

# Getting Ready for School with Coltale the Dragon



Use these cards to help your child's transition from early years to primary school and have the chance to enter a prize draw. Transition to primary school is the process where children move from early years education to a more structured school environment. It involves adapting to new routines, expectations and developing further skills for learning.



# How these cards can help with transition.

There are key skills that schools expect children to be learning before their first day. Practicing these will make your child's journey to Reception as positive as possible and support your child's emotional growth and confidence as they start their school journey.

[www.fis.cityoflondon.gov.uk/coltale](http://www.fis.cityoflondon.gov.uk/coltale)



# What can you do at home?

**Each card focuses on different skills which you can help your child to develop. Research shows your relationship with your child is the most important factor in their development.**

There's a lot you can do at home:

- Read stories about going to school.
- Talk to your child about the new adults they will meet (teachers and teaching assistants).
- Use these cards to practice your child's skills in preparation for school.



# Use the activities on the back of the cards to encourage learning through play which in turn will help the transition process.

- Allow your child to practice social interactions and school-related activities.
- Keep the cards in a visible place at home so you and your child can refer to them when needed.

And remember that your child will need a good night's sleep before they go to school.



# What if my child has Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)?



## **If your child needs additional support:**

- Make sure you share as much information with their new teacher.
- Your child's key person will invite you to a transition meeting during the Summer Term. Discuss your child's needs and agree a transition action plan. Your insights and observations will provide valuable context for teachers.

## **You may want to ask additional questions such as:**

- Is there a space where your child can go if they feel overwhelmed?
- Are visuals used in the classroom as part of the daily practice? If so, how?

You may find that your child is taking a little longer to settle or develop certain skills. That's ok. Be patient. You can ask the school for additional settling-in time.

**If you would like to find more information and advice, go to our SEND Local Offer page:**

**<https://www.fis.cityoflondon.gov.uk/send-local-offer>**

You might also be interested in the City of London SEND Ranges document. It provides guidance for staff in all settings 0-25 on what should be 'ordinarily available' to meet the needs of children with SEND.

**<https://www.fis.cityoflondon.gov.uk/send-ranges>**



# Activity 1- Learning to take care of themselves

## Transition skills 1

- To use the toilet.
- To wash and dry hands independently.



# Transition Activity 1

## Independence adventure!

- Help your child to practice flushing, then to wash their hands with soap while singing their favourite song (e.g. "this is the way we wash our hands" to the tune of "Here we go round the Mulberry bush"). Can they turn the tap on and off independently?
- If your child has SEND and is not yet ready to go to the toilet, use visual aids to introduce the idea and try to routinely change your child's nappy in the bathroom so they get use to the space. If they are happy to do so, help them to practice flushing the toilet.





# Activity 2 – Dressing themselves

## Transition skills 2

- To put on/take off shoes and coat.
- To learn to get dressed with little help, e.g. after PE.

Remember to be patient. These skills take time, practice and praise.



# Transition Activity 2

## Dressing up event!

- Lay the coat out so the hood/tag is at your child's feet. Show your child how to insert their arms into the arm holes and then stand and flip the coat over their head.
- If the coat has buttons, encourage your child to practice when the coat is not being worn or when the child is sitting down (for better balance).
- Teach your child to put a coat on a peg.
- Have fun helping your child to dress their favourite soft toys.
- Practice putting on and taking off a T-shirt or cut off strips of fabric tied up in a loop or scrunchies on feet up to the ankle to recreate changing pants and socks.

Ideally choose shoes with Velcro fastening that are easier to put on/take off. Try practicing these skills by helping your child but letting them do the last step (e.g. doing the Velcro on their shoes). As they become more confident, give them more independence.



# Activity 3 – Feeding themselves

## Transition skills 3

- To be comfortable eating lunch in a different room or place.
- To carry a tray with food and help themselves to water.
- To deal with noisy environments.
- To try new food.
- To use cutlery (e.g. fork and spoon).



# Transition Activity 3

## Lunch exploration!

- Choose a new spot to eat lunch, like a cosy corner, café or outdoors.
- Practice carrying a small plate containing pieces of fruit. This takes time!
- Describe the sounds around you: Is it noisy or quiet? If your child is particularly sensitive to sounds, you may want to explore ear defenders or noise cancelling headphones.
- Share your thoughts about the new foods you try. Is it crunchy or sweet? How does it feel? If your child isn't ready to try new food, present changes slowly, one element at a time (e.g. the colour but not the texture).
- Encourage your child to drink water regularly. Can they identify their water bottle by looking for their name on it?
- Practice cutting food using playdough or soft food like bananas. At first you might need to place your hands over your child's so that they can feel the correct position and movement; then let them try. Remember that if the plate is slipping on the table, this makes cutting food tricky!



# Activity 4 – Communication skills

## Transition skills 4

- To practice listening to instructions (e.g. tidying up).
- To practice taking turns in conversation.
- To express their needs and wants clearly.



# Transition Activity 4

## Listen up!

- Set a timer for 5 minutes and see how many toys or books your child can put away (even if only one or two at the start). Try using a colourful visual timer and give your child lots of praise.
- Sing nursery rhymes every day (this can include a tidy-up song). This will help your child develop good listening skills.
- Practice listening by giving clear, simple instructions with gestures or visuals, if needed, to ensure your child understands what is expected of them.
- Share books, looking at pictures and taking turns talking about what happens.
- Try to tell a story multiple times, but change a small detail in it. See if your child can tell you what has changed.



# Activity 5 – Physical skills

## Transition skills 5

- To be able to walk to school, including walking up and down steps.
- To climb, run and jump.
- To throw a ball with accuracy.



# Transition Activity 5

## Active Adventure

- Before your first day at the new school, take a fun walk to visit it and talk about the excitement of starting school.
- Use stories to explain routines in school. Ask the school to prepare an 'all about my school' book with pictures of the classroom, playground and teachers.
- Make an indoor obstacle course. Use a rolled-up rug and cushions as balancing beams or simply put some masking tape on the floor for your child to follow. Make up a tunnel by lining up chairs for your child to crawl under. Add a laundry basket and ask your child to throw a ball into it.
- Some children have a lot of energy and enjoy jumping and bouncing so a trampoline is often a favourite activity. Practice risk taking at your nearest soft play provider or help your child to jump safely off the sofa onto a cushion, jump up to catch bubbles or keep a balloon in the air.





# Activity 6 - Building confidence relationships & emotional regulation

## Transition skills 6

- To share and take turns with toys.
- To recognise and name what they are feeling and know when to say 'no'.
- To express their needs.



# Transition Activity 6

## Play “Toy School”!

- Set up a classroom using toys as children. Your child can then be the teacher and take the register. This will support their confidence and help them to practice making marks on paper.
- Look at story books together and speak about what characters are feeling (sad, happy, angry, scared).
- Look in a mirror and make different faces to express feelings (how big can your smile be when you are happy?)
- Encourage your child to stand up for themselves by saying and using the gestures for ‘stop’ and ‘no’.
- Support your child to express their needs by using their voice, pointing, using pictures or by leading an adult to what they need.



# Recommended books: starting school

- **School for Dads** - Adam & Charlotte Guillain; Illustrated by Ada Grey
- **Never Take a Bear to School** - Mark Sperring
- **Mae's First Day of School** - Kate Berube
- **Shu Lin's Grandpa** - Matt Goodfellow
- **Starting School** - Clara Vulliamy
- **My Big Shouting Day!** - Rebecca Patterson
- **All Are Welcome** - Alexandra Penfold (Author),  
Suzanne Kaufman (Illustrator)
- **The Colour Monster Goes to School**  
- Anna Llenas
- **Lulu's First Day** - Anna McQuinn and  
Rosalind Beardshaw
- **A New Day At School** - Peter Andre and Sarah Fabiny
- **Olu's Teacher: A Story About Starting Nursery** - Jamel C. Campbell



Thanks to Georgina Poullais - Family Outreach Worker, Eileen Robinson - Shoe Lane Library, Jessica Sallabank - City Parent Carer Forum.

# Useful websites:

- **Starting Reception:** <https://startingreception.co.uk/>
- **City of London, Family Information Service Early Years Hub/SEND Hub:**  
<https://www.fis.cityoflondon.gov.uk/ey-send-hub/early-years-hub/eyfs-guidance>
- **City of London, Family Information Service SEND Local Offer - Early Years:**  
<https://www.fis.cityoflondon.gov.uk/send-local-offer/early-years-0-to-5>
- **Barnado's Family Space:**  
<https://families.barnardos.org.uk/pre-school/preparing-for-school>
- **Family Action Charity:**  
<https://family-action.org.uk/self-help/back-to-school-guidance-for-parents-of-children-with-send/>
- **BBC Bitesize - Time For School:**  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z78dtcw>
- **BBC Bitesize - Starting primary for children with SEND:**  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zv8q8xs>
- **Zones of Regulation: children coping skills and self-regulation:**  
<https://www.nhs.uk/borders.scot.nhs.uk/media/1001858/Zones-of-Regulation.pdf>



# Final thoughts on Transition

We hope you have enjoyed these transition cards and your child has a happy time at school. Even if you are feeling a little anxious about your child starting school, try to give them a sense of positive anticipation and pride in becoming “more grown up”.

Your child needs to feel secure and confident that their needs, wants, likes and dislikes will be understood. You could create a “passport”. This can include a picture of your child and useful information about the support they may need. This can then be given to the new teacher.



For ideas of things to do during the Summer, go to the What's On section of the City of London Family Information Service website:

<https://www.fis.cityoflondon.gov.uk/whats-on>



1 Aug

Rhyme Time



Barbican Library



1 Aug

Science Museum



Science Museum



1 Aug

SEND Activity Programme:  
Football



Golden Lane Sports and  
Fitness



1 Aug

SEND Activity Programme:  
Gym



Golden Lane Sport and  
Fitness

## POSTCARD

Give some feedback for the chance to win a Coltale Puppet!

**We used the transition cards to...**

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Tear off this card and hand it in at Artizan, Barbican or Shoe Lane Library.

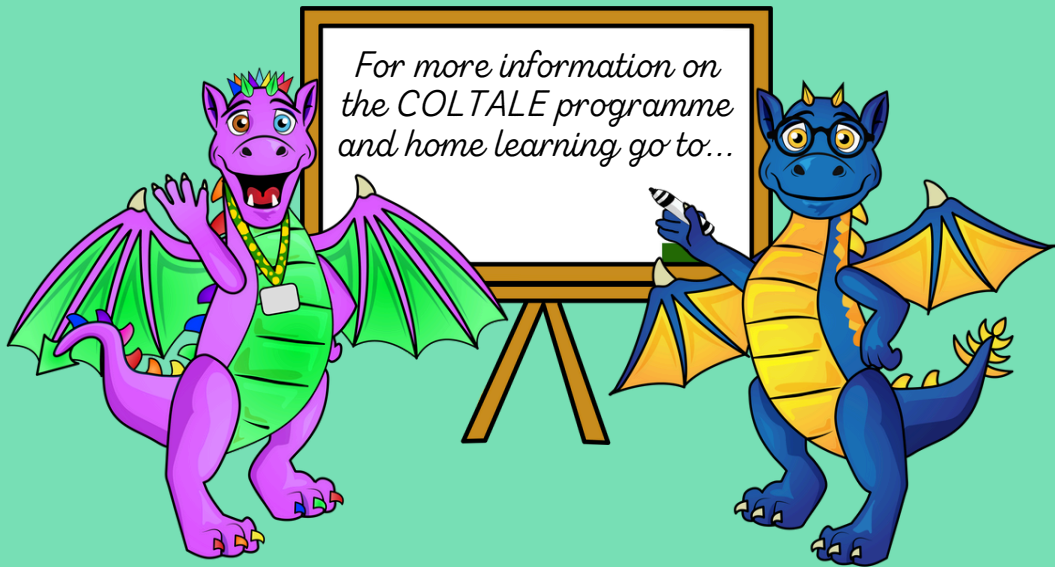


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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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