

Top Tips for Parents/Carers to Support Children's Transitions

Visit, watch a virtual tour or look at photos of your child's school or ELC setting.



Share some positive ideas about nursery/school with your child.



Communicate with staff from the school or ELC setting.



Read a story about going to school/nursery.

Pack your child's favourite toy or comforter to take with them to nursery or mouse knitted for school.



Practise walking the route to school/the ELC setting.



Top 10 Tips for Parents/Carers to Support Children's Transitions

- 1. Visit, watch a virtual tour or look at photos of your child's school or nursery**
Most settings will arrange for you to come for a visit. Some settings may create virtual tours for your child to watch, or share pictures of the setting to help your child to familiarise themselves with their new learning environment. Talk to your child about what they see and like and have positive conversations about starting school/nursery.
- 2. Communicate with staff from the school or nursery**
The setting will want to chat to you to find out more about your child before they start school/nursery. This could be during a visit, or via telephone, email, letter in the post etc. Settings will set up a profile for your child and will welcome your contributions, where they can get to know you as a family. This will form the beginning of a learning profile for your child and will be an opportunity for you to find out more about what the setting will do to support your child.
- 3. Share some positive ideas about school/nursery with your child**
Talk with your child about going to school/nursery. Tell positive stories of when you were at school/nursery - e.g. the songs you sang, the games you played with friends and the fun you had. Accept that your child may have fears, but try to reassure them e.g. 'I can see that you're worried, but remember you will make new friends'.
- 4. Read a story about going to school/nursery**
Reading stories about going to school/nursery will help your child to talk about anything they want to ask, or are curious about, any feelings they might have around starting, whether these are positive or worries. This is an opportunity to support them through these emotions. For story ideas, please see the end of this document. If your child is starting P1, there will be a number of stories linked to the Mid Mouse project.
- 5. Try hard to keep positive - a smile goes a long way ☺**
Children pick up on emotional cues/anxiety from you. They are attuned to your body language and feelings/emotions. A smile can go a long way in helping your child feel confident:

'If you see someone without a smile, give them one of yours.'
- 6. Allow time to settle your child, where possible**
If possible, try to plan ahead for your child starting school/nursery by setting aside time to support them to settle. Some children will settle more quickly than others and some may settle initially and then regress at a later date - this is perfectly normal.
- 7. Make dressing easy!**
Put your child in clothes that are easy for them to pull on and off, especially if they are newly toilet trained. Shoes with Velcro fastening will make them feel more independent, as they won't need to ask for help tying the laces. Contact your child's school if you are unsure or are unable to get hold of school clothes.
- 8. Pack your child's favourite toy or comforter to take with them to school/nursery**
If your child has a favourite cuddly toy or comforter, this may help them to settle into their new setting, as they make connections between home and their new environment. You might hear staff calling these toys 'transitional objects'. When your child is more settled, staff may offer to keep your child's comforter in a special safe place that they can see or access if needed. If your child is starting Primary 1 they can take their little mouse to school when they start.
- 9. Practise walking the route to school/nursery**
Talk to your child about the things that they see on their way to the school/nursery. You could make a map of your route with your child and create some activities together to familiarise them with the journey. For example, you could look at the different door numbers along the way or if you pass a shop, you could play shops at home and talk about the shop you saw on your route.
- 10. Have a good bedtime routine**
Having a good bedtime routine for your child and yourself, as a parent/carer, is important to keep

Useful Websites and Further Information for Parents/Carers

Parent Club <https://www.parentclub.scot/>

Sleep Scotland <https://www.sleepscotland.org/support/gateway-to-good-sleep/>

[Learning at Home: Ideas for parents and carers about Early Level](#)

Starting School/Nursery Book List and Interactives Stories

Scottish Book Trust - 12 books for little ones starting school

<https://www.scottishbooktrust.com/book-lists/books-about-starting-school>

The following stories are accessible on 'You Tube':

- ❖ George's First Day at Playgroup
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_aKtcsVBbU
- ❖ Maisy Goes to Nursery
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gA_wOTmIMEw

- ❖ Mouse's First Night at Moonlight School
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLYdOt80aEg>
- ❖ Harry and the Dinosaurs go to School
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gCR42DG1joU>
- ❖ Topsy and Tim Start School
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WMnQ_IezQAE
- ❖ Spot Goes to School <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XKn4FSp6Q-Y>