

HORDLE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY



Starting Reception

Your child's journey to
school starts at home

Introduction

We understand that all children develop at their own pace, and that we're all learning from birth. When it's time to start school, some children will need more help than others.

There are some key skills that all schools expect children to be learning before their first day. Practising these will make your child's journey to Reception as positive as possible.

If your child is already at nursery, in pre-school, or with a childminder, those professionals will work with you and your child to help get them ready. There's lots you can do at home to build your child's confidence and independence, helping them feel emotionally and practically prepared to start school.

How can I help my child get ready?

Your child will have lots of new activities and routines to get used to when they start school. There are some things they'll need to do more independently than they might have before.

Research shows that a child's relationship with their parents is the most important factor in their development, and there's a lot you can do at home.

When your child is at home with you or another caregiver, you can practise as a family with fun activities (we've included links at the end of this resource).

Some of these skills take time to master, so it's good to introduce them gradually in your daily routine.



Skills to practise before starting Reception:

The Reception Year is a special year at school where children begin to develop a wide range of skills. In order to make the transition from pre-school to primary school as smooth as possible, it will be essential to consider the following skills.

Growing independence

Taking care of themselves

- Putting on/taking off their coat and shoes (consider shoes with velcro rather than laces)
- Independently using the toilet and washing their hands (including being able to wipe their own bottom)
- Getting dressed with little help, e.g. after using the toilet or doing PE
- Using cutlery (e.g. fork and spoon,) and drinking from an open cup to be able to independently feed themselves
- Recognising their own name when it is written down (if they can recognise their name they can easily find their peg, read the name label in their clothing etc)
- Spending time away from you, learning they can be looked after by caring adults



Play, creativity and curiosity

- Taking part in imaginative play (e.g. role play)
- Drawing, painting, colouring and sticking
- Counting, building and doing puzzles
- Exploring the world around them (e.g. looking closely at the natural world, noticing numbers, patterns and shapes, playing safely with objects at home)



Building relationships and communicating



Being with others

- Practising sharing and taking turns with toys
- To understand that there are rules and why they are important. Our school rules help to keep us safe, at home you could talk about simple rules that you follow at home
- Talking to them about **how** they are feeling and **why**
- Looking at story books together and speaking about what characters are feeling is a good way to do this
- Beginning to recognise what others are feeling, e.g. understanding if a friend is sad
- Encouraging them to set boundaries for themselves and others (e.g. knowing how to say 'no' or 'please stop, I don't like that').

Communication and language

- To talk to adults using full sentences, encourage your child to speak using more than a one/two words or pointing.
- Singing along with songs and nursery rhymes
- Talking happily to others about activities, experiences and the world around them
- Showing they need help by speaking clearly (in basic English or sign language)

Listening and engaging

- Paying attention for short periods of time
- Taking part in an adult chosen activity before being allowed to engage in a self chosen one
- Listening to and following simple instructions
- Carrying on with a task even when it's difficult and bouncing back if things go wrong



Physical development



Getting moving for at least three hours a day

- Walking up and down steps (one foot at a time, using the wall for support)
- Doing simple puzzles and craft activities, strengthening their grip with cutting and sticking
- Climbing, running, jumping and playing
- Catching a large ball (most of the time)



Healthy routines



- Going to bed around the same time each night, waking up in time to get ready for school
- Limiting screen time to the recommended daily amounts ([see advice](#))
- Eating a healthy diet and trying new foods
- Brushing their teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day (you'll need to supervise this until they are at least 7)



New skills take time to learn. Practising at home will help your child move into school more easily and with confidence.

What should I do if I have concerns about my child's development?

- If you're worried about your child's progress, please talk to us as soon as possible to share details about their development, needs, what motivates them, what might trigger difficulties, how they learn best, and what strategies work well.
- Research tells us that summer born children, or those speaking English as an additional language (EAL) may need more support.
- You can work with your child's current early years setting to help your child with self-care, managing emotions, social skills, and communication in a way that suits their stage of development during the summer term.
- If your child needs additional support to settle into Reception, make sure you share as much information as possible with us. We can work with you to find strategies to support your child.

If you know or suspect your child has special educational needs (SEND), developmental differences or delays, some of the skills mentioned in this information pack may not be achievable for them at this point.

Early intervention makes a big difference – ask your child's nursery, school, health visitor, local children's centre or Family Hub for help.

If you believe your child may have Special Educational Needs, we suggest you make an appointment to discuss this with your child's class teacher. We have a school SENCO on site who may be able to provide further advice and support.