

How to prepare for Reception 2023



Why it is important to prepare?

We know here at Howley Grange that starting school is a big step for you. We understand that this is a time of mixed emotions, you may feel both excited and a little nervous at the same time.

There is nothing to worry about but to help you prepare, here are some practical skills that you can work on at home over the Summer. Practising these will help you build confidence in each skill and will help you to become more independent, ready for September.

We feel that with a little bit of preparation you can feel happier and more confident when starting on this new and exciting adventure called school!

1. Getting dressed...

It might be quicker for your grown up to get you ready/dressed at home each day, but in school your grown up will not be there and therefore you will need to be able to dress and undress yourself when going to the toilet and for PE. It will also be great if you could put on and zip up your coat independently, ready for any outdoor activities.

Dressing up is a fun way to practise these skills at home, and using chunky buttons, velcro and zips, at first, makes it much easier for little fingers. Being able to put on your coat independently and do it up can really give you a head start at school!

Sing along at home to the song below, while you practise getting dressed with your grown up.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GDFa-nEzlg>

2. Making friends...

We know that meeting a whole classroom full of new playmates can be a little overwhelming. To help ease this worry, at home during the Summer, your grown up could help you think of ways that you might start a conversation with somebody new to you. You may also want to practise sharing and taking turns as these are important life skills that will help you make and keep friends. Play dates can be a great opportunity to build confidence and practise essential social skills too. Don't worry if you don't have any/many friends yet-we'll help you make lots in September!

Watch the clip below with your grown up and talk about what makes a good friend.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJhtuYyGBSs>

3. Eating lunch...

Lunch can be a time many of you worry a little about. There is no need to worry though, your teachers will be there at the start to help you and the lunchtime supervisors will also be there. To help you prepare for lunchtimes, you can practise opening and closing your lunchbox at home, if you are bringing one to school in September. Making sure you can open the containers and peel any fruit. If you are going to be having school dinners, it's worth practising eating different kinds of food with cutlery while at home. You could also try some new foods at home during the Summer, foods that you may see at school.

See the song below to help prepare you for lunchtime fun...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxXLROCe0jY>

4. Handling emotions...

It's completely normal for you to get emotional during your first few weeks of school. Ask your grown up to explain that it is completely ok to feel this way and that it is ok to get things wrong (that's how we learn!) or to feel shy. At home over the Summer, you could practise techniques for calming yourself down, ready for if you get a little upset or worried in September.

When you start school, take time before bed each night to talk with your grown up about how the day went and discuss any worries you might have about the next day. Watch the video below, to understand different emotions you may feel...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-J7HcVLsCrY>

5. Communicating with others...

As well as listening and concentrating in the classroom, you will need to be able to follow simple instructions and know how to ask for help when it's needed-we all need a little help sometimes. Confidence in communicating with grown-ups can help you to feel happy and settled early on in school. Cooking or baking together with your grown up is a great way to practise following simple instructions. Practise following instructions with the song below...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hW2DDGX7Tcc>

6. Going to the toilet...

At home you might ask a grown up to help you wipe your bottom after you have been to the toilet. In school your teachers will not be able to help you with this (although we will talk you through it!) So over the Summer, have a go at practising wiping your own bottom and just getting your grown up to check. Don't forget that when you go to the toilet you must wash your hands afterwards. Take a look at the 'How to wash your hands' song below...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDHJW4r3eIE>

7. Recognising your name...

At home you might like to practise recognising your name. Look at the shapes of the letters to help you. Play a game with your grown up- ask a grown up to write down all the names of the people in your family, mix them up-can you find yours? You may also want to practise by having each letter in your name on a separate piece of paper, mix them up-can you put them in the right order and recognise that it spells your name? Recognising your name is an important skill to practise.

You could also practise writing your name over the Summer (don't worry if you're not able to do it YET, we'll help you learn when you're ready!) ☺

7. Learning some of your letter sounds (phonemes)...

When you start school, you will have daily phonics lessons with your teacher. Together we will learn what sound each letter makes. We will then start blending them together to make words e.g. s-i-t = sit. Over the Summer, you might want to practise learning some using the resource below. We follow Bug Club Phonics here at Howley but we also love to sing different songs (to help us learn) and you will hear them lots when you start at school. Your grown up may not enjoy them as much as they do get stuck in your head. In school, the sounds we will learn first are: s, a, t, p, i and n.

Pronunciation of sounds guide

Have fun preparing
yourselves for starting
school! We can't wait to
play and learn alongside
you.