

# Getting Ready for School Checklist

Many parents and carers find this checklist helpful, as a guide to supporting children’s healthy body and brain development, to help them get ready to learn at primary school.

To help your child have the best start at school, make an appointment with your local [child and family health service](#) or [General Practitioner](#) for their [Blue Book](#) health and development check including:

- [Brain development](#)
- Growth and healthy weight
- Physical health
- Emotional and general wellbeing

To view the **Blue Book** in different languages click [here](#)



If you are worried about any area of your child’s development, or if your child needs a little extra help to develop some of their skills and abilities, the [Child and Family Health](#) team can give advice about the simple things that parents and carers can do, to help children develop the skills that they need to get ready for school. They can also help with information about child therapy services such as children’s [speech pathology](#), [occupational therapy](#), [physiotherapy](#), and other services such as [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health](#) or community supports.

[Child and Family Health nurses](#), or your General Practitioner (GP), can also help with referral to services for families going through difficult times.

## Getting ready for school

If you are wondering if your child is ready for school, here’s a checklist that includes the physical, social, language, thinking and emotional skills that children should generally be observed doing before they start school. The checklist also includes recommended health checks and healthy habits that help children develop healthy minds, bodies and brains. For more guidance, please see the checklist section below.

### My child has had...

- Their [Blue Book](#) health and development check -with a Child and Family Health Nurse or GP
- Their 4-year-old vision screen -(offered free of charge by the [Statewide Eyesight Preschool Screening Program \[StEPS\]](#) at Preschool/Child Care, a clinic or with an eye health professional)
- A [dental check](#) in the last 12 months (For a FREE dental check-up for your 2-18 year old phone the NSLHD Health Contact Centre -1300 732 503)
- Their annual [715 health check](#) (for [Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander](#) children only). Ask your GP
- A [hearing check](#) -if you have noticed any of the following risk factors for hearing loss:
  - Repeated ear infections, [coughs and colds](#) (including coughing; sore throat; runny nose; fever etc.)
  - Difficulty listening or hearing e.g. saying ‘what!’ all the time; not paying attention; not following directions; etc.
  - Discharge/runny ears
  - Constant pulling of ears

### Each day my child...

- Does at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous [physical activity](#) per day such as playing outside, walking, riding a bike/scooter, dancing, ball games, playing sport, etc.
- Regularly drinks plain water (if offering other drinks, offer low-fat milk rather than cordial, juice, soft drink, etc.)
- [Eats a variety of foods](#) from the five food groups (vegetables and fruit; breads and cereals; meat and alternatives; dairy and alternatives) and only limited junk food
- Has a parent/carer’s help with [brushing teeth](#) (morning and night)
- Has stories shared with them and we talk/yarn, sing, play and read at least one book



[Click on the hyperlinks for more information](#)

## My child...

- Is a [healthy weight](#) (go to '[healthy weight calculator](#)')
- Is up to date with all their [immunisations](#)
- Gets enough [sleep](#) (10-13 hours at night and maybe a daytime nap)
- Has less than 1 hour [screen time](#) per day for 2-5 year olds for all types of screens e.g. phone, TV, tablet, etc. (Avoid screen time in the hour before bed. Screen time is NOT recommended for children under 2 years.)

## Learning and Problem Solving – my child can...

- Identify and name the primary [colours](#) and some of the secondary colours – red, blue, yellow, green and orange
- [Count](#) to ten
- Listen to short stories and recall simple details of the story
- Use [time](#) concepts to tell a story or describe what's happened
- Take turns with others when talking/yarning and playing games
- [Learn](#) new tasks and activities when shown

## Speech, Language and Communication – my child...

- Can recognise their [own name](#) and the names of members of their family
- Has [speech](#) which is easily understood by both friends, family and unfamiliar listeners
- May be able to identify some [letters](#) of the alphabet
- Can [answer](#) questions asked of them and ask questions of others, for example, "Why is the sky blue and the grass green?"
- Can follow [verbal](#) directions given by adults and peers

## Physical ability - my child has a...

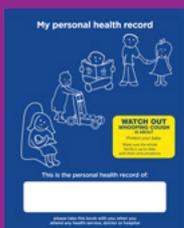
- Basic level of [movement](#) skills, including being able to throw and catch a bounced ball (most of the time), climb, hop, stand on one foot
- Range of [fine motor](#) skills for their age; cut on a line with scissors; use a pencil to colour in, begin to [write](#) their name; draw a person with two to four body parts

## Self-Care – my child can...

- Take themselves to the toilet
- [Blow](#) their own nose
- Dress themselves
- Put their own shoes and socks on
- Feed themselves, open a water bottle and a lunch box
- [Organise](#) their belongings and pack their own school bag
- Understand the need to wear a [hat and sunscreen](#) when outside

## Feelings, behaviours and social skills – my child...

- [Enjoys](#) doing new things
- Can focus on tasks for about 5 minutes e.g. a story; craft activity; etc.
- [Moves](#) easily between activities on their own
- Identifies feelings such as happy, sad and angry
- Is more and more creative with make believe play
- [Shares](#) and plays well with other children of the same age and can:
  - Take turns
  - Play games with other [children](#)
  - Understand and follow simple rules
- Is able to [separate](#) from me



### Don't wait and see 'Act Early.' if you

- Require assistance with this checklist
- Have concerns about any area of your child's brain development, growth or health

'Act Early.' by talking to your **Child and Family Health Nurse** or **GP**

For more information and service contact details visit **NSLHD Child Youth and Family Health Service**



**NSW Government** produces numerous resources to help parents find the right childcare/preschool; enrol their child in a NSW public primary school; and to support children be off to a positive start when starting school. For more information click [here](#).

**Raising Children Network** website offers many practical tips for parents and carers including helping children prepare for, and adjust, to preschool or school.

**Learning Potential** includes practical tips and ideas to help nurture children and young people's learning potential.

To find a General Practitioner go to **HealthDirect** [here](#).