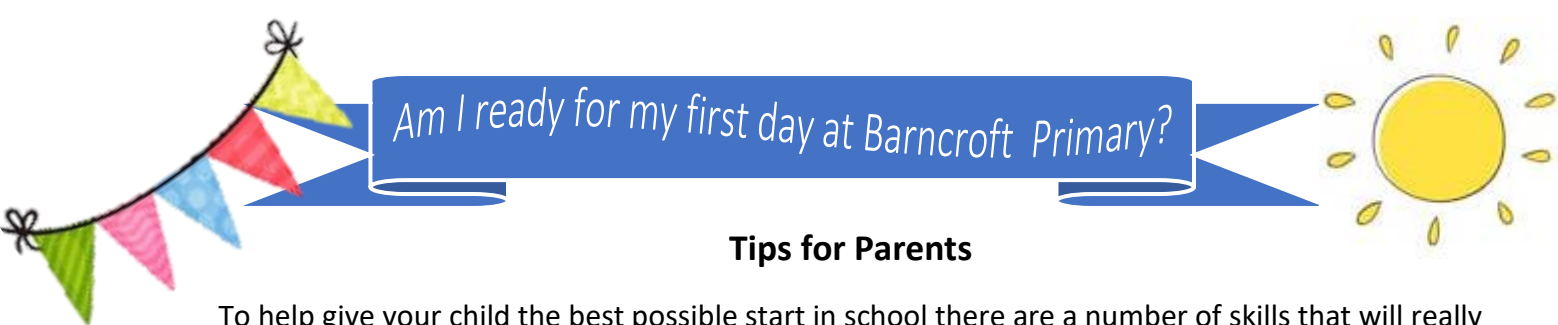




Tips for Parents

To help give your child the best possible start in school there are a number of skills that will really help them to settle in. Have a go at some of the skills below to help get them ready for school.

Self-care

Getting dressed can be a tricky thing. Encourage your child to practice getting dressed on their own.

Practice doing up buttons, putting on socks, fastening velcro shoes and fastening trousers. Practice putting their coat on and doing the zip. It's also really good to practice things like wiping your nose and learning how to look after your things and putting them away.

Eating

Help your child to get ready for lunch time by showing them how to use a knife and fork, how to open their lunch box and water bottle and how to carry a plate. Teach them how to open wrappers and packaging and how to ask for help if they need it. All of these can be tricky to do and helping your child to do this at home will help them feel confident in school.

Going to the toilet

Make sure that your child knows how to make sure their bottom is clean and how to pull up their trousers. Teach them to flush the toilet and then wash their hands properly. Explain to them that if they feel unwell they can tell an adult.

Speaking and listening

Practice having conversations with your child.

Giving your child time to talk – and also time when *they* have to listen – teaches vital speaking and listening skills. You could take turns to talk about the best part of your day over the dinner table. Can they ask questions to find out more?

Sharing and turn taking

Practice playing games like Snakes and Ladders and other sharing games so your child gets used to taking turns. Use language like 'Whose turn is it next?' and 'Thank you for waiting'.

Reading

Reading to your child is one of the most important things you can do to help their development. It improves their vocabulary and listening skills and acting out stories is a great way to practice communication. Seeing you enjoy stories also helps your child to be an enthusiastic reader.

Have they got a favourite story? Do they know some nursery rhymes?

Developing fine motor skills

Developing hand strength, fine motor skills and hand-eye co-ordination all helps prepare your child for writing. Making Lego models, using scissors, and threading beads or pasta onto string are fun ways to develop hand strength. Drawing and colouring activities are good for introducing children to mark-making tools.

Following instructions

Play games that involve following simple instructions. This could be something like 'Simon Says', following a simple recipe or following the instructions to build a Lego model. Activities like this also help to build your child's resilience and helps them to build their concentration skills.

Knowing their name

They may know their name by sound, but how often do they see it written down? Start getting them familiar with how their name looks written down and also get them to practise writing their own name. They don't have to know how to write it perfectly, but even getting used to holding a pencil properly can really help.

Routine

Have a routine to your day. Try to have lunch at the same time and get up at the same time each morning. This will help your child get used to having a routine when they start school.

