

School Readiness



A shared understanding across Leicestershire

This document has been developed by Leicestershire Children and Families Partnership working with early years providers, schools and 0-5 services. Developing a shared view of school readiness and a partnership agreement across Leicestershire supports working together, to ensure the best start in life for all our young children.

It is important that the first steps of a child's journey through school are successful; families, children and schools must be ready for each other.

Children are unique and capable individuals who develop at different rates. It is important to ensure that children have the skills, dispositions and attitudes to be successful as they start this journey through school and that those who may need additional support are identified and supported early in order that they reach their full potential.

Early years providers, schools, families and 0-5 services all have a shared responsibility to ensure that each individual child is ready to continue their learning journey as they enter school and get off to a flying start.



"Working together for a child ready, family ready, school ready community."

Leicestershire's shared view of school readiness is based on the UNICEF* framework which is defined by two characteristic features 'transition' and 'gaining competences' based on the following dimensions.

✓ **Ready children**, focusing on children's learning and development

✓ **Ready families**, focusing on parental and caregiver attitudes and involvement in their children's early learning and development and transition to school

✓ **Ready schools**, focusing on the school environment along with practices that foster and support a smooth transition for children into primary school and advance and promote the learning of all children

*School Readiness: A conceptual framework UNICEF 2012.

Ready Children

With the support of families, early years providers, schools and 0-5 services we want our young children to settle happily and be successful learners in school laying the foundations for lifelong learning.



In Leicestershire our aim is for all young children to benefit from accessing their Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) in high quality, inclusive early years provision.

We want our young children to experience early years provision (which includes pre-schools, childminders, children's centres and schools) that offers a safe and nurturing environment enabling them to be physically healthy, mentally alert, emotionally secure, socially competent and able to learn.



"Working in partnership, with a shared view of school readiness, is key to ensuring our young children have the best start in life."

Ivan Ould, Chairman, Leicestershire Children and Families Partnership

Ready children*

- I am curious and want to play and learn
- I feel good about myself and like it when you praise me
- I am starting to know when I am happy, sad or cross
- I can let you know what I need and tell you about what is important to me
- I can settle when you leave me knowing you will be back soon
- I can play with other children and I am learning to take turns
- I can make simple choices
- I am willing to have a go and keep on trying
- I can use lots of different words about things that interest me and use them when I play
- I can listen and take turns in conversation with grown-ups and children
- I can follow simple instructions
- I can join in with favourite songs/rhymes/stories
- I can go to the toilet and dress myself most of the time
- I am an active and confident mover both indoors and outdoors



“Children who start school ready to learn, have better life chances.”

Sue Wilson, Service Manager, Children and Family Services, Leicestershire County Council

*If a child is developing typically for their age.

Ready Families

In Leicestershire we aim to ensure that all families / carers are supported and are able to find help from a range of professionals to enable their child to be ready for and benefit from what school has to offer.



Positive attitudes and involvement of families/ carers is crucial both in their child's early learning/development and transition to school.



"Our daughter was quite shy. The pre-school and childminder helped us with encouraging her to talk to other children, which then supported her in making friends at school. She is now happy and settled there."

Louise Bentley, parent in Leicestershire

Ready Families help their child when they...

- build their confidence and praise them for their efforts and achievements.
- encourage them to have a go at new activities and keep on trying even when things go wrong.
- make time to play, have fun together and show an interest in their talk and ideas.
- support them as they learn to manage and express their feelings.
- give them time to say what they need, make choices and follow simple instructions.
- visit new places and meet new people; if they stay to play, they reassure them they will be back soon.
- let them play with other children and encourage sharing and taking turns in games.
- talk with them about their interests, ideas and everyday things, such as what they see in the shops and at the park.
- enjoy sharing stories, sing favourite songs and rhymes and use a variety of words as they talk together.
- encourage them to have a go at dressing themselves and using the toilet independently.
- get active together, play outside and make time to walk, run, climb and have fun.
- plan healthy meals, have regular routines and make sure they get enough sleep.
- talk positively about going to school, meet with staff to talk about their child and become familiar with school life.



"Starting school is a key milestone for children, we need to work together with families to support our children on their school journey and in reaching their full potential."

Jane Moore, Director, Children & Family Services

Ready Schools

Early years providers have a key role and responsibility to work in partnership with schools and 0-5 services to support both families and children in being ready for school. Leicestershire schools have a responsibility to foster and support smooth transitions to enable each individual child to settle and continue their learning.

Communication and collaboration between all those involved is key to successful transitions.



"We consider it crucial to work in partnership with colleagues in early years provisions in order to support and promote school readiness and a smooth school transition for all children and their families."

Jill McLauchlan, Headteacher, Westfield Infant School



Ready early years providers and schools help children when they.....

- have high expectations and a child-centred approach.
- know each child well, understand and respond to their interests, strengths and needs.
- give each child time, space and support to express their feelings and talk about what matters to them.
- build strong connections with families and listen carefully to what they say about their child.
- support families, giving ideas and information about getting ready for school.
- give plenty of time for transition talk and visits recognising that some children and families may need extra support.
- gather information from other professionals and use this to plan and provide for appropriate learning and care.
- share and value relevant records and information to ensure continuity and ongoing progress in learning.
- make sure key staff are well informed and experienced in Early Years, Child Development and current initiatives.
- create a learning environment which is welcoming, safe and suitable for everyone's needs.
- build confidence and independence - thoughtfully praise each child's efforts and achievements.
- ensure that what each child can do provides a starting point for their learning and development.
- make learning fun!

"Communication is key for a smooth transition to school. We detail key information about our children for teachers to refer to and invite teachers to visit pre-school and observe children where they feel secure."

Caroline Emmett, Operations Director, Little Rainbows Community Preschool CIC

For information about being ready for school
visit www.leicestershire.gov.uk/school-readiness

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