

# Primrose Hill @ Helping children settle in !

Leaving your child at nursery for the first time is stressful but by working together, exchanging information regularly and taking part in nursery life whenever possible, this difficult time will become a very positive experience for all of us.

Our teams are highly experienced at helping children settle in and quickly adapt to daily life in our nurseries.

To do this we:

- \*ensure the whole process is an enjoyable experience.*
- \*develop a close relationship between the nursery team and your family and*
- \*encourage you to play as active a role in nursery life as you would like to.*
- \*provide a Key Person for each child – an individual who will lead the settling in process, is focused on your child's development and who is your main point of contact. The Key Person will learn your child's preferences and any requirements so they feel at home as soon as possible.*
- \*quickly gain an understanding of your child's personality, likes and dislikes and develop routines which allow them to undertake the experiences, activities, opportunities and games which they find most fun or stimulating.*

**Starting a new nursery or going to school for the first time can be hard.** *There's a new environment to adjust to, rules to be followed and a uniform to wear. It can be even harder for the parents to let their child grow up! Here are the answers to some common worries.*

*If your child has never been away from you, then they might be upset when you're not around. Before they start, try leaving them with relatives or friends for short amounts of time, such as 15 or 20 minutes, and increase it gradually. If your child is old enough to understand, you can explain to them that you're going away for a short time and will be returning.*

*Your child will have some short induction sessions at nursery and you may be able to stay for some or all of the time to help ease them in. Many young children will cry when you drop them off at class, but the majority recover quickly once they're distracted.*

Although the idea of '**big school**' has been an appealing thought over the new term, the reality of new routines and expectations can be overwhelming and results in children acting out of their usual character. ***The important thing for parents is to try and manage their own anxiety !!***

***“Separation anxiety or the emotions that you feel when apart from one another are not just something that children experience; you may find yourself just as upset at letting your little one go off to school as it marks changes in your life also.”***

- Try to think about the routines that you will establish for your child at the beginning and end of the day.
- Remind your child of how much they are going to learn and enjoy their day. Let them know you will be thinking about them and how excited you will be to hear about their day when you see them after school.
- Take time at the end of the day to communicate. Don't worry if you get very little in response to your questions as often children need to spend time processing their experiences and may not feel like talking. The important thing is to show them that you are interested in how they have got on. Don't forget to share your own day at the same time so your little one can be thinking about what you do when you are not together.

**Nursery children** will need a change of clothes (including socks, pants and plimsolls) in case they get messy or have an accident.

**Reception & primary children** will need a PE kit, a water bottle, a spare change of clothes and a light cardigan may be useful, too.

Young children love predictability so you'll need to introduce them to the idea of a changing routine. If you can, visit the nursery or school a few times before they start. Take some time to explain what they'll be doing and what their day will be like but try not to overload them with information or they might become anxious. Talking about the new school little and often will help.

Every child has mornings when they're reluctant to leave the house. Often it's because they're tired, or maybe something difficult happened the previous day. Gentle encouragement and a few extra hugs might help, and they're often fine once you've left.

**“If you think your child is not settling in as they should be, then **talking to them about their worries is a good place to start,**”** "Providing them with plenty of reassurance about how starting school can be a tricky time is a great way to open up your child about how they are feeling.”

School starters can be too young to articulate their worries, so **a chat with the teacher might help identify the problem and develop a strategy to improve the situation.** Share your concerns with us as we are experienced in supporting you and your child to settle in. Try to pay attention to how your child is reacting when you drop them off and pick them up. How do they respond when you ask them questions about how school is going or what friends they are playing with? Providing them with plenty of affection and reassurance about how starting school can be a tricky time is a great way to open up your child about how they are feeling."

We provide **daily feedback sheet in nursery & Daily Report in Reception & Primary Levels,** which summarises what your child has been doing. If you want to have a proper chat with the teacher then arrange a time you can meet. It's much better than trying to talk to them at a busy time !