

## Starting primary school is a big step....

for you and your child. You may be looking forward to this next step with your child... or you may be feeling anxious about how well your child will settle in.

You may be a bit upset that your baby isn't a baby anymore! And just like us our children's emotions may be all over the place too and that's ok!

One thing is for sure.... You'll want to do everything you can to give them the best start!

"did I ever tell you about my P1 teacher..." "I remember my first day, I was nervous and excited"

"I'm looking forward to learning all about colours with you"

"remember that the teachers are there to help you so it's ok to ask for help"

## Preparing

- Create a positive attitude towards learning – talk about all the different activities they will be involved in.
- Visit the school/practice the school run
- Practice saying goodbye and create your own little goodbye ritual (see our ideas on managing being apart)
- Remember to put labels on everything!! Those lunch boxes and jumpers can soon disappear
- Talk about your own school days –
- Read/make up stories/roles play with teddies about someone starting school. Explore the feelings.

"I will miss you but I will be excited to see you again and hear all about it!"

Remember ALL emotions are OK,

## THE FIRST DAY/S

- Routine; give yourself time to prepare and feel relaxed. It could be helpful to have all the uniform laid out and shoes by the door from the night before.
- Give yourself extra time to arrive at school – it's good to be prepared for any last minute wobbles on your way out the door.
- Remember to take first day photo!!!!
- Encourage child to build friendships – model this by how you talk to the other parents and children in the playground
- Explore those normal and natural nervous/excited feelings. How we all get the "funny Tummy"
- Remember your goodbye routine!!



### PLAN YOUR OWN DAY TOO...

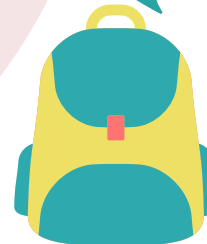
Have tissues at the ready – it's ok to have a tear or two your child might be feeling that way too. Just try not to prolong those goodbyes!

Connect with other parents in the playground. They may be feeling the same way. It's also a nice time to build relationships with other families for you and your child. Remember that you'll all be on this journey together for the next 7 years.

Have something gentle planned for yourself for that morning – no stress! Maybe meeting a friend/ going for a walk – take the time to connect with nature and the world around you, getting to drink that cup of tea or coffee while it's hot etc

Put on some soothing or happy music when you get back to the car or on your headphones

Be PROUD of yourself and your little one. This is a huge step in you and your child's life.



## Hometime

- Have some snacks at the ready!
- Remember the pressure cooker effect – your child may have been managing big feelings all day and need release when they come home.
- Have some quality or one to one time with your child to celebrate first day.
- Keep to short simple questions to not overwhelm your child; "what funny thing happened today?" "Did you enjoy eating your snack in the classroom"
- Tell them how your day went – they'll want to know that you were ok without them too even though you missed each other.
- Empty their bookbag/lunch box for notes if they have one. Do this together so your child feels you are a part of their school life as well.

## Being apart

For some children being apart from parent/carer can be hard. Some gentle tips to support you and your child;

Heart Hands...Draw a heart on your hand and theirs

Heart strings...tie an invisible string to your child's heart and remind them its connected to you all day long

Paper KISS post it with a X in lunchbox

Hug button – could be an actual button on their school shirt or tshirt/ the heart or star shaped zipper on pinafore – if the press it they send a hug, if they rub it they get a hug or a pebble with a heart on it.

Comfort item in bag or special Keyring on zip



## REMEMBER....

Tune in and talk about their/your feelings.

Be prepared for regression – more cuddles needed. This is normal.

## Supporting your child through the school year

- Familiarise yourself with what your child is learning
- Get access to school rules/policies
- What facilities are there in the school for children and for parents?
- Attend parent meetings
- Are there any courses or workshops in the school for parents?
- ASK advice on how you can best support your child's learning at home?
- Seek advice and support when you need

If you or anyone you know would like some support, advice or ear to listen remember Parentline are **HERE** for you



- Here for you
- Ear to listen
- Respect
- Every parent



**PARENTLINE ARE HERE**

Mon-Thurs 9am-9pm

Fri 9am-5pm

Sat 9am-1pm

webchat; [ci-ni.org.uk](https://ci-ni.org.uk)

email;

[parentline@ci-ni.org.uk](mailto:parentline@ci-ni.org.uk)



# Starting School

