



Tips To Prepare 3 - 4 Year Olds for Kindergarten.

A warm welcome and introduction to parents who are, for the very first time, preparing their daughter for Kindergarten. To many, the notion of “kindergarten readiness” can be daunting. Don’t let it be. It is simply working alongside your child’s pre-school and future Kindergarten to help your little person prepare for the transition into “big school” in a way that best enables her to settle in, learn and thrive.

Fortunately, there are four widely accepted areas that parents and educators can focus on to help prepare girls for their first day in Kindergarten. The following ideas, grouped into four categories to help us better grasp the notion of “kindergarten readiness”, can assist us to nurture skills and competencies in little people; just remember, there may still be some skills they are working on when they start school and all children vary in their maturity at this age.

The important thing is to be aware of each category and to incorporate aspects into your child’s play and activity time. This will help them view starting school positively, with a sense of excitement, and enable all members of your family to enjoy this milestone experience.

1. Social and Emotional

Making friends and being congenial are at the front of many parents’ minds when wondering how their child will adjust to school life within a group of friends and peers.

Your child should work towards:

- Playing cooperatively with peers, older children and adults
- Adjusting to new environments and routines
- Taking turns and resolving issues positively by herself
- Caring for others and showing concern for others
- Asking questions.

Ideas to help nurture social and emotional readiness:

- Arrange play dates for your child, ideally with others who will attend Kindergarten with them
- Teach skills of sharing, helping, listening
- Set routines then surprise her with occasional change
- Help her to recognise and respond to the feelings of others
- Invite her to think of and ask questions
- Encourage focus on a single task for a period of time.

2. Independence and Personal Responsibility

To most parents, this seems one of the more obvious categories; with many already “experienced” in working through topics like separation anxiety, personal hygiene, manners and looking after her own (and others’) property.

Your child should be able to:

- Go to the toilet and wash her hands independently
- Say ‘please’ and ‘thank you’
- Clean up after herself
- Look after her own belongings
- Say her first and last name, and possibly a phone number
- Follow simple rules
- Separate from her parents.

Ideas to help nurture Independence and Personal Responsibility:

- Teach manners in various situations, among other children and adults
- Explain simple rules and consequences
- Create opportunities in being responsible for choices
- Establish an expectation of keeping her own things tidy
- Let her dress and undress herself
- Encourage taking turns
- Follow a series of verbal instructions.

3. Academic, Curiosity and Concept Development

With a little conscious effort, parents find this category is the easiest and most fun to incorporate into every day life; while driving in the car, cooking or making things, and even finding specific items or counting produce when shopping for groceries.

Your child should work towards:

- Recognising letters, shapes, colours and numbers to 20
- Recognising initial sounds and rhyming words
- Using a mouse and keyboard
- Writing letters, numerals and her own first name
- Speaking in grammatically correct sentences
- Listening with understanding to simple stories
- Understanding the nature of printed text – that it is written left to right and has words that may relate to pictures.

Ideas to help nurture Academic, Curiosity and Concept Development:

- Test her sight, hearing and speech abilities
- Read to your daughter. Follow words with your finger underneath
- Count objects indicating one to one matching
- Play 'I spy' and rhyming, number and colour games
- Borrow a variety of books from the local Library and supervise constructive computer "screen time" with interactive books and learning games
- Encourage drawing using specific shapes, lines and colours
- Offer a variety of media with which to draw and create.

4. Physical

In a country like Australia, and a coastal city like Sydney, it is crucial that parents consider water survival and swimming among their child's physical competencies when starting school. Likewise, simple life-skill competencies like how to hold pencils or scissors, how to use a tap or zipper, or even looking left and right at a crossing, all amount to more confidence as a child embarks on her educational journey at school.

Your child should be able to:

- Hold pencils, crayons and brushes with the correct grip
- Use scissors with some degree of accuracy
- Open and close lunch boxes, turn taps on and off, do up and undo buttons, zippers and Velcro
- Have confidence running, jumping, skipping, hopping, climbing, and catching and throwing (a ball)
- Climb and descend stairs independently
- Enter and exit an in-ground pool safely and confidently
- Submerge under water, open her eyes and blow bubbles
- Grasp a rescue aid, if required
- Float on her back for 30 seconds
- Recover from face-down float to a standing float
- Propel (by swimming, floating or paddling) for a minimum distance of 10m, with feet clear of the bottom.

Ideas to help nurture Physical readiness:

- Teach correct pencil grip (holders are available that may help)
- Offer fine motor activities e.g. lacing, threading, drawing
- Purchase toys and clothes that require manipulation of smaller objects such as buttons, zips, laces, and puzzle pieces
- Play with balls and outdoor games that include running, jumping and skipping
- Take your child to the beach for rock hopping, digging in the sand and enjoying the waves
- Take your child to "Learn to Swim" classes where she learns water safety and basic swimming skills, and gains confidence in the water around other children.

It is not Roseville College's expectation that each item be ticked-off by the time your daughter starts school; however, it is important that children have an awareness of what they are working towards and that they have a willing attitude in learning and improving alongside their peers.

If you have any concerns, speak with your pre-school coordinator and/or the staff at Roseville College to ensure appropriate steps are put in place to support and encourage children who need it.