Children are experts at picking up on their parents’ emotions—Share your positive feelings about starting school with your child.

**Important Skills for Children starting school**
- Using the toilet independently
- Following verbal instructions / directions
- Dressing and undressing (jumper, hat, paint shirt, shoes and socks)
- Recognising own name in print
- Looking after own belongings
- Sharing with peers
- Expressing needs and wants
- Holding pencil to make marks on paper
- Keeping still for a short period of time and listening
- Separating from parents at school
- Taking turns
- Speaking clearly
- Identifying own bag and belongings
- Opening lunch box and packaging
- Using handkerchief / tissue

**Leaving your Child**
- Help your child to find a friend before you leave
- Take the cue from the teacher—sometimes children calm quickly when parents leave
- Ring the school for reassurance if you are worried
- Reassure your child that you will be there when school finishes
- Talk to your child and teacher if you need to make alternative arrangement such as another person doing pick up
- Always let the school know if you are running late

Starting School is a major milestone in life and can be a very rewarding experience for your child and your family. Teachers and parents can work together to help children settle happily into school.
Sample skills suitable for most children starting Kindergarten
Starting school will be a little easier if children have some of these skills. Encourage your child to attempt these things but don’t worry if they can’t do all of them.

Language
- Talks to other people about familiar objects and events
- Answers and asks simple questions
- Makes needs known
- Follows simple instructions
- Uses books for enjoyment or for looking at pictures
- Identifies pictures in magazines or on screen
- Uses a variety of implements (pens, pencils, textas, crayons) to draw, scribble or write
- Joins in familiar songs or nursery rhymes
- Enjoys listening to stories

Mathematics
- Recognizes that numbers can be used to count
- Uses and recognizes concepts such as many, a lot, more, less, small, smaller
- Identifies things in a group that are different
- Recognizes different shapes
- Understands opposites such as up/down and over/under

Personal and Social Skills
- Uses the toilet independently
- Can say own name and address
- Adapts to unfamiliar settings and new experiences
- Can finish a task and tidy up afterwards
- Shares and takes turns with other children
- Is beginning to understand and identify emotions
- Understands the concept of rules
- Understands it’s ok to lose a game as well as win
- Respects other’s property and belongings
- Can share an adult’s attention with other children
- Participates in imaginative play

Physical Skills
- Uses scissors to cut along a line
- Enjoys a variety of indoor and outdoor play

Helping Children Learn
Parents, other family members and friends can help children by:
- Giving them lots of time and opportunity for play
- Listening to them
- Answering their questions
- Talking with them about the things they are interested in
- Looking at books together
- Singing and nursery rhymes
- Reading and telling stories
- Playing games to recognize the sounds made by letters of the alphabet
- Enjoying “pretend” play
- Including them in activities such as shopping, washing the car, visiting the park, working in the yard or visiting or library
- Providing materials to make things
- Sharing their excitement about reading and learning
- Modelling reading and writing as part of everyday life such as shopping lists and filling out forms
- Providing encouragement, appreciation and acceptance
- Supporting them to maintain their home language while learning English

Provide Your Child with Practice in:
- Talking with children and adults and communicating their needs
- Playing with other children
- Spending time with others
- Following simple directions
- Sharing and taking turns
- Going to the toilet independently and washing their hands afterwards
- Putting on and taking off jumpers
- Recognizing and looking after belongings
- Opening and closing lunch boxes and school bags
- Packing their school bag for the day ahead