



Starting School Top Ten Tips

Being a parent is not easy. When your child starts school it can be an anxious time for both of you. Here are some tips which you may find helpful.

- 1. Starting school** - Going to school for the first time is a big event for children. Visit the school before your child starts so that the journey, building and people are familiar.
- 2. Have patience** - Sometimes children's behaviour becomes babyish when they start school, they can swing from being dependent one minute to independent the next, be patient with them, give them a cuddle and show a genuine interest in their worries.
- 3. Establish a routine** - Mornings can be especially stressful for both of you. Establish a morning routine and make sure your child has breakfast. Give yourself and your child enough time to get ready in the morning especially if they are beginning to dress themselves.
- 4. Show interest** - Show a genuine interest in everything your child does, both in school and at home, encourage them to talk to you about how they are feeling.
- 5. Praise them** - Praise them at every opportunity. If they do something that pleases you, tell them.

6. **Time to relax** - When children start school the day can be very long and tiring for them, allow them time to relax when they get home. Children have a continuing need for love, support and encouragement from those who love them the most.
7. **Spend time together** - Try to spend even a small amount of time doing something together each day, even if this is watching their favourite TV programme with them and talking to them about it.
8. **Have fun** - Starting school is an anxious time for all children, having fun and playing with your child helps to alleviate some of the anxiety and play helps children to manage new situations and develop social skills.
9. **Talk to the teacher** - Make a point of talking to your child's teacher if you are worried about anything at all. It's best to voice concerns early on even if you think that it's just a small concern. Regularly attend parent's evenings and school meetings – it shows your child and the school that you are interested in how everything is going.
10. **Look after yourself** - Parents today have a difficult and complex job to do but parents don't need to be perfect. Make sure you look after yourself and have people to talk to when you need to. Try to spend some time thinking about your own life and priorities.

And remember - asking for help is a sign of strength not weakness

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