

Getting Ready for School: Simple Tips for Families

Preparation is the Key

- **Check you've got all the gear** – school books, stationery, backpack, lunch box, and drink bottle.
- **Talk about school positively** – a new teacher, chances to make new friends, and new experiences. Keep it light and reassuring. For first-time starters, avoid over-talking it so it doesn't become overwhelming.
- **Rebuild bedtime routines** – children need enough sleep to feel settled and ready to learn. Aim for 10–12 hours per night with consistent bedtimes.
- **Reset screen-time boundaries** – routines often loosen during holidays. Clearly communicate the rules, and involve children in the conversation by listening to their ideas and solutions too.
- **Make space for feelings** – it's completely normal to feel nervous, worried, or unsure about starting school, moving classes, or having a new teacher. Big changes bring “what ifs” for adults too, not just kids.
- **Create predictability where needed** – some children feel safer when they know what to expect. A practice walk or drive to school, trying a practice lunch in the lunchbox (and checking they can open it themselves), or wearing the uniform at home can really help.
- **Build social confidence** – look for opportunities to mix with other children outside the family, like at parks and playgrounds. Practice skills like introducing themselves, asking others to play, or knowing when they might need support.

