Ready Steady Nursery

Supporting you and your child into Education

A handbook for parents and staff working with parents. Developed by Sure Start and The Children and Young People Team; in partnership with parents.
Introduction

You will have completed your child’s application for the nursery of your choice and may already of been informed of which nursery your child has been allocated to.

This programme is designed to support those parents/carers of children who will be making the transition from community groups or home to Nursery.

The programme explores ways in which we can support our child with this transition process.

The programme is designed to allow you to follow the sessions at your leisure, however it is advisable that you follow the sequence of the sessions to ensure that all areas are covered.

Some aspects of this programme can be completed alongside another adult or on your own.

We suggest you work through this programme in the months before your child starts school.
Section one

Welcome!
My name is Hooter and I will be guiding you through your child’s journey into Education.
I hope you find the course informative and Remember—Have fun!

Preparing for nursery

- Remembering the good times—our early memories.
- Getting along together.

Activity

What are your memories of school? We all have them—good or bad! For now we are going to think of the good ones.

Using the "Good Times!" Sheet (overleaf), describe the memory and the age you were when it happened.

What happened? Where were you? Who was with you? How did you feel? Why is it a good memory?
Session One

Good Times!

Age
Session One

We are going to look at how adults work together as a team.

Hooter Say’s
It is important for children that all adults in their lives are agreeing with each other and giving them the same information. If adults are unsure what is ok and what is not then children end up doing what they think is ok.

Look at these questions, answer what you can and put your thoughts and ideas on the worksheet overleaf:

1. What do adults in your life do that makes you feel good?
2. What do you do for others to make them feel good?
3. What do you do that is fun as a family?
4. How do you work out the rules and routines?
5. How is challenging behaviour dealt with?
6. Is this discussed with other important adults?
7. Do you and other adults deal with children’s behaviour in the same way?
8. If not, how do you deal with the different ways your child’s behaviour is handled?
9. Do you feel there are changes you can make to enable everyone to work as a team?
Making changes - your thoughts and ideas

Remember!
These are just ideas that come into your head.
You can change your mind.
Just remember to discuss this with the important adults in your life!
From this list, choose what are the most important things you want for your child?

- To feel happy
- To feel healthy
- To feel confident
- To make friends
- To want to learn
- To be independent
- To be able to concentrate
- To be able to listen
- To ask for help
- To respect others
- To take turns
- To go to the toilet unaided
- To show interest
- To want to learn
- To be confident
- Write any others here
From the previous activity, have you noticed that you want the same for your child as you want for yourself?

Why do you think this is?

What did you feel you achieved at school?

Do you want this for your child or something different?

How do you plan to support this?

For example: The parent that found reading difficult may be determined that their child does well in this area.

OR

This parent may feel that they have got through life finding reading difficult and does not feel it is a barrier for their child.

What is your view?
You are the most important person in your child's life! When they start school other people will have an influence on how your child sees their world. Your child trusts you and knows they have your unconditional love. This should provide some comfort to you when they are pushing you and you are at your wits end! Your child starts learning from the day they are born. Beware! Your child is watching how you act in day to day situations and will copy your actions in similar situations they might find themselves in!

Section Two

Hooter says—remember that you are your child's first teacher and their home is the first place they learn.

The importance of play:

- You are your child's first teacher.
- The importance of listening and play in learning.
- What skills do our children have?
Listening Activity

In this activity we are going to look at our own experiences of listening and being listened to.

How do you listen when having a conversation?

If you have another adult to work with then use the cards on the next page.

However if you are working alone see Listening Activity Sheet 2.

Using the Listening cards

• One adult is to tell a story
• The other adult is to listen using the prompts on the cards.
• Have turns at telling a story and using the cards.
• Be aware of the different listening styles
  • How did each style feel?
  • What style did you prefer?
Listening Cards

When you are listening, you will seem really bored and look around you, at your watch and avoid eye contact.

When you are listening, you will interrupt, finish off sentences and have a better story to tell.

When you are listening try to be very interested. Try not to talk and listen as hard as you can. Try to check out what your partner has said by repeating parts of their story to them.
How do you feel when you are talking and the other person seems really bored and looks around, glancing at their watch and avoiding eye contact?

How did you feel?

How do you feel when you are interrupted, have your sentences finished off and your friend always has a better story to tell?

How did you feel?

How do you feel when someone really seems interested in what you are saying. They repeat parts of the story back to you and give you lots of eye contact and encouragement to continue talking?

How does this feel?
Listening and Play

We might not realise it, but we are teaching our children every time we interact with them. Children love to be with us, watching and copying how we are in different situations. Most learning happens during everyday activities like shopping, household chores and just chatting together.

Listening

Have you ever been shopping and you are ignored by the people behind the counter? Does a friend always butt in when you are telling her something? Do you seek out a certain someone if you have a problem?

Let’s look at how children experience this:

Activity

Relating to your own experience of this. Can you think of a situation when you have seen your child experience any of the above? How did your child react? How can you support them in these situations?

Hooter says: We have 100 BILLION brain cells. The earlier we help them connect through play and chatting, the better.
**Child Centred Play**

When we play with our child, we give them lots of attention which makes them feel good about themselves (See the Child Centred Play Sheet in this weeks "activities for doing at home")

We will practice this today but please do this at home for around 10 minutes every day with your child.

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**Practice Child Centred Play**

*This activity can be done with another adult. See listening activity page.*

Decide who will be the parent and the child.

First time the parent is to be bossy, critical and interfering.

Second time: In a child centred way, praising, describing the play and allowing the child to be in control. Give eye contact, smile, play at the child’s level use a soft, caring voice.

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**Praise phrase:**

- “I like that”
- “Well done”
- “Wow (describe the play)”
- “I love our time together”
- “You did (describe the play) so well”
- “I am proud of you”
- “Do you want to tell me about what you’re doing...?”
- ____________________

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In the boxes below, describe how you felt as the child with each “parent”.

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Critical and bossy

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Child Centred and praising
Practicing Child Centred Play with your child

How did your play session go?

Idea!!!
Take advantage of a time your child talks about starting nursery.
How your child is feeling about starting nursery?
Try to repeat back to your child what he or she has said rather than asking questions all the time.
This may happen during a time when your child is playing an imaginary game.
Child Centred Play Activity

If you can work with another adult, use the cards on the next page and do the activity as explained on the cards. You need an object/toy to do this activity.

If you are working alone see Child Centred Play Activity Sheet 2.
Adult 1.—You are the Child
You are a child and have sat down to play with an exciting new toy.
You would like an adult to join you in your game.
You know what you would like to do with the toys and it is completely
different to how the toy is supposed to be played with (in an adults view!)
Play with the toys in front of you.

Adult 2.—You are the Parent
You have just bought this new toy for the child. It
is something you saw on T.V and it looks great!
You can’t wait to see what it does.
You like things done right and want the child to learn how to play with it
properly.
Play with the child and toy in front of you.
Think of your own experiences of listening and communication. Read the story below and answer the questions as honestly as possible.

“You are at your friend’s house and you have shown her your new mobile phone. You are desperate to get home to play with the phone and find out about all its functions. Your friend has the same phone, takes it off you and starts to show and tell you how to work it. Every time you try to take it back, she goes on to show you another function. By the time you get it back, there is nothing else to discover!”

Have you ever experienced someone repeatedly “taking over” something you were doing?

- How did this feel?

Do you remember a similar experience as a child when someone “took over” your play?

Can you remember your feelings?

Can you think of a time when you might have done this (with all good intentions) with your own child?

How did your child react and how do you think they felt?
Imitation

How do you discover how to work the new trolleys in the supermarket? Chances are you watch other people who seem to know what to do.

We all imitate other people to learn new skills.

Children love to copy what adults and other children do to help them learn how to use things or how to deal with situations.

Sometimes they seem to learn the things we would rather they did not, first!

Can you think of situations when you have seen your child copying you? — Good or Bad!!

E.G — Talking with their mouth full after watching an adult do it!

- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
**Things to do**

**Use descriptions of what your child is doing and make nice comments on what you see.**

**Suggestions for things to say while using Child Centred play:**

- **Wow, you're stacking the bricks high.**
- **You're putting that little brick on top of the big, red one.**
- **I can see you are driving the car.**
- **All the cars are lining up now.**
- **You are putting your ball behind the box.**

**Things to avoid**

- Asking too many questions.
- Telling the child what to do.
- Giving too many instructions.
- Criticising.
- Interfering.
- Taking things from the child to show them the “right way”.

*Remember: 10 minutes of Child Centred Play a day!*

My notes:
Section Two

The list below is typical behaviour for a three or four year old. As all children develop at different stages, your child might or might not be doing these.

Have you noticed any of the development listed below in your child?

😊 Enjoys repetition—Same story, toys or game.
😊 Can use complete sentences.
😊 Can recognise their own name.
😊 May add “ed” to words to form a past tense e.g. “gotted a book”
😊 Does not like sitting still for long.
😊 Enjoys climbing, running and exploring.
😊 Will scribble lines in pretend writing, enjoys drawing and finger painting.
😊 Enjoys playing along side other children but not always doing what they are.
😊 May have an imaginary friend and have an active imagination.
😊 Wants to please you but can still lie.
😊 Tries to write their own name.
😊 They learn by doing and copying.
😊 Love being read to and ask lots of questions.
😊 Enjoys pretending to read books or telling you a story.
Section three

Object:
Discuss the object with your child—let them find the answers

What we found out about our object:

- 
- 
- 
- 

How can we help our child's brain develop:

- Making the world bigger for our child.
- Music is good for you!
- Things we do to help our child learn.
- Home is our first classroom and we're teacher.

Activity

Let's have a go at extending our child's world.

Find an object you want to explore. (example: yellow duck)

Look at your object. Find other objects that would give you more information about your object.

How can you use the objects you have found?

What did you find out?

Hooter says When a baby is born interaction with other people enable connections to be made in the brain. The stimulus we provide help the cells connect and grow. These are electrical impulses which form pathways and patterns allowing us to make sense of the world around us.
**Object: Yellow duck**

This is discussed with your child—let them find the answers.

**What we found out about our object:**

- It floats in the bath
- It is soft and smooth
- It squeaks
- It has an orange beak
- They can be different sizes
- They can be different colours

**An example of extending our child’s world and building brain connections in relation to your object:**

- See real ducks at the farm or park
- Singing "5 little ducks went swimming one day"
- Reading duck stories i.e. Daisy Duck
- Finding similar coloured objects
- Finding similar objects
- Counting
- Playing with and exploring the object in different settings i.e. bath or sink
The O.R.I.M framework

- **Opportunities:** We provide lots of opportunities for our children to learn. This means it can help if we are aware of the chances for learning in everyday things we do.

- **Recognition:** Children learn all the time.

- However, children learn better when we recognise what they are doing.

- It makes them feel good and valued, so they want to learn more.

- **Interacting:** Children enjoy joining in with our activities and also enjoy if we join in with theirs. So by interacting and doing things together, our children learn more.

- **Modelling:** Our children learn a lot from copying us.

- We are role models for our children. If they see us having fun, e.g. reading, they will have fun reading too! The other side to that is if we over react in a situation, there is a greater likelihood that our children will deal with a similar situation in the same way.

- (and get in trouble for it!)

Think of a time you and your child have been together and you are doing something you enjoy.

For example: Talking to your friend on the phone

Your child is watching and listening to you.

Have you then seen them copying how you spoke and acted while on the phone!!!

**Be aware**

This also happens when they are watching you having difficulty dealing with a situation and they copy that too!!
Write an example of how you might support your child using the O.R.I.M framework.

Put one example in each hand:
Music is good for you!

Hooter says: “Most of us enjoy music! Music is fun but it also good for the brain. It seems that it is one things that makes us use both sides of our brain. It gives us a “buzz” and helps the brain make lots of connections.

Babies can hear before they are born. Can you remember a tune your baby moved to, while still in the womb.

A beat, rhythm and music helps us in all areas as we develop and grow. Think of walking? One foot after another and the rocking rhythm that goes with it.

When singing, never worry about how you think you sound! Your children will

Match, with a line, the action to the nursery rhyme you think would help the child learn that action:

For example:
“Moving and actions in music.”

**Action**
- Learning about moving to music
- Thinking how we can speak in rhythm
- Helping calm a child down
- Having fun using actions
- Learning about counting
- Learning colours
- Anticipating what comes next

**Rhyme**
- “I love to sail in my big blue boat”
- “Pop…….Goes the weasel”
- “One, two, three, four, five once I caught a fish alive”
- “Hey Diddle, Diddle”
- “The wheels on the bus”
- “Ring a ring of roses”
- “Rock-a-bye baby”
Circle the development you think music helps in our children:

- Reading
- Speech
- Memory
- Maths
- Co-ordination
- Problem solving
- Turn taking
- Sense of humour

Go to the end of this session for answers

**Music in our lives:** Try to add a few of your own ideas!

- Listening to the radio—try a different station, like Classic FM!
- Rhymes and songs—include your child’s name as part of it!
- Make music—use things from around the house e.g. cereal box drums!
- Dancing and moving together to favourite songs.
- Having a quiet bed-time song as part of the bedtime routine.
- __________________________
- __________________________
- __________________________
- __________________________
- __________________________
- __________________________
Things we do that help our child learn

Hooter says: Remember, we have been teaching and helping our children learn, from the day they were born! Now our child is older, we will still be the most important person in their lives, only now they will get further learning opportunities at nursery along with the ideas, opinions and influences of other adults.

Activity

Read the two conversations on the next page.
Use your imagination to visualise the parent and child.
What is happening?
Draw a picture of each of the situations on in the boxes below or draw on your own paper.

Conversation 1

Conversation 2
**Conversation 1— Peter and his mum**

Peter: “Look Mum - cows!”

Mum: (Looks up—nods and keeps on reading)

Peter: “Some water! What’s that mum? What’s it doing?”

Mum: “Come and sit down! You will make the seat dirty!”

Peter: (kneels) “That bird, in the water, what’s it doing?”

Mum: “Sorry! Oh, Its a duck.” “Sit still– mind your feet!”

Peter: “Its head is in the water!”

Mum: “Please sit down and stay still!”

Peter: (Sits down) Shouts- “I want my cars!” “Give me them all!”

Mum: “Don’t talk to me like that! You can have them if you are quiet!”

Peter: “OK” (Pushes his car on the table) “Look mum, it’s going to London, like us!”

Mum: “Yes” - “I am trying to read—play with your cars.”

Peter: Cries “I want you to play too”

Mum: “Later, I am tired and I want to read”

10 minutes later

Mum: “Give me a car”

Peter: “No, later. I am tired!”
Conversation 2— John and his mum

John: “There are lots of cars down there—look Mum. What are they doing?”

Mum: “I think it looks like a traffic jam, what do you think? Or maybe it’s lights, traffic lights? Can you see?

John: “It’s a policeman—he has stopped them!”

Mum: “I wonder why he has done that?” John:

“I can’t see what they are doing”

Mum: “Perhaps there has been an accident or something”

John: “Wow! Mum—we are going fast now!” “Look—a river and some boats.”

Mum: “I think that is the Union Canal”

John: “I think it’s a river”- “It looks like one”

Mum: “If it was a river it would be at the bottom of the hill and it would be wavy. This is on the side of the hill and it is very straight because it has been built to carry long boats”

John: “Ok” “Why was it put there?”

Mum: “To help boats go into the centre of town. I think they carried coal.”

John: “What did the coal do?”

Mum: “It heated houses when I was your age. Your Gran put it on the fire”

John: “Will I see fires like that in London?”

Mum: “I am sure we will.”

John: “Can I play with my cars now?”

Mum: “Ok and I will read my magazine.”
What has Peter learnt from this experience?
Write your thoughts-
- The world around him?
- The parent?
- Using language?
- Himself?

What has John learnt from this experience?
Write your thoughts-
- The world around him?
- The parent?
- Using language?
- Himself?
Section Four

Using Imagination in problem solving and stories:
- The house activity.
- Association chain game.
- Imagination activity.

Hooter says: A pre school child has an active imagination! They love to learn, but they want to learn their way, through play and interaction with others. They like to be "helpful" and imitate what they see around them. Most things are taken literally.

The House Activity

Can you draw a picture of your perfect home.
What is the kitchen like?
Where are the bedrooms?
Does it have stairs or is it on one level?
Where will you eat, sleep etc?
Where did you get your ideas for your perfect home?
Can you come up with a story about your home.
The House Activity

Look at the pictures below.

How does this compare with your perfect home?

- 

This activity challenges perception and assumptions that the picture we hold in our head will be the same for our children.

When we discuss ideas with our children their “picture” of the idea will be very different from ours.

This often can lead to conflict in our relationships, which can be avoided by checking out what our children are thinking.
Section Four

My notes:
Section Four

Hooter says: By now you realize that our brain has many parts or "specialties". Our brain is most effective the moment we use as many different brain specialties as possible for each subject we want to remember. We do not think in terms of sentences. Not even close. We think in terms of associating, linking and connecting thoughts. The more we mix these thoughts with words, pictures, smells, symbols, numbers, feelings, taste and emotion, the better our brain will process this information. This will result in a better memory!

Suppose we think of the word "holiday". What is the first thing that comes to mind? In my case I would think of "sun". When I think of sun, I would think of "beach" as my second thought. Here is my thinking scheme:

Association chain

Sun → Beach → Fun

What is your association chain when you think of "Holiday"?

Special points of interest:

What does this mean? All associations are unique and very personal. We are able to function because... our brain is linking this association in a very personal and unique way. We also know that our brain consists out of an almost endless amount of possible connections. This also implies that it is possible for us to make endless associations. Therefore we are looking for a way in which we can structure and secure our information and data.

- The moment you start to use the mind map technique, you can use two kinds of words: "keywords" and "creative" words.
- E.G A keyword could be "Dinner" and the creative word "cooking" - each word gives a different picture.
Section Four

The association game

Read the word in BOLD letters.

**FOOD SHOPPING**

After reading the word, close your eyes and try to keep your eyes closed. Visualise the word in your head.

**Could you only see the word FOOD SHOPPING?**

Of course not! I think you 'saw' all kinds of food flying past your mind's eye. And I'll bet that all these images were very closely related to the words food shopping.

We are just naturally talented in association. we seem to do it, effortlessly. You give a person one word and his/her mind starts to wander!
Section Four

What is Imagination?
We are moving onto looking at imagination.
Here is a definition.

**Imagination:** the ability to remember, dream, create, improvise and in the process entertain oneself anywhere and anytime.

Hooter says: It is tempting to allow your child to play computer games, watch T.V etc as it allows you to get on with your day to day business however spending five to ten minutes a day playing with your child will encourage the development of your child’s imagination.

We don’t have to sign the kids up for drama classes in order to encourage imagination.

Children can have restricted opportunities to use their imaginations if they have lots of time tabled activities, lessons and tutors, or are allowed a steady diet of TV.

A return to some of the simpler activities of our own childhoods can pave the way to more imaginative freedom!
Section Four

Hooter says: Imagination can often be as important as maths, science or reading. Despite how it sometimes looks to adults, imaginative and pretend play helps develop many important skills.

Imagination

This activity allows you to experience how your child uses their imagination and what a marvellous skill they have.

Chocolate

Read the

Ask your child to close their eyes and imagine that it is their birthday and someone has made them a chocolate cake. Ask your child to describe the cake to you.

Ideas on what you can ask your child:

What does it smell, taste, look like etc?

Who made the cake and how do they feel about this person? Can they tell you a story about the cake?
Do children still have the time and initiative today to fight pretend dragons, have an imaginary friend, or dress up as a fairy tale princess? Or is plain old imagination fighting a losing battle with iPods, video games, organized sports and T.V. shows?

Just what is so important about imagination?

Here are some amazing benefits that come from developing the imagination:

- Imagination helps school-age children solve problems by helping them think through different outcomes to various situations and role playing ways to cope with difficult or new circumstances.

- Imagination allows children to practice real-life skills. From shopping at a pretend shop to giving characters and voices to dolls or puppets, children’s imaginative play helps them to practice and apply new learning and better understand how those skills are used in the real world.

- Imagination encourages a rich vocabulary. Telling and hearing real or made-up stories, reading books and pretend play help children learn and retain new words.
Section Five

Activities week five:

- Our ideal teacher.
- Sharing information.
- Starting school checklist.
- Routines and organising.

Activity

Can you remember back to your school days? Did you have a teacher who had a positive influence on your life? With these thoughts in mind, complete the following.

Imagine your ideal
Activity

It is your child's first week at nursery school and your child's teacher, Mrs Thomson asks if you can come and see her for 5 minutes when you collect your child.

How do you feel?

What do you think?

What do you say?

Helpful hints

- Relax
- Don't imagine the worst
- Prepare
- Listen
- Talk
Section Five

• “There was something I wanted to talk to you about…”

• “When’s a good time for us to talk?”

• “I’m a bit confused, can you explain that again”

• “I was thinking about what happened yesterday…”

Be aware of...

• Your body language

• Give eye contact

• The tone and level of your voice

• Let the other person know you are listening i.e. nodding your head, smile etc

Useful conversation starters.....

Remember!

v Relax
v Don’t imagine the worst
v Prepare
v Listen
v Talk
Section Five

Ideas for contacting the nursery

Like the previous activity there may be a time when you wish to speak to a member of staff at your child’s nursery. Here are some ideas that you should consider:

- Ask the teacher when it would be a good time to meet with them.
- Telephone the school and ask to make an appointment to see the member of staff you wish to talk to.
- Speak to your child’s teacher at the end of the day rather than in the morning.

Remember:
- Relax
- Don’t imagine the worst
- Prepare
- Listen
- Talk
Section Five
Starting Nursery Check List

● Does the Nursery have all your up to date contact details? □

● Are all Nursery forms filled in e.g. emergency contact etc? □

● What is your Nursery's policy on comforters? (dummies etc) □

● Change of shoes /clothes for when in nursery? (e.g. Full set of clothes/ black rubbers) □

● Does my child recognise their own coat and shoes? □

● Snack arrangements—Can my child sit at a table to eat? Allergies? □

● Can my child use the toilet—with help or unaided? □

● When does my child start and finish Nursery? □

● Childcare arrangements—discussed with the carer, child and Nursery? □

● I have prepared my child to stay on their own? □

● What do you plan to do while your child is in Nursery? □

● A packet of tissues !!! (for you) □

● Take your child's photograph before you leave as cameras are not allowed at Nursery! □
Section Five

Routines are one way of making the world seem predictable. We can tell what will happen next. In a way this can make life seem easier and safer. If we could never tell what’s going to happen next, we would feel very worried.

Looking at our routines

Can you think of what you do at the moment to support your child getting ready to go out for the day? For example: Does your child have a bag for staying at grannies etc with everything in it they need for that day?

What is your routine?

How will this change for you when your child starts nursery?
Section Five

Look at your routine on the previous page.
Do you do anything at night to prepare or is everything done in the morning?

How does your routine work for you and your family?

Can you think of a different routine if you are not satisfied with the way things are working at the moment?

How much do you do for your child to get them out in the morning?

Is there anything your child could be doing for themselves?

It is important that your child starts to take some responsibility for being prepared for nursery.
This is a skill that children are developing in nursery then through Primary 1.
Section Five

Look at the stars.
Can your child take responsibility for any of the tasks?
These are only suggestions—can you think of your own?

- Starting to dress themselves
- Encouragement to discuss their day
- Shoes and coats in the proper place.
- Putting on their own coat

Own Idea!
## Section Five

Look at the Actions and Consequences below. Can you match them up?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No change of shoes.</td>
<td>Child feels uncomfortable and worries about getting messy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not returning library books Borrowed.</td>
<td>Child can feel anxious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not wearing comfy, practical clothes.</td>
<td>School will contact you for information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No snack money.</td>
<td>letters sent home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child late getting to or collected from nursery.</td>
<td>Child misses out on exchanging book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not informing the school of child’s absence.</td>
<td>Child has to borrow shoes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not responding to</td>
<td>Child misses out on a school trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Snack fund is affected.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. No change of shoes.
2. Not returning library books Borrowed.
3. Not wearing comfy, practical clothes.
4. No snack money.
5. Child late getting to or collected from nursery.
6. Not informing the school of child’s absence.
7. Not responding to
Read the following story:

It is Sunday evening, all children are bathed and almost ready for bed, you are looking forward to some well earned “me” time.

Your son David, who is in nursery announces that it’s a dress up day tomorrow and he wants to dress up as The Cat in the Hat.

This is quickly followed by your 6 year old daughter announcing that she has reading homework which must be signed by an adult to say she has read it. She also looked at school dinner menu for tomorrow and she doesn’t like anything so she will need a packed lunch.

On hearing this, your eldest son announces he wants packed lunch too.

What do you do????????

Answers from the Actions and Consequences.

1-E  5-B
2-D  6-C
3-A  7-F
4-G
The things to keep in mind are:-

1) **Getting enough sleep**

The need to have a bedtime routine in order for the children to have had enough sleep in order to cope with the challenges of the day ahead.

2) **Organisation**

Being organised in the morning and ensuring that your child has everything they need for nursery that day ie appropriate dress, labels on coats, shoes, snack money, black rubbers etc.

3) **Passing on necessary information**

What is necessary information – what will impact on your child’s day? If you are in any doubt about what should be passed on, let the school know anyway. For example the child has been wakened during the night with a crying baby, illness in the family, death of a pet or family member, talk of moving home, new partners for the parent, parents splitting up etc.

4) **Practice appropriate skills**

Practice at home allowing children to dress and undress themselves. Fastenings on clothes, zips, buttons belts.

5) **Check nursery bag daily**

Develop habit of checking nursery bag every day for notes from teachers, newsletters, forms to be returned, replace change of clothes if used etc.

6) **Sharing your day**

Although your child may be initially too tired to share their day with you and you may have to find a more appropriate time (e.g. after dinner) they may well benefit from knowing how your day has gone as the reassurance that you are continuing with everyday life confirms a positive and safe ethos.

An example of a prompt question could be: “What did you make in nursery today?”
Section

Hooter says: As a parent you are probably helping your child with reading much more than you may realise. If your home contains books, magazines and catalogues and your child sees you reading, if you read to your child and talk together about familiar stories and if you also use printed materials to find things out, then your child already has a head start!☺

Activity

☐ Reading at home and

☐ Maths at home and in the

Checklist:

What does my child know already about reading?

- Which way up to hold a book ☐
- How to turn pages ☐
- Recognises labels of favourite foods in the supermarket ☐
- Recognises some names of TV programmes ☐
- Some road or shop signs ☐
- Some letters in their name ☐
- Realises you can find things out from books ☐
- Can tell their own story ☐
- Can retell a story you have told them ☐
- Their favourite story or book ☐
- Knows some stories are “happy ever after” and some are sad ☐
- Can tell you what might happen next during a story ☐
Section Six

How to help enjoy books.

Based on an article by
Judith Puddick

• Remember that talking about reading is very important, so if your child is sometimes reluctant to read aloud, discussing a book will also help to develop reading skills.

• Concentrate on enjoyment and grasping the meaning rather than absolute accuracy.

• Keep reading time relaxed, comfortable and pleasurable, in a quiet corner, with the television turned off.

• Talk about the cover and read the title before rushing into the text, asking questions, such as: what do you think it will be about; what sort of book is it; have you seen one like this before?

• Look through the book, noticing interesting pictures and words, then read the opening together.

• Don’t correct too quickly, encourage your child to make up their own stories to go with the pictures they see.

• As you look at the book, talk about the characters and plots or what they liked about the story.

• Make up your own stories and add your child as a character.

• Attend information sessions about reading run by the nursery and read any guidance that is sent home.

• Join your local library together and use it regularly. Watch out for storytelling events, summer reads and reviews of new titles.

For information on adult services to help with reading

Contact:
Adult Basic Learning
Adult Learning Centre
6-10 Glasgow Road
Bathgate
EH48 2AA
Freephone: 0800 731 1831
Tel: 01506 776333
Email: adultbasiceducation@westlothian.gov.uk
Section Six

Activity
Think about how numbers are used at home!

How numbers are used at home:

- T.V channel numbers on the remote control
- Looking at a clock
- Sharing out food
- Laying the table to eat
- Counting toys
Section Six

Hooter says: We might not know it but we use Maths constantly in our everyday lives.

By the age of four years most children can start to recognise numbers e.g. on a clock. Later they can read these numbers out and say them in order. They start to match numbers and become familiar with amounts e.g. Hundreds.

Adding and taking away:

- “One more”
- “Take away”
- “Altogether”
- “Another one”
- “How many left”

Shape:

- “Square”
- “Round”
- “Circle”
- “Triangle”
- “Rectangle”
- “Box”
- “Oval”

Words and statements important in Maths:

- “Bigger”
- “Taller”
- “Longer”
- “Smaller”
- “Heavier”
- “Lighter”
- “Biggest”
- “Smallest”

Measuring:

- “One more”
- “Take away”
- “Altogether”
- “Another one”
- “How many left”

- “Bigger”
- “Taller”
- “Longer”
- “Smaller”
- “Heavier”
- “Lighter”
- “Biggest”
- “Smallest”
Section Six

Numbers on the move
Think of how numbers are involved in the activities below:

Shopping:

Using the phone:

Walking in town:
Section Six

Treasure Hunt

Go for a walk and find these things as you go.

You can collect them or tick them off as your child discovers the item.

(Remember a bag to carry your “Treasure”)

1 Stick

2 Feathers

3 Leaves

4 Pebbles

5 Flowers
With younger children, parents may be actively involved in helping them learn specific things such as nursery rhymes, colours and counting.

Being aware of nursery themes and continuing them at home gives your child a feeling that learning does not stop at nursery, setting a positive mind towards “homework”. A simple example of this could be... pointing out a fire engine or tractor and relating this to what they had done at nursery.

Even if you do not know much about the subject, there are different ways we can support them.

- Television
- Library
- Ask your child
- Own idea
- Own idea
Activity seven:

- Comforters and soothers
- Using the toilet
- Self help skills

Did you know children who use dummies might not try to chat as readily as other children? Sucking a dummy or a bottle can lead to problems with the teeth at the front of the mouth?

You may feel this section does not relate to you and your child...

Wow! Don’t they grow up fast!
Your child starting nursery can be a good opportunity to “dump that dummy/bottle”!
Try to convince them they are a “big” boy/girl now.
This is not always easy when it’s been a big part of your child’s life and they may not want to give these comforts up easily.
Section Seven

Tips for dumping the dummy/bottle

蜱 Try to make the break a clean one, your child will be upset for less time but expect a few days of grumpiness!

蜱 If this is too difficult, make the break gradually by limiting the dummy to certain times e.g. bedtime

蜱 Using the start of nursery as a milestone in their development, telling them they are big now and only big boys/girls go to Nursery. That big boys/girls don’t use bottles/dummies at nursery. Make a huge fuss over how big they are getting!

蜱 Restrict the bottle to bedtimes and dilute the milk with water.

蜱 Try taking the dummy or bottle out of your Child’s mouth when they are talking to you.

蜱 Offer a “special” beaker at meal times instead of a bottle

蜱 When your child kicks the habit make a BIG DEAL. Tell the world, granny, next door even the cat! Make sure your child hears you speak about how proud you are of their efforts.

蜱 Most of all don’t give in, if they have shown they don’t need their bottle/dummy, don’t give into their demands when they are having a grumpy time. You’ll only undo all your hard work and set your progress back. Be consistent.

蜱 It will be hard work but worth all the effort!!
Section Seven

Starting nursery can spur you to help your child to get out of nappies if they have not already done so.

Up to the age of 20 months, toddlers' bladders empty often, making it difficult for them to master holding on for the loo. In addition, clothing is still tricky to manage.

Some parents find it easier to toilet train their children during the summer, when toddlers can run around with fewer clothes on. If this isn't the right time for your child, however, don't worry. Always go with your toddler's readiness.

It can take longer for boys to learn, especially as they also have to master weeing while standing up. Most boys learn to go sitting down first. Dad, mum or an older brother can then show them how to do it the other way.

On average, most children begin learning to use a potty by around their second birthday, but, as with everything in children's development, each child is different.
Section Seven

Is your child ready?

Your child may be ready to start trying to use the toilet if he:

- Stays dry for a couple of hours each day
- Takes an interest when you, your partner or older siblings go to the toilet
- Has bowel movements at regular times of the day, say, after breakfast
- Can demonstrate when a bowel movement is taking place, by squatting or making a grunting sound for example
- Lets you know he wants to be changed when his nappy is soiled

When to wait

It's usually best not to start toilet training your child during times of stress, such as:

- The arrival of a new baby in the family
- Starting a new childcare arrangement
- Moving from a cot to a bed
- Moving house
- Family relationship problems
- When a family member is ill
Section Seven

Potty pointers

- Be positive and upbeat - present the change from nappies as something exciting.
- Give lots of praise whenever your child manages to do a poo on the potty - stress how grown up and clever it is.
- Don't rush things - sometimes if you start teaching later it takes less time, and older children can skip the potty stage and move straight to using the loo, which makes life easier.
- Expect setbacks - learning to use the toilet is just like other skills your toddler learns and you didn't expect him to learn to walk without a lot of falls.
- Give your toddler clothes that can be pulled down or up easily - you may also want him to wear training pants at first, to cope with those inevitable accidents.
- Never force your child to sit on the potty, this will only upset him and won't make the process any faster.
- Some toddlers enjoy picking out their own potty and toilet seat.
- Many toddlers are afraid of the sound of the toilet flushing or don’t like to see the poo being flushed away - just wait until he has run off to play and then flush.
- It always takes longer for a child to learn to stay dry at night - when he starts having the occasional dry nappy in the morning, it’s a good sign the time is right to try going without a nappy.
- Do your best not to be angry with your child if he has an accident - just say, cheerfully, "never mind, you'll get there next time, let's get you some dry pants".
- Remember to get your toddler to wash their hands afterwards, so that using the potty or toilet is associated with hand washing from the word go.
Section Seven

Getting

- Ask your Health
- Discus with
- Talk to other
- Your own ideas
- Your own ideas
Section Eight

It's distressing to see your child crying when you leave them with another carer or at nursery. But there are things parents can do to help children settle - and get the most out of the experience.

Activity Eight:

☺ Awareness of my child's separation anxiety.

How do I handle this?

☺ Things I can do to support my child.

Separation Anxiety

All children suffer from being separated from important adults in their life. This was probably first noticed at around eight months when your child clings to you and cries even around familiar adults. This usually gets better around 18 months but can return during times of change.

Can you identify times when your child has become clingy and tearful?

☺ E.g.—being left with granny while you go to the shops.
Section Eight

How do I handle my child crying when I leave?

From the list you have made on the last page, choose one situation and try to think of the following:

**Situation:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Childs action</th>
<th>Feelings</th>
<th>Your reaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E.G. Child starts to cry at the door</td>
<td>Upset and anxious</td>
<td>I don't leave her</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section Eight

It’s a really good experience for a young child to be left regularly with a trustworthy adult other than a parent. This could be a grandparent, relative, child minder or nanny or at nursery. Your child will learn how to make new relationships and develop social skills, and this is good preparation for starting playgroup or school.

But no matter how confident you feel about the person caring for your child it can be very difficult for you both, especially at first. Often children cry inconsolably when they see their mother or father leaving which makes it even more difficult to say goodbye.

So how do you help settle your child as smoothly as possible when he or she is clearly feeling anxious at being separated from you?

From the list on the previous page is there anything you feel you could have done differently?
Crying at Nursery

Separation anxiety can begin as early as six to nine months when your child first becomes really aware of strangers. From this age you can expect to see tears when you leave your child with a carer for the first time, or when your child starts nursery or school.

Or you might find your child settles in well in the first week, then subsequently cries when it’s clear that this is a long term arrangement.

Children often cry when you collect them too. It doesn’t mean they have been unhappy without you. Until the age of three or four, a child will often feel a rush of overwhelming emotion that results in tears at seeing you again.

Also your child may simply feel exhausted. It’s hard work being at nursery or school. It is a good idea to meet your child with a snack (such as a piece of fruit) and young children often like to be cuddled and carried.

A child’s tears are perfectly normal.

You might think it indicates a problem at nursery or that your child feels unhappy when usually the opposite is the case - the tears are just for you.

It’s perfectly natural for your child to protest and say ‘How can you leave me?’ then be comforted and enjoy their day.
The way you handle the process is important and there are things you can do to help settle your child quickly. Preparation is the first step. If your child’s starting nursery in your area, go past the building together a few times before actually going in.

Explain that your child will be going there and accompany this with positive comments about how lovely it will be, what fun your child will have and what nice friends your child will make. Reading books together about starting nursery will help too.

Most nurseries and child minders like to take a couple of weeks to settle a child in. For instance on the first morning you may be asked to stay with your child. On the second visit, you could leave your child for 15 minutes, and so on. You could adopt the same approach with whoever your child stays with regularly.

Try taking a favourite toy along. Even if the nursery doesn’t allow toys from home, your child might enjoy the security of holding the toy on the journey.
How do you say goodbye?

When you leave, be very clear that you are going even if your child starts to cry. Give your child a kiss goodbye (this goes for babies too), say ‘I’m going now’ and reassure your child that you will come back. Let your child know when this will be in easily understandable terms. For instance, you could say ‘Mummy will come back, then we’ll go home for tea’.

Then wave and walk away. Don’t be tempted to tiptoe out when your child isn’t looking. Your child will realise you’ve gone and may think you are never coming back. Also make the process a quick one. Don’t pop back to check that your child’s OK, as this will reinforce the tears. It will help if your child has one particular carer/nursery worker present to offer comfort as you leave.
Section Eight

Other points to consider:

**What if my child isn’t settling?**

Most children settle down in a matter of weeks, but if your child consistently cries when you leave you could try standing outside for a couple of minutes to reassure yourself that the crying stops. If you are concerned, you could call half an hour later to find out how your child is. If you are told your child is fine, believe it. Nurseries and child minders would not be happy to look after a child who cried all day and would soon let you know if there was a problem.

If you are feeling worried about how your child is settling, try not to show it. Even young children are very sensitive to your emotions and if your child senses you are anxious, your child will feel anxious too and will become even more upset at being separated from you. The more confident you are about leaving, the more confident your child will feel.

While it is good to have one or two significant other adults in your child’s life, it’s not good for her to have many carers or a fast turnover since this won’t offer the consistency she needs. If your child is at nursery but isn’t settling, it might be worth considering whether this could be a problem.

**What if my child starts crying after being previously settled?**

The birth of a new brother or sister can trigger separation anxiety. It is almost worth starting the whole process of settling at nursery or with a carer again. If you can, it’s a good idea to leave your new baby at home at first when you drop your older child off. That way your older child will have your undivided attention. If your baby comes along too, your older child will assume that you are going home for a wonderful time together and will feel left out.

Separation anxiety often gets worse as a child’s language skills improve. Your child develops the ability to express feelings and you may find a child who has previously seemed happy and settled suddenly pleads not to be left.

It can also come out of the blue. Your child might suddenly start crying after months of not seeming worried when you leave. If this happens it is worth thinking about whether there has been any change in the routine at nursery or at home that may have been unsettling such as having new carers, or perhaps your child isn’t feeling well. It could be that your child just wants extra reassurance that you will be back.
Any change in your family life will bring about tensions. Starting school is a major change for you and your child. Getting in touch with how we feel about this can help us deal with difficult situations if they arise. How are you going to cope with the added pressure of school expectations?

Can you identify any situations you might come across?

- Change from afternoon nursery to morning school.
- Juggling work/college home and School.
- Managing Different Routines.
- Own ideas
- Changing childcare arrangements
- Own ideas

Activity Nine:
- Getting in touch with our feelings.
- Anger Game.
- What is anger?? And what makes us angry??
- Managing anger and relaxation.
Section Nine

The Anger Game

Make a list of things that can make you feel
1. annoyed
2. angry
3. makes your blood boil.

Mark each item on your list with
1. 2. or 3.

Let’s see how we get on!

Try to be aware of how you are feeling making your list.

My angry list…….

Child refusing to get out of bed—2
Can’t find house keys—3
Toothpaste down their clean uniform—1

How I am feeling now.....
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feelings:</th>
<th>Thoughts:</th>
<th>Behaviour:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angry, let down</td>
<td>“Have I not got</td>
<td>Tone of voice would change and I would</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and tense.</td>
<td>enough to do!!!”</td>
<td>talk loud and sharp. This would result in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>my child crying and feeling sad, going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What thought, feelings and behaviour is associated with the things that make you angry?

Look at you list on the previous page and try to note them here.
Section Nine

Aggression is Different!

It is a Learned way of behaving!
Does this surprise you?

We might get aggressive because:

- We feel unsure of ourselves, or threatened.
- We take things personally when there are no need to.
- That’s what we’ve always done in certain situations.
- We feel frustrated when people don’t behave as we want them to or expect.
- We want to take charge.

To control our aggression we need to:

- Learn to recognise the signs of tension and upset.
- Learn to give ourselves instructions to manage our anger.
- Look at some of our beliefs, attitudes and expectations.
- Check if they are acceptable and fair or leading to aggression
- Break down incidents into easy stages to understand them.

In other words...

Non-aggression is different too
It’s also a learned way of behaving!
Section Nine

Managing Our anger
My ideas on how to relax...
Section Nine

Time for relaxing!!!

reminders

Talk to a friend!

Think of a special place!

Have a bath!

Think happy thoughts!

Put your feet up!

Go for a walk!

Let your mind wander to far off lands!

Exercise!
Activity Ten:

- Moving On—What do we want for ourselves in the future.
- Careers Advice
- Useful Numbers and Certificates.

Hooter says: What now? We have looked at our children moving on—but what about us? What would you like to do in the future? What were your dreams before you had children or what are your dreams now?

- Bored and in a rut.
- Unsere I know what I want?
- I want to chat about my options.
- I want new interests.
- What can I do now?
- I want to work.
- I am looking forward to extra time.
- What about Qualifications.
- I am unsure I know my skills.
- I am happy the way things are.
Section Ten

Contact:
- Careers Adviser @Sure Start—01506 774440
- Your local Job Centre.
- Access 2 Employment Adviser.

My future dreams and wishes

Your child is moving onto school so what now...
What do you want to do?
Section Ten

My thoughts on College

My thoughts on Volunteering

My thoughts on Working

My thoughts on Training
Useful Information

- Advice Shop—01506 283333 (option 1)
- Childcare Information Service—01506 280000
- Children's and Young People's Team—01506 282948
- Citizens Advice Bureau—01506 432977
- Crime Stoppers—0800 555 111
- Domestic Abuse Service—01506 281055
- Family Mediation Lothian—0131 226 4507
- Homeaid West Lothian—01506 652230
- NHS 24—111
- Pupil placement—01506 280000
- Sure Start—01506 774700
- WLC Information service—01506 280000
- West Lothian College—01506 418181
- Woman's Aid—01506 413721 (Freephone 0808 2000 247 - (24 hours)
Useful Web Sites

- **Parenting West Lothian**
  On this website you will find a lot of information about how children grow and develop, how you can help your child, what supports are available and ideas for managing difficult behaviour. There are a number of articles and information sheets which have been developed in West Lothian and there are also links to other useful websites. Whether you are a parent seeking more information/support or a professional looking for additional supports to help the families with whom you are working, we hope there will be something which can help.

  [www.westlothian.gov.uk/parentingwestlothian](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/parentingwestlothian)

- **Scottish Government**
  Information on school education on the Scottish Government's website.

  [www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)

- **Sure Start—West Lothian**
  The aim of Sure Start is to give very young children (from pre-birth to 3 years) the best possible start by working closely with parents and other local authority, health and voluntary agencies to provide a more cohesive service for parent and child in a non-stigmatising way. Through the provision of a range of services provided in each locality we hope to improve children's social and emotional development, their health and their ability to learn and to strengthen families and communities.

  [www.westlothian.gov.uk/surestart](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/surestart)
Useful Web Sites

Parenting West Lothian—
www.westlothian.gov.uk/parentingwestlothian

Sure Start—West Lothian— www.westlothian.gov.uk/surestart

ParentLine Scotland
Tel: 0800 028 2233   http://www.children1st.org.uk/what-we-do/how-we-help/parentline-scotland

One Parent Families Scotland
13 Gayfield Square, Edinburgh EH1 3NX
Tel: 0808 801 0323 www.opfs.org.uk

Parent Network Scotland
Tel: 0141 353 5604 www.parentnetworkscotland.org.uk

Enquire (The Scottish advice service for additional support for learning)
Helpline: 0345 123 23 03
Textphone: 0131 22 22 439   www.enquire.org.uk