

School Readiness

Rationale

Parents often believe that school readiness is something that a child should be achieving before starting reception class, but this could be better described as ready for the school transition. School readiness should be displayed just before a child leaves the foundation stage to start year one.

Although, this is the case childcare practitioners still have an important role to play in supporting and promoting the school transition and in developing key skills that will support the child's move from the early year's curriculum (Early Years Foundation Stage, EYFS) into primary year one (key stage 1, National Curriculum).

Listed below are some of the characteristics that could show school readiness:

- Independent in toileting
- Able to dress themselves
- Understands expected levels of behaviour
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Can take turns and share
- Can sit still for a short period
- Can separate from parents/carers
- Communication and language skills needed to communicate needs and listen to others
- Can actively learn and creatively and critically think

Some of these characteristics may be difficult for all children to achieve and this shouldn't leave parents or carers concerned that a child isn't school ready. Always remember that every child is unique, as the EYFS states not every child develops at age related stages! Every child's individual achievement, differences and beliefs are shared and encouraged within the Pre-School Centre.

The important thing is that practitioners are aware of these characteristics and can put steps in place to encourage a child to develop the skills. Getting support and identifying any areas of weakness early is critical in ensuring the gaps are narrowed and that all children are given the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Documents called tracking sheets are completed termly to help identify any areas of weakness, as well as ongoing observations of your child, playing and interacting with others, within the setting.

During the end of term 3, your child's keyworker will produce a summary transition booklet to support the transition into school. The document concludes your child's learning throughout their journey with us, it includes a summary of their experiences moving through the learning objectives, a section for parents to complete and of course,

a section for your child's voice. This can be scribed for the child by you, by us, or an area where they may like to draw a picture or make some of their own marks! This is a key skill in promoting confidence and a sense of value throughout the school transition.

Key phrases to prompt your child to completing this section could be 'what did you enjoy best about pre-school?', 'what did you like to play with?', give them little prompts and sit back and wait. We always enjoy reading this section!

Many of the activities and experiences that your child completes and shares, within the Pre School environment contribute to a successful school transition.

Below are such skills that we have identified and promote throughout the year:

- Supporting and encouraging your child, to use the toilet independently and to wipe their bottoms, using health and hygiene practices every time. Using lots of encouragement and praise when completed.
- Encouraging your child to take off and put on own jumpers or cardigans and coats for outdoor play: it can be easier and quicker to do this for them but supporting a child to do it themselves will help them to learn the skill independently. This can also be done with putting on own shoes and socks, we provided a changing station at the beginning of term two in January, to encourage your child to take off their shoes, put on wellies and coats for outdoor play. Parents/carers can support this by encouraging, supporting and praising their child when they have a go!
- Using problem solving techniques to encourage children to deal with conflict, without the intervention of an adult, however the adult can show support and model the expected behaviour in these situations. The practitioner is always positive and expresses the behaviour that they would like to see rather than the behaviour you don't want to see, i.e., we are kind to our friends instead of no fighting, etc
- Praise and encouragement, this is clearly evident throughout every day EYFS practice, we promote this further through sharing proud moments in each child's learning journal. Children in our setting are able to display their work they are proud of on display boards and tell us about themselves and their family events, through the rainbow of news display. Playing games and having group carpet time encourages, communication and language development, turn-taking and listening skills.

Research suggests that the development of the above skills and other early years experiences are essential in developing and determining a child's future outcomes, therefore promoting these skills as early as possible, is the best way to ensure every child gets the support they need to succeed.

For more information regarding school readiness:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/early-years-childcare-andfamily-support/family-support/getting-ready-to-start-school/>

Reviewed by Saskia Gregory & Lisa Best 05.05.2022

Next review 05.05.2023