

Picture books to aid transitions (preschool to primary or starting preschool)

Not all children will be worried or anxious about going to school. It's important to remember that as parents and teachers. We all know that there are children who skip in the first day and some who nearly have to be prised away from a caregiver. As the adult in this situation it is important to reinforce the positives of going to school, to reassure your child that you or another adult will be there on time for them and that school will be a fantastic place to go to. If your child is worried, reassure them on all the points without dismissing their fears. Practise opening and eating and tidying away lunch – you would be amazed how many children cannot do this. Also, putting on and off coats and shoes and hanging them on a hook. Practise getting dressed in a school uniform if your school has one and tying back hair if you don't usually put your child's hair in a ponytail or plait.

Always remember, your infant or early intervention teacher does this every year and is well experienced at settling in all the children. Your school will contact you about the transition and if you need more information do not be afraid to email or ring the school. They will be very happy to help you out. We don't know what school will look like yet but if you can teach your child to wash their hands correctly and keep doing it over the summer that would be great for September.

Llama Llama misses Mama

This book talks about a llama starting preschool but we use in in primary schools also. It is a great book to gently encourage children who may be afraid or worried to discuss their fears of loneliness and being alone. Llama Llama is also a cartoon series on Netflix so you child may know the character from this series.

Read aloud of the book by the author <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xB6i1ReuT8>

Some activities on the book <https://www.rif.org/literacy-central/book/llama-llama-misses-mama>

Discussing missing someone/loneliness http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/booknook/bn_llama.pdf

Lots of cross curricular activities here <https://assets.readbrihtly.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Educator-Guide-Llama-Llama-Books.pdf>

Boardmaker activity for the book <https://boardmakeronline.com/Activity/1250893>

Art and craft activity <https://jdaniel4smom.com/2016/07/llama-llama-misses-mama.html>

Harry and the Dinosaurs go to school

If you have a little boy or girls starting school who loves dinosaurs this is a lovely light-hearted book to read with them. You can model Harry's dinosaurs with your own child's dinos. You could change the teacher's name to your child's teachers name so familiarise him/her with their new teacher.

Read aloud of the book <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=heAH9Fx0NCo>

Some ideas for discussion after reading the book

<https://www.pacey.org.uk/SSTMicrosite/media/Website-Files-SST/school%20ready/SST-Harry-and-the-Dinosaurs-go-to-School-Factsheet.pdf>

Harry and the Dinosaurs is a series of books. There are some lovely general Harry activities here

<https://www.twinkl.ie/resources/e-h-story-books-story-primary-resources-english-key-stage-1/story-books-harry-and-the-bucketful-of-dinosaurs/story-books-harry-and-the-bucketful-of-dinosaurs-activities-and-games>

How do dinosaurs go to school?

If your child has an interest in dinosaurs, the book 'How do dinosaurs go to school?' might be appealing to them. Again, these are a series so you may find a few books your child likes.

Read aloud of the book (by a puppet) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xrCRfuEsWY4>

Some activities based on the book <https://www.rif.org/literacy-central/book/how-do-dinosaurs-go-school>

Lots of general dinosaur activities here <https://www.twinkl.ie/resources/topics/dinosaurs>

There is an activity pack here you can buy if you don't have access to a printer

<https://www.bookdepository.com/How-Do-Dinosaurs-Go-School-Activity-Pack-Jane-Yolen/9780007281077>ardmaker dinosaur activity
<https://boardmakeronline.com/Activity/36451>

Some other starting school books

Starting School

This book really lends itself to changing the names of the character's friends and adding in your child's friends as you read. If you have been in contact with your child's primary school, you could include some details of the new school as you read.

Read aloud of the story <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yPoh5sJhu5I>

A parent writing about how this book helped his son to start school

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2011/sep/20/ahlbergs-starting-school>

Some more books about starting school <https://www.scottishbooktrust.com/book-lists/books-about-starting-school>

Back to school with Boardmaker <https://goboardmaker.com/blogs/news/back-to-school-with-boardmaker>

Topsy and Tim start school cartoon <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgUOxM24yA4>

Selection of Topsy and Tim books <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIisK5ilhAQ>

If your child enjoyed 'Don't let the Pidgeon drive the bus' they may enjoy 'The Pidgeon has to go to school'

Read aloud of the book <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uo3PnlQWxAs>

The 'No David' series is beloved by children as he is so bold and they get to say No! a lot when reading with someone. They might like this book if they are familiar with the story and the character

David goes to school read aloud <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTUR5L8pOV8>

The Charlie and Lola books are popular with children. Here, Lola doesn't want to go to school.

I am absolutely too small for school read aloud <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHjRzSFyn50>

First Day read aloud <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1BWPqwFgFM>

Spot goes to school cartoon <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XKn4FSp6Q-Y>

Hand hygiene will be very important when we return to school. A song may be an easy way to introduce the idea to children

Wash your Hands <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljNvF650WTc>

Wash your Hands song https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LaePayB_pC4

Mr Worry may be useful if your child is worried about going to school

Read aloud of Mr. Worry <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgt2UovH3Ac>

Cartoon of the book <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wanaz8aj2g>

Lovely story on Facebook about social distancing
<https://www.facebook.com/113162570107145/posts/242866403803427/?vh=e&d=n>

Getting the bus to school

If your child gets the bus to school here is a lovely funny picture book about how I get to school

How will I get to school this year? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pgap_j812WE

Froggy goes to school <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aWSAJ1ASvhl> This book has lovely sounds which could make a great sensory experience for your child

Song about going to school https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fs1b5L0_pGY

Video about how children around the world get to school <https://www.globetrotinkids.com/this-is-the-way-we-go-to-school-book-review-activities/>

Owl Babies

The classic! Owl babies is always read at the beginning of junior infants and why? It talks very gently about owl babies who are worried they Mammy will not come back. If your children are worried about you returning to work or themselves returning to crèche/school/childminders it is a great book to read with them. There are loads of resources online based on this book. I have included some here.

Owl Babies read aloud <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/storybooks-and-games/owl-babies/>

Owl babies cartoon <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPQRISTYFH0>

Lots of resources for supporting the book here <https://www.twinkl.ie/book/owl-babies>

More ideas here <https://www.worldbookday.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Early-Years-Teaching-Ideas-Owl-Babies.pdf>

The Kissing Hand

A book that is often read in the first week of junior infants usually with some art work based on this book. Again, this is a great book to reassure children who may be worried about school/crèche/childminder return. We may not be allowing parents to accompany children to classroom when we return so having a little routine in a designated drop off point when we return to schools etc. may be very beneficial. Many children respond to the routine in this book and engage in it with caregivers in the morning when they say goodbye.

The Kissing Hand read aloud <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dPUW1t9Gu4s&vI=en>

Activity pack based on the read aloud https://www.storylineonline.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/KissingHand_ActivityGuide.pdf

The Kissing Hand cartoon <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-G5okff-nw>

The Kissing Hand art Paint your child's hand with poster paint and make their handprint on a piece of paper. If you have pre cut coloured hearts allow them to choose one and stick it to where you kiss their pals. If not, cut out a heart and stick it. Simple piece of art but children of all levels should be able to participate, even with hand over hand support.

Making a book video based on 'The kissing Hand' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ky-5YTVHLcI>

Teaching your child how to 'belly breathe' to help them to cope with big feelings and emotions <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KB-qAWMp8bE>

The Kissing Hand activities for children with moderate to severe learning difficulties http://www.ric.edu/sherlockcenter/dsj/kissing_hand.pdf

Resources for slightly older children <https://www.thewiseowlfactory.com/free-printable-for-the-kissing-hand/>

Goodbye song (with raccoons) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DuwTW6DzObs>