

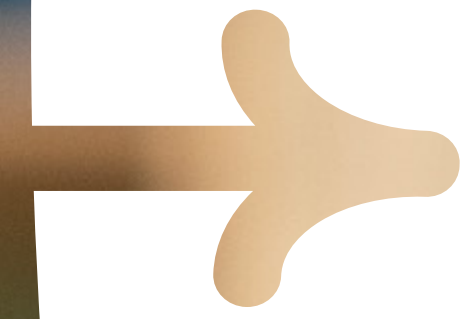
# Welcome to Preschool at Bright Horizons

Getting your child ready for their big move to school is not about ABCs; it's about building confidence, independence and resilience so that they can also feel ready for their next chapter.

This is more than childcare.  
This is **childhood**.







# Your child's biggest adventure yet

Making the move to 'big school' is a big deal – for you and your child.

Like so many things in life, it's normal for this journey to be filled with a mix of excitement and nerves, sometimes at the same time.

Here we walk you through how we help our preschoolers prepare to take their next steps, how we ensure they'll be school ready (and what that really means!) and how you can support them at home.

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# Our approach

Preparing your child for school is so much more than just developing academic skills. Through our holistic Nurture Approach, we lay the foundations for a love of learning, while also building emotional resilience, independence and sparking their curiosity about the world.

This is more than a philosophy; it's at the heart of everything we do. Our unique Nurture Approach is made up of three key pillars:

- **Holistic Learning -**

Through our Bright Beginnings Curriculum and Growing Programmes

- **Emotional Wellbeing -**

Encouraging emotional resilience, self-expression, problem-solving, and critical thinking.

- **Excellence in Teaching -**

From our nurturing and qualified educators who create a supportive environment where children can be their best.

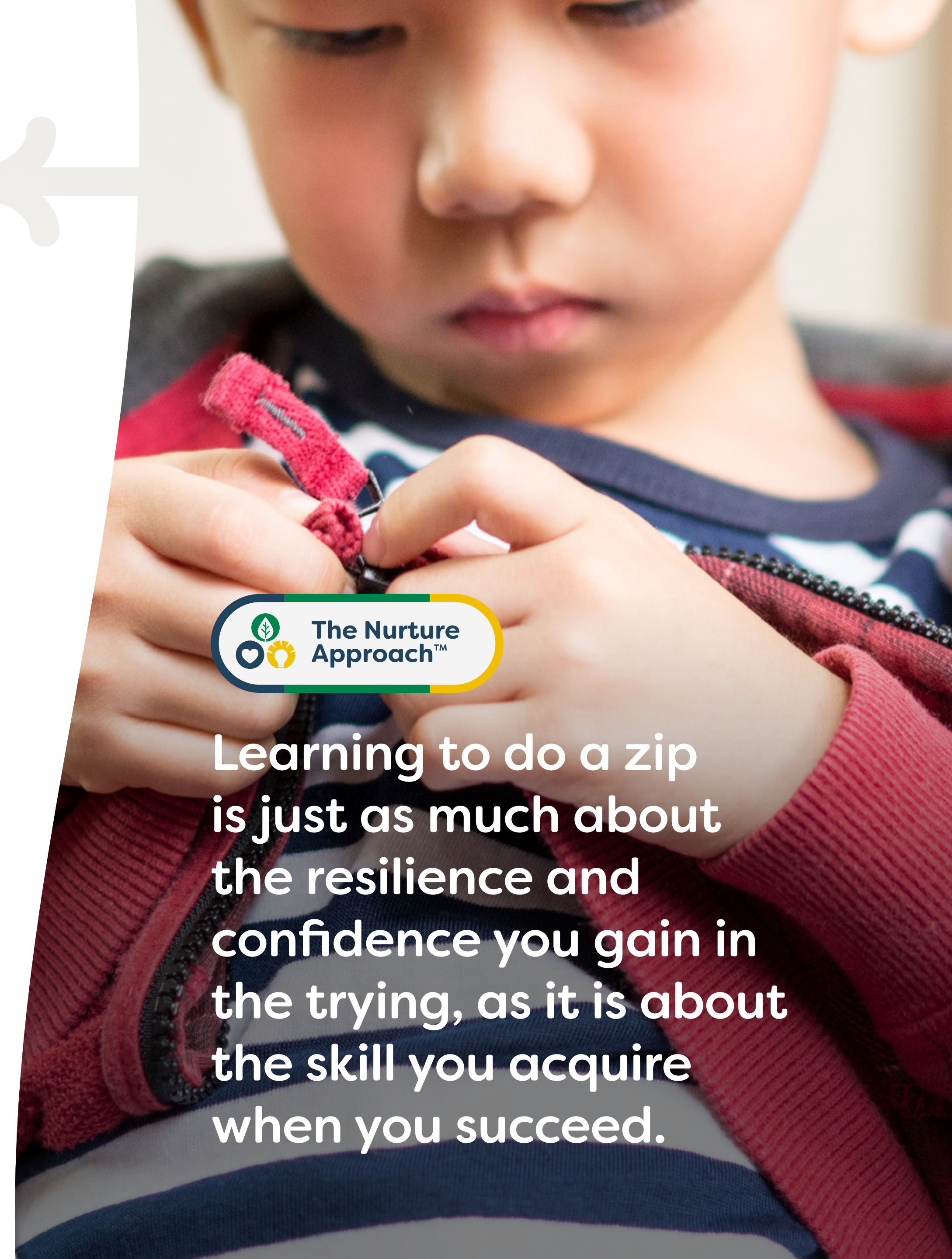
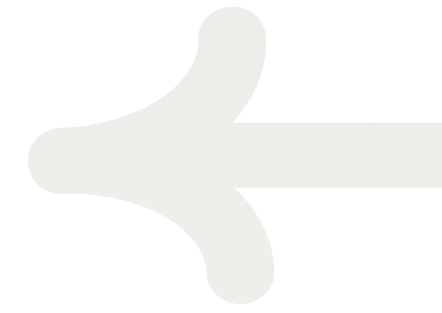
Delivered by our dedicated and inspirational practitioners, our unique, holistic, research-based Bright Beginnings Curriculum aligns to, but goes above and beyond the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It promotes a deeper understanding of the world and encourages a life-long enthusiasm for learning, developing children's skills within these core areas.

- Feelings and Friendships
- Sharing Thoughts and Ideas
- Technical and Life Skills
- Thinking Creatively
- Exploring and Learning About My World

**Together, we build the foundations that will enable them to thrive as they make this exciting transition.**



**Learning to do a zip is just as much about the resilience and confidence you gain in the trying, as it is about the skill you acquire when you succeed.**





Our practitioners are trained to understand where each child is in their emotional development and to support them in the right way.



We support and inspire all our children through open-ended learning opportunities and experiences.

When children feel secure and happy, they're able to learn. As they learn, their self-esteem grows, providing the foundations for emotional wellbeing.

## Inspirational Teaching & Exceptional Care

Our practitioners are dedicated to providing the highest standards of care and education. Our programme of ongoing professional development is led by Early Childhood Specialists, ensuring every team is committed to creating a nurturing and stimulating environment where every child can thrive.

## Emotional Wellbeing

The latest research shows that between the ages of 0 and 5, a child's brain is developing neural pathways which will have a huge influence on their early learning and development and how well they cope emotionally throughout their lives.

Our Nurture Model training programme ensures every member of staff is able to recognise and meet children where they are emotionally – because every child is different. This means our practitioners understand each child's needs and how to best support them, developing positive and healthy relationships with practitioners and peers that help them to thrive.

## Our Bright Beginnings Curriculum

Our Bright Beginnings Curriculum reflects the way children naturally learn. The five distinct areas of our curriculum (Feelings and Friendships, Thinking Creatively, Technical and Life Skills, Sharing Thoughts and Ideas, Exploring and Learning About My World ) deliver a holistic approach to children's development.

This approach promotes a deeper understanding of the world, aligns to and goes above and beyond the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework to encourage a life-long love for learning.

# How we support academic readiness

As part of our Nurture Approach, our Early Childhood Specialists have created our bespoke Bright Beginnings Curriculum. This is enhanced by a programme of key ‘Growing’ areas: Readers, Writers, Mathematicians, Scientists & Ecologists which teach children key skills in preparation for starting school.



## **Growing Readers:**

Unlocking the magic of language all starts with positive early experiences of books! Our Ready to Read programme nurtures and inspires early literacy and reading skills by taking children on exciting and delightful adventures through their favourite books. Whether they're Going on a Bear Hunt or discovering why Giraffes Can't Dance, stories selected by children and practitioners inspire a love of literature and encourage children to become both readers and storytellers.



## **Growing Writers:**

A mark on a page is never just a mark. Before letters and words, children explore squiggles and splodges, doodles and dots. Our Growing Writers programme guides children's journeys from mark-making to confident writing through play.-based opportunities. Carefully curated opportunities like playdough, large-scale painting, block building, and puzzle solving help develop fine motor skills, while riding bikes and climbing help to develop large motor skills that are essential to becoming ready to hold a writing tool.



## **Growing Mathematicians:**

Maths is all around us and our Growing Mathematicians programme encourages mathematical thinking and understanding through everyday play experiences. A trip outside means putting on two gloves, while lining up involves talking about who is third in line and building a tower is perfect for counting how many blocks there are or how high the tower is. Guided by our practitioners, children begin to recognise the value and purpose of maths in their daily lives.



# How we support academic readiness



## **Growing Scientists:**

Outdoor bug hunts are more than just beetling about, they're lessons in biology, while mixing, pouring and baking offers a first taste of chemistry (with a fraction of maths!). It's experiences like these that ignite children's natural curiosity and inspire critical thinking and problem solving, helping them develop a passion for science. Our Growing Scientists programme encourages constant exploration and experimentation, allowing children to test theories and make discoveries, as they question and learn to understand how the things around them work.



## **Growing Ecologists:**

In the early years, sustainability involves teaching young children about the importance of protecting the environment, reducing waste, conserving resources and being a healthy and responsible member of society. At Bright Horizons we make use of recycled materials and reclaimed resources such as cardboard boxes and pre-loved items all of which the children enjoy exploring in loose parts play.







Every act of learning, intertwines with emotional growth, building resilience, confidence and self-esteem.



# How we support growing Independence & Social Skills

## **Independence:**

As a preschooler, your child's abilities are growing daily and so too will be their desire for independence and taking on new challenges.

Practitioners use the outside spaces of our gardens, forest schools and local parks to create opportunities for children to enhance their physical strength and coordination, refine motor skills as well as to think critically.

By expertly guiding these activities, they ensure that the confidence gained from climbing a tree comes as much from planning how you'll get down as it does from the exciting ascent.

## **Social Skills:**

Similarly, taking turns and learning to share is as important as listening to instructions and recognising when your friend is sad and might need a hug.

Our family-style mealtimes give children a sense of independence and empower them to make their own choices and decisions, as well as encouraging social skills.

Alongside core life skills like dressing and undressing, to eating your lunch and knowing how to wash and dry your hands after going to the bathroom, these skills are embedded within your preschooler's daily activities.

Together, they'll pave the way for a smooth and confident transition when the time comes for them to be independent at school.





With us, learning begins  
at the beginning.



# How we support growing Emotional Wellbeing

## **Emotional Wellbeing:**

It's never too early to learn how to take care of yourself. Whether that's through a little quiet reflection, yoga session or unwinding in a comforting sensory room, we help children to understand their emotions and feel confident to learn and develop pro-social behaviours, which are important life skills. Knowing how to get on with others promotes positive interactions, builds relationships and helps people feel connected. Our curriculum is thoughtfully planned to create opportunities for practising pro-social skills that help the development of emotional regulation - being able to manage a range of emotions.

The latest research shows that between the ages of 0 and 5, a child's brain is developing neural pathways which will have a huge influence on their early learning and development, as well as how well they cope emotionally throughout their lives.

Our unique Nurture Model training ensures every member of staff is trained to recognise and meet children where they are emotionally - because every child is different. This means our practitioners understand each child's needs and how to best support them in developing positive and healthy relationships with practitioners and peers that help them to thrive.





# Helping every child feel ready (SEND)

## When children need a little extra support

- Some children will need a little extra support temporarily as they transition through different stages of learning and development, while others may need it throughout their educational journey.
- Our nurseries are inclusive spaces and THRIVE® is a fundamental part of our Bright Horizons Nurture Approach. It offers tailored practical support for children during unexpected or unsettling life changes. While the Nurture Approach primarily focuses on supporting children's emotional wellbeing from a developmental perspective, THRIVE is available when extra help is needed.
- It focusses on four key areas: your child's social and emotional wellbeing, developing secure attachments with parents and significant caregivers, creative self-expression, and building resilience to cope with life's challenges, to fully engage with life and learning. While your child may never need the additional support of the THRIVE approach®, knowing that every Bright Horizons nursery has access to a THRIVE-licensed practitioner ensures peace of mind should any child and their family need an extra helping hand.
- For children who need ongoing additional support, each of our nurseries also has a trained Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) practitioner with a passion for supporting the children in our care. A child's SEND practitioner will work with you, your child's Key Person and caregivers to create an environment where their individual potential is nurtured.





# Ensuring smooth transitions

## What does 'school ready' mean?

While safe and secure in our nurturing spaces, we provide the chance for your child to get ready for school in a familiar and stimulating space, focussing on social and emotional wellbeing, as well as helping them develop the practical and academic skills they will need.

Every child is unique and is on their own individual path towards becoming school ready. Being a 4 year old is an important step to becoming a 5 year old. It's a stage in its own right and having a solid foundation is what counts.

## Our preschool rooms:

Our preschool rooms are thoughtfully designed to provide a positive transition to the school environment and will help prepare your child so that the change doesn't feel so big.

## Routine:

Predictable but flexible routines build confidence and familiarity within the safety of our nursery environment and pave the way for a smooth transition to school. As part of this preparation, children have the option to wear a Bright Horizons polo shirt and use a book bag, introducing them to the concept of a school uniform.

## School visits:

Familiarity actually breeds confidence! That's why, where possible, we take our preschoolers to visit local primary schools so they can see their classrooms, get a sense of school routines and meet their new teachers.

Even if it's not the school your child will be attending, just knowing what's behind the door starts preparing them for what their next step will be and will help reduce the fear of the unknown.





## Why stay with us?

Keeping your child in the same nursery until they start primary school has many important benefits.

By enabling your child to continue their growth and development with us throughout the key months before starting school, they will be confident and ready to move when the big day arrives.

The research behind our unique Nurture Approach supports the core developmental stages of early childhood, and includes the way our practitioners nurture children, ensuring each child receives the individualised attention they deserve and need.

As children gradually transition through different stages of development and rooms, they are introduced to many different age-appropriate challenges and learning opportunities throughout their time with us. But it's the

consistency of our specialist nurturing environments that help them build strong emotional and social connections with familiar practitioners and the ability to make friends, gaining key skills that they'll need to thrive in their new school.

At the same time, our bespoke Bright Beginnings curriculum continues to give them a holistic, child-centred learning experience. And of course, our parent partnership with you ensures your child's journey is a collaborative one, prioritising their needs, wellbeing and happiness every step of the way.

Keeping the continuity of our nurturing setting plays an integral role in maintaining your child's learning momentum. So, by staying with us, your child can enjoy a smooth transition to their 'big' school, fully prepared in all the ways that matter, and excited and confident to tackle their next challenge.



# Your preschooler's day

**For your preschooler, each drop-off means a new day of discoveries.**

Throughout your child's day, we use actions, experiences and open-ended questions to stretch and challenge them in areas such as problem solving, memory and information processing. We also introduce them to age-appropriate maths, reading, writing and scientific experiences through our Growing Programmes.

These are provided through our Bright Beginnings Curriculum where interconnected learning is key. Playing shops means counting money and greeting customers; while making mud pies builds curiosity and science. Behind every activity, there's a multitude of carefully planned (and sometimes surprising!) learning opportunities.

The fun continues in the great outdoors, where buttoning up coats supports independence and dexterity, racing besties on tricycles builds coordination and confidence, or digging deep in a vegetable patch helps cultivate green fingers and knowledge of nature and sustainability while at the same time developing shoulder, elbow and wrist muscles to support early writing skills.

As school gets nearer, pre-school becomes a dress rehearsal.

Children start practising regular activities and routines. Whether it's getting changed for PE, eating a packed lunch, using the toilet independently, understanding how a register works, or deciding what to pack in their bag at home time. Becoming confident with these activities means that when the big move happens, these basics are already familiar parts of their day.

*"Since my daughter started at Bright Horizons four months ago I have noticed such a difference in the way she is. She's more comfortable around people, she's taking such big leaps in her talking and has picked up so much."*







# Our people: Their expertise

It takes a special kind of person to grow and nurture young minds, that's why our fabulous people are at the heart of everything we do.

Knowing when a hug is needed but a high-five is preferred, or that a child is just as likely to count flowers than wooden blocks, our educators develop a deep understanding of each child's unique needs.

To support the journey to be school ready, they'll observe, guide, and nurture each child's growth, celebrating every achievement along the way; whether they've learned to tie their shoelaces on their own (or just kept trying), or shared their favourite toy with a friend.

Our early years educators understand that play is the work of children. Thoughtfully curated resources ensure their skills are developed and their learning continually enriched. Our educators create an environment where children's curiosity is encouraged as they discover and explore, all while learning to collaborate, concentrate and navigate challenges and setbacks.

In partnership with you, your child's Key Person will ensure your child feels safe, cared for, valued and accepted, helping them transition from preschool to primary school and beyond.





# How parents & families can help

As with most things in life, there's no single magic moment when a child will suddenly flick a switch and become 'school ready'.

The journey for each child is as individual as they are and is made up of a million different mini-moments and experiences at home and in nursery which shape your child's skills and confidence, so they slowly and surely start to feel ready for school.

We understand and recognise the importance that parents and families play in preparing for this transition, that's why we value our partnerships with parents and carers so much.



# Paving the way...

Parents, carers and families play a big role in helping children to become school ready. Three key areas you can help with are:

## Confidence building

- Positive Reinforcement: By acknowledging and celebrating your child's efforts and achievements, no matter how small, you help reinforce a positive attitude towards learning and boost their self-esteem.
- Keep it Chatty: Encourage your child to express their feelings, emphasising that it's okay to share worries as well as excitement. Follow your child's lead – you don't have to have a 'big' conversation, answer the questions as they naturally arise.

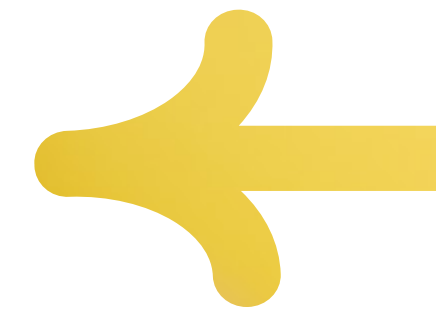
## Familiarisation

- Practise the Journey: Whether it's by car, scooter or bus knowing how they will get to school, who will take them and pick them up will reduce worries that children may have over the new routine.

- School visits: Many schools hold induction days for new children to see their classrooms and meet their teachers and fellow classmates, it's a great way to help them get familiar with their new environment.

## Marking the moment

- Make it Fun: You may be able to whip up excitement about getting new uniform, but if the trousers are too itchy or the jumper too hot, perhaps a superhero pencil case or funky school bag will help the preparation feel exciting.
- Don't Bin it, Scrap it: Many children are naturally quite nostalgic and proud of their achievements. Why not make a scrap book of their time at nursery, with photos, drawings and their first writing. You can even create a new one in readiness for school.





# Practical activities to try at home

There are plenty of simple everyday opportunities to help your child grow their confidence and feel comfortable with the prospect of taking their next step into big school.

## Establish routine

Life is often unpredictable but, where possible, consistent daily routines for mealtimes, playtime, and rest help give children a sense of security and prepare them for the more structured school environment.

## Encourage independence

Encouraging your child to dress themselves, tidy up toys and complete simple tasks like laying the table, will build confidence and prepare them for the new responsibilities of school life.

## Read together

By cultivating a love for reading, you can share books together about starting school, discuss with them and encourage them to ask questions. Expressing their feelings supports emotional wellbeing and develops language and communication skills.

## Playdates

The ability to take-turns, share and co-operate will all help towards a positive social experience in school and time with other children will support the continuing development of social skills. A summer holiday playdate with children starting at the same school will give them all the confidence of knowing a familiar face.

## Make maths familiar

Incorporate basic maths into daily activities. Counting apples into a fruit bowl, sorting your teddies or recognising shapes and patterns as you walk in the park all help to build the foundations for early maths skills.

## Encourage problem-solving

Whether they prefer puzzles or I-Spy, building bridges or making marble runs, any opportunities for simple independent problem solving are all valuable.





# Next steps

Now you’ve seen what childhood looks like at Bright Horizons, there are several ways to take the next steps.

## Book a personal tour

If you haven’t already visited your local nursery, a personal tour is the best way for you and your child to get the full Bright Horizons experience. It’s a great chance to chat with our practitioners, ask questions, and get a feel for the special spaces and people who will work with you to nurture your child. Book online or contact us to schedule a tour of your local nursery.

Book your tour today!



## Secure your preschool place

To enrol your child with us, simply reach out to your local nursery team. They will be delighted to guide you through the process, arrange a visit, and answer any questions you may have. If and when you decide you’d like to register your child at a Bright Horizons nursery, we do ask for a registration fee at this point. It means that you, your family and your chosen nursery all know your child is definitely joining us and so we can make sure we’re fully prepared to provide the highest quality care and education.

## Funding options

Covering the cost of childcare isn’t always easy, especially in the current financial climate. The UK government offers a range of funded childcare schemes to help lighten the financial load. Bright Horizons offers various funding options, including government schemes and employer assistance programmes. Our team will work closely with you to explore the funding options that best suit your family’s needs.

We’ve created an easy to understand [guide](#) and when you visit us, our nursery teams can help you learn more about our childcare funding options.

## FAQS

For answers to common questions and helpful information, explore our [FAQs section](#). We’ve done our best to anticipate and address your enquiries to ensure a well-informed and reassuring experience.





*“From watching our 9-month old son take his first wobbly steps at Bright Horizons to now, striding confidently into reception has been nothing short of miraculous. The team at Bright Horizon made sure he was prepared, happy, and excited for primary school. It’s been a heartwarming experience to see him embrace each new challenge with a big grin.”*

**This is more than childcare.**  
**This is childhood.**

