

Preparing your child for school

Starting school can be both an exciting and yet nervous time for both children and their parents. At Shadwell Childcare we understand that you would like to ensure your child will have all of the skills to allow them to settle into their new reception class. This guide has been produced in response to previous parent communication and will hopefully help with a smooth transition for your child as they move from nursery to school.



Be Happy!

The main priority for our children is for them to be happy and confident when they start school. At nursery we work hard to ensure that your child has all of the skills they need to make the move to school as easy as possible for them. It has been shown that children who are settled, happy and confident with their nursery environment are more likely to engage and concentrate when in school allowing for greater education, **this is extremely important to us as a setting**. We work hard to offer a fun and stimulating environment to show your child that nursery, and school, are fun places.

Be Ready!

Parents would also like their children to be able to recognise or write their name and have an understanding of numbers. You also wanted your child to be able to sit and listen at carpet time to develop concentration and to learn to follow instructions such as tidy up time. Our focused moderation and tracking ensures that the Key Person has a deep understanding of your child and activities are created to help each child achieve their best across all of the 7 areas of learning. Our children have lots of small group work developing focus and concentration and share exciting stories and take turns in large group circle time.

Be Independent!

We encourage self-care, hand washing and clear bathroom expectations as we aim to give them as much independence as possible. We teach them how to put on their own coats and shoes and encourage them to cut up their food and eat their lunch using the cutlery. All things that can also be practiced at home but give a child independence and confidence.

Seven Areas of Learning

Each day our staff use Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to plan activities that will allow each child to engage in activities that give them new skills. Your child's Key Person will assess and track your child's progress and monitor their development.

Children should mostly develop the 3 prime areas first. These are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development



These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning. At nursery we work hard to ensure that all children are as secure as possible in these areas. As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in 4 specific areas. These are:



- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Expressive arts and design
- Understanding the world

You will find the Parents Guide to the EYFS which explains how the areas are used for each child's development on the Parents notice board.

How we Plan and Assess across all areas of the Early Years curriculum

To plan effectively we observe each child's development and learning, assess progress and plan for next steps. At Shadwell Childcare, ongoing formative assessment is at the heart of our practice. We observe children as they act and interact in their play both from planned activities and free flow play. We consider ways to support the children to strengthen and deepen their current learning and development. Organic planning follows each child's individual interests to keep them engaged and enjoying their learning.



Maths

We engage children in maths continually through play and also focused activities. We use the children's interests to lead our planning. Mathematics learning can be found throughout the setting weaved into every area. For example we may number all of our vehicles and chalk parking spaces on the floor, the children can then park the vehicles in the correct space matching the numbers. We try to use the outdoor environment as much as we can too and collect leaves and stones which can be painted with numbers.

Members of staff also sit with groups and individual children for planned maths activities and fun number games. It is important to ensure children understand the concept behind numbers 'what makes 3' rather than learning 1-100 with no deeper knowledge.

All staff recently attended a maths mastery course where we received the very latest methods for teaching young children maths and a deeper understanding of numbers and patterns.

We plan appropriately across all areas of the Early Years curriculum so your child has all the skills ready for school. We introduce our children to mark making, listening and communicating, following instructions and maths work - all through play activities or specific small group work. Young children learn tremendous amounts when singing, sharing stories, playing games and talking to each other. Our provision in both Sunflower and Bluebell rooms provides the opportunities to help your child develop and learn following their own interests.

Phonics

In both Bluebell and Sunflower rooms, we follow the guidance from the DoE document "Letters and Sounds" Phase 1. These are adult-led activities which focus on the 7 aspects of the Letter and Sounds programme. It begins with environmental sounds and instrumental sounds through to oral blending and segmenting. This lays the foundations for the phonic work that start in Phase 2 (Reception).

- Our daily sound box engages children directly relating sounds and objects
- Adult led phonics activities with small groups, dependent on abilities, as they progress through all aspects of Phase 1 Letters and Sounds
- Jolly Phonics Songs with actions and writing letters is a daily activity
- We offer mark making areas for developing fine motor skills



At Shadwell Childcare, we give every child the opportunities to develop their confidence by talking to their peers at registration and sharing their news, discussing emotions and feelings in circle time and concentration skills are developed in small focused group activities



- Registration time we listen for our name and can share our exciting news
- Quiet times, such as story time, to develop listening skills, recalling events from stories, using communication skills to tell their own versions of them. They are able to enjoy a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books in our cosy book corners.
- Singing rhymes and songs throughout the nursery day develops important listening skills, tuning into those rhyming words and predicting what comes next.
- After lunch time, we have Circle time which is a special time involving children in our planning, reinforcing knowledge and understanding, taking turns, listening to each other's ideas.
- We sing 'Silly Soup' rhymes which helps children listen for sounds and match them, concentration and awareness of their surroundings are developed



Our setting is extremely lucky to have highly qualified staff who are all experienced in the EYFS. In addition we are supported by an Independent Early Years Consultant who continually assesses the provision and equipment, and who assess the planning, children's needs and moderation. We have a retired teacher who carries out weekly fun phonics and numeracy sessions that the children all look forward too. These are based around small groups with pre-determined focus around next steps predominately for pre-school children.

You can help your child's independence with a 'can do' attitude, give them responsibilities everyday as they get closer to school. This could be anything from laying the table, hanging up their coat to feeding a pet.

Top tip

Useful phrases to teach your child to allow them to make friends... "Can I join in?" or "Do you want to share?"



At nursery we use **Open Ended Questioning** that you could also use at home. Questions such as:

- Can you find a way to.....?
- I wonder if.....?
- Why do you think that happened.....?
- What did you notice about.....?
- Tell me about.....?



What can you do at home?

Talk to your child about school. Explain the routine of the day and visit the school together. Most schools now hold settling in days specifically for the new pre-school children but also visit for school fairs or fun days.

Look at the school brochure together, visit the website and see all of the children taking part in fun days. Talk about your own school days

Try to focus on the fun elements if they are anxious, such as new friends, the wonderful climbing wall or the amazing wooden play house.

If your child has a particular security toy or blanket now is the time to try to get them to use it less through the day. Have a fun day out buying big boy / girl school uniforms, school bags and sport kits. *The most important thing to remember is this is a fun, exciting time for your child which will give them lots of new opportunities and experiences.*

Working with schools and transition reports

Shadwell Nursery works closely with all of its local primary schools to give our children the very best opportunities as they move on to school. All pre-school children, regardless of whether they will attend Shadwell Primary or another school, will have the same opportunities and take part in all experiences to prepare them for their move.

We have a wonderful partnership with Shadwell Primary school and all pre-school children will experience lunch within the school hall, taking a tray and collecting their own food. We experience the noise and hustle and bustle of the hall as the older children enter for lunch. Gingerbread sessions are also held where we visit the reception class and play with their resources, meet the teachers and play with the reception children, it's always fun!

We work closely with all primary schools and invite reception teachers to come to our setting to meet the children and watch them play in a familiar environment.

Most schools also offer settling in sessions to you and your child and these are useful to help you familiarise yourself with the setting and the teachers. Children can often meet new friends at these sessions and are happy to return to continue their play!

A transition report will be produced near the end of your child's time with us. This is completed by the child's key person and is given to your child's new primary school. It allows your new teacher to understand your child prior to them starting. We will complete our observations and share these with you and ask you to complete the section for parents / carers where you are able to write about your child's personality, likes, dislikes and any information you feel is important. **Please can you complete the parent section and return the report by the requested date.**

A tracker is also part of the report and this shows your child's progress across the seven areas of learning.

Picture books about starting school that you could read to your child include;

- I am too absolutely small for school – Charlie and Lola
- Starting school by Janet and Allend Ahlberg
- Topsy and Tim Start school
- Harry and the dinosaurs go to school
- Usborne, going to school sticker book and starting school sticker book



We value all of our children and always give them every opportunity to thrive and meet their full potential investing whole heartedly into each child during their time with us.

If you have any questions or would like more information on any specific areas, please speak with the key person or Room Leaders. The Room Leaders will also be very happy to explain the planning and next steps that are shared on our planning boards and we welcome any ideas that you may have that will enhance the learning available to all children.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on 01132659050 or p.wilson@shadwellchildcare.org if you have any other questions.

