



Ready to **START** school

**An easy guide to help your
child to be ready for school**

- Ready children**
- Ready families**
- Ready services**



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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- ✓ **Ready families**
- ✓ **Ready services**

Parents and carers can help their children to be ready for school. This will help them to do well in the whole of their education.

There are lots of people who can help and support you and your child. You can ask for help from your Health Visitor Children's Centre, child's nursery or school.



Start the day! Help your child to be ready for school, with your support.

- ✓ Children love helping to get ready for the day.
- ✓ Put on their clothes and let them help.
- ✓ You will need to make a bit of extra time in the morning to do this.
- ✓ They could practise pulling on their underwear, pulling on their jumper and practise getting them the right way round!
- ✓ The more practice they have, the easier it will be and the less time it will take.
- ✓ Make sure you give them praise for trying.
- ✓ You can help them to be school ready by making sure their clothes and shoes have labels in them.
- ✓ Choose clothes depending on the weather.
- ✓ Teach them how to put their coat on independently.
- ✓ Practise fastening zips and buttons.
- ✓ Teach them to recognise their own coat, hat and bag.



Together you and your child can do this and there's lots of support out there to help you both prepare for school.

- ✓ Talk to your child, but also spend time listening to them.
- ✓ This can be simple things like what you are doing around the house; "Let's put our coats on." "Let's get ready for tea."
- ✓ Put down your phone when talking with your child.
- ✓ Talk to your child about what they can see/hear/smell/feel and taste: "It's sunny today."
- ✓ Take your child to meet other children and make opportunities to play together. Children's Centres have lots of activities, where you can meet other children and parents/carers.
- ✓ Read stories or share a book and talk about the pictures. Your local library has lots of books to choose from and they are free to borrow!
- ✓ In the evening, talk to your child about their day.
- ✓ Encourage your child to take turns, but remember adults need to do the same.
- ✓ Praise your child for following instructions.



Allow your child to express their feelings about going to school. They may be worried or excited. Talking together is good.

- ✓ Talk to your child about what they can expect when they arrive at school, giving simple explanations.
- ✓ Encourage your child to try new things and ask for help when they need it.
- ✓ Let them know it's ok to say how they are feeling - happy or sad.
- ✓ Show them how to ask for help.
- ✓ Give them a chance to ask for help with your support, e.g. picking items in a shop or helping to pay.
- ✓ Help them identify who to ask for help: friends, brothers and sisters and teachers.
- ✓ Play alongside your child, talking about what you are doing.
- ✓ Read stories about starting school, e.g. Colour Monster Starts School.



Ready to try different foods, activities and experiences.

- ✓ Try new foods together and talk about the names of different foods, including fruit and vegetables.
- ✓ Let your child help with simple tasks, when preparing food, washing vegetables and putting out plates and bowls.
- ✓ Show your child how to use a knife, fork and spoon.
- ✓ Give your child a child-size portion of family meals.
- ✓ Give praise for trying new foods and feeding themselves using a fork, knife or spoon.
- ✓ Try out new activities using pencils, crayons and paints.
- ✓ Don't worry about the mess; it's all part of learning.
- ✓ Use items you have around the house to enhance your child's play.
- ✓ Spend time out of the house experiencing new things. This can be as simple as going to the park, shops or play centre. Talk about what you are doing, who you will see when you get there and what your child is looking forward to.



Teaching your child to go to the toilet on their own will prepare them for when they are at school and need to use the toilet.

- ✓ Talk to your child about using the toilet and washing their hands.
- ✓ Make sure your child is wearing clothes that are easy to manage when they want to go to the toilet.
- ✓ Let them practise going to the toilet at home and tell them it's ok to go the toilet in school.
- ✓ Show your child how to wash their hands and remind them to do this, after going to the toilet and before eating.
- ✓ Give your child praise when they try to do this independently.
- ✓ Reward charts can help with this.
- ✓ Ask for help from your Health Visitor or Children's Centre.

Registering for a School Place

Parent/Carers can apply for their child's primary school by visiting www.sthelens.org/admissions. The closing date for primary applications is the 15th January. Parents will be informed of their offer on the 16th April (unless the 16th falls on a weekend or bank holiday) and then offers will be made on the next week day.

For more information you can contact the Primary School Admissions Officer on **01744 671035** or alternatively email schooladmissions@sthelens.gov.uk

- If you have any worries, talk to your child's Key Worker, Children's Centre Worker, Health Visitor or GP.
- Has your child had their preschool vaccinations?
- Attend a nursery, preschool or childminding setting, as this will support your child to develop all the skills they need to be ready to start school.
- Talk to your child about their day at school.
- Let your child practise putting on their school uniform.
- Be on time for preschool / nursery / childminder every day; this is all practice for starting school.
- Take your child to your local library. It is free to join and free to borrow books.
- Read a book with your child or share a book and talk about the pictures.



Signpost to Services

Some useful and helpful contacts

0-19 Service

The 0-19 Service in Wirral has a dedicated children and young people's website - www.wchc.nhs.uk/children or tel: **01744 624925**

With the click of a button, parents, carers, and young people can access a range of local and tailored support, information, and advice, including videos and resources - ranging from baby packs to fussy eating, puberty support to vaccination schedules, as well as local online support groups. To search for a particular service, you can either use the A-Z service directory or the search function. Young people can also complete the online feedback form about their experiences of the services they've received.

You can also stay up-to-date with all things Health Visiting and School Nursing by linking the dedicated Facebook pages [@0219HVHub](https://www.facebook.com/0219HVHub) and [@MyHealthWirral](https://www.facebook.com/MyHealthWirral)

NHS Choices

Information and contact details for health and additional support on topics such as:
potty training
healthy eating
common childhood illnesses
common sleep problems in children
childhood allergies

Your choices in the NHS - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/about-the-nhs/your-choices-in-the-nhs/>

Children's Centres

Children's Centres provide a range of activities that support school readiness, and improve parental aspirations, which enhance outcomes for children and families.

<https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/childrenscentres>

Tel: **01744673445**

The Incredible Years Parenting Programme

Strengthens parent/carer and child interactions, supports school readiness and promotes positive attachments, whilst reducing harsh discipline measures.

<https://incredibleyears.com/programs/parent/>

Tel: **01744676543**



Library Services

Libraries welcome children from the very earliest months of life, helping parents and carers to support them as they grow and learn. Working with schools and other partners, libraries provide a range of activities such as read and rhyme times that can introduce babies and children to the wonderful world of books. Libraries also offer access to the internet, printing and scanning.

01744 676954

<https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/libraries/>

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/what-we-do/programmes-and-campaigns/bookstart/>

Passport to 2s

Some children who are two years of age can access up to 15 hours of funded early education per week, for 38 weeks of the year, depending on their individual family circumstances.

The 'Passport for 2s' scheme has been introduced in St Helens to make it easier for those who are entitled to access up to 15 hours of funded early education for their two-year-old.

If you are eligible, you could access a placement with a school pre-school, a private nursery or pre-school or with a registered childminder. You can find a list of the eligibility criteria along with more information on how to apply.

Early Education Entitlement Manager
St Helens Borough Council
Early Education Entitlement Team
PO Box 512
ST HELENS
WA10 9JX

01744 676542

All children will be entitled to 15 hours funding for 3 and 4-year-olds from the term after their third birthday until they start school.

Homestart

The prospect of children starting school or nursery can be a worrying time especially if parents/carers feel their child is not ready for the next chapter. We offer individual play sessions in the home focusing on specific areas of development and encouraging independence.

www.homestartsthelens.org.uk tel: 01744 737400



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