and landmarks along the way. When you get to the school talk with your child about what it looks like, where the entrance is, show them the playground, talk about what they see. Take a photo of your child's school and put it in a familiar place – such as on a fridge, where your child can see it everyday.

On return home, allow your child to draw a picture of their school and what they are going to be doing on their first day at school in the playground.

If you are unable to visit either by foot or car – use the internet. You will be able to find a picture of your child's school online or even use google maps street view to virtually travel to school showing your child landmarks along the way.



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Let's talk about comparisons

Let's talk about comparisons. Below is a selection of words that are applicable to nursery and what they are called at school. Play a game with your child to help them understand the differences between nursery and school.

Nursery meaning	School meaning	New school vocabulary words
Nursery	School	Uniform
Garden	Playground	School shoes
Key person	Teacher	Gym or P.E bag
Snack-time	Play-time/Break	Gym or P.E shoes
Paper	Jotter	Gym shorts
Table	Desk	Pencil case
Pre-school Room	Classroom	Jotters
Computer	Whiteboard	Rubber and sharpener
Nursery Manager	Head Teacher	Ruler
Backpack	School Bag/Book Bag	Lunch box
Nursery Kitchen	Canteen/Dinner Hall	Drinks bottle
		Lining up



NB: Don't tell your child the answer straight away. In nursery we use the "think time rule" - research shows that if you give your child at least 7 seconds to think of the answer you will get a better response.

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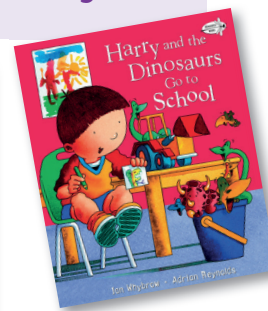
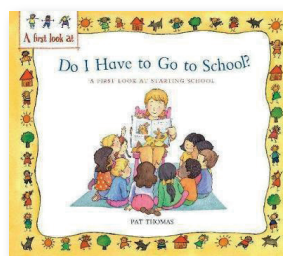
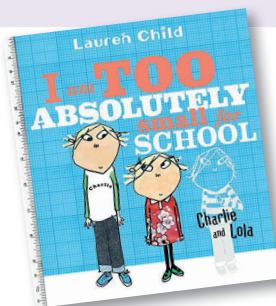
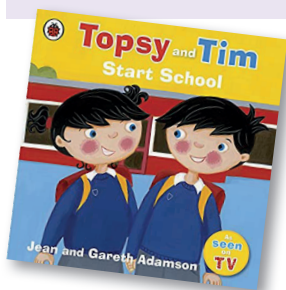
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Stories to support children going to school



There are many fantastic stories to support children going to school. Why not order books online from Waterstones? Remember as a Busy Bees parent you receive a **10% discount on online sales from Waterstones**. Log into UP and search for 'our favourite books' to find the discount code. These can become part of your child's bedtime routine. Sit down with your child and spend time looking at what books are available and allow them to choose a couple for bedtime. Here are some suggestions:

- **Topsy And Tim Start School, by Jean and Gareth Adamson**
- **I Am Too Absolutely Small For School, by Laura Child**
- **Do I Have To Go To School, by Pat Thomas**
- **Harry And The Dinosaurs Go To School, by Ian Whybrow and Adrian Reynolds**



Alternatively, Cbeebies App is packed with lots of little videos of children talking about starting school to help children feel confident. Like Topsy and Tim. **Watch Topsy and Tim's Top Tips**

Talk to your child about the story they have read or the clip they have watched – how do they feel about starting school now? Do they have any worries? What are they excited about?

