

My child is starting school ... what should be I doing?

A list of suggested activities and ideas for parents of pre-school pupils:

- Encourage children to dress themselves (including shoes) and use the toilet independently.
- Young children learn through play: spend time with them as they play, listening and watching so that you can add a little extra to what they are already learning.
- Talk to them a lot – always try to add to their spoken vocabulary.
- Make sure they can listen carefully and repeat and obey simple instructions.
- Read to them regularly from well-illustrated books they can enjoy.
- Ensure they know how much you enjoy books and how useful books are.
- Sometimes point to the words as you read, showing how we scan from left to right.
- Let them finish some sentences or predict the outcome of a story. Make up stories for them and get them to help with ideas. Teach them nursery rhymes and number rhymes.
- Encourage games that help them recognise similar shapes – snap, happy families, picture lotto, and jigsaw puzzles. Also encourage counting games such as snakes and ladders.
- Let them help you with jobs, especially ‘sorting out and putting in order’ jobs like tidying a cupboard or setting a table.
- Make sure they tidy away their own toys.
- Let them experience many different materials – paint, play-dough, sand, water, paper, scissors and paste. A painting overall and plenty of newspaper or plastic sheeting for the floor will help you both to enjoy the experience!
- Finally, if they want to learn some letter shapes, make sure they are lower case (small letters) not capitals. Please ask us for a copy of the letter shapes we teach. Tell them the sounds letters make.