WELLY BOOT WOODS • FREE UK EARLY YEARS & RECEPTION PRINTABLE

UK Starting Reception Checklist: 10 School Readiness Skills

A gentle, realistic checklist for parents and EYFS practitioners preparing 3- and 4-year-olds for Reception class. Reception teachers agree: school readiness is about emotional confidence and simple self-care—not reading or writing early!

Key UK Primary School Reception Dates (England):
• **15 January (National Application Deadline):** Last day to submit your primary school Reception preferences via your home local council portal.
• **16 April (National Offer Day):** Councils email/post primary school Reception place offers.
• **May–July (Stay & Play Visits):** Classroom settling-in sessions and meeting your child's Reception teacher.
• **September (First Week of Reception):** Staggered settling-in mornings and first full days!

Part A: Emotional & Social Readiness (Building Confidence Before Reception)

[ ] **1. Practising Short Goodbyes:** Can say goodbye at the classroom door using a predictable ritual (such as charging a smooth 'Pocket Hug' pebble in their coat pocket).

[ ] **2. Asking a Safe Adult for Help:** Knows they can tell their Reception teacher or TA: *'Excuse me, I need the toilet'* or *'Can you help me, please?'*

[ ] **3. Naming & Calming Big Feelings:** Has a simple reset tool when frustrated or overwhelmed (like Ruby Robin's 4-2-4 'Smell the Wildflower, Blow the Dandelion' breath).

[ ] **4. Taking Turns & Waiting Briefly:** Can wait a short turn for a popular bike, toy, or adult's attention during group carpet time.

[ ] **5. Coping When Plans Change:** Understands that mistakes and wet-play changes are okay—we can always try again or find a 'Plan B'.

Part B: Reception Class Skills Checklist (Practical Self-Care)

[ ] **6. The 'Superhero Coat Flip':** Can put on their own school coat (lay the hood by their toes, slide arms in, and flip it over their head!) and practise Velcro shoes.

[ ] **7. Independent Toilet & Handwashing:** Can use the toilet, wipe independently, flush, and wash and dry their hands with soap.

[ ] **8. Lunchtime & Water Bottle Practice:** Can open their own lunchbox clips, peel a banana/tangerine, and pop open their own water bottle.

[ ] **9. Spotting Their First Name:** Recognises what their written first name looks like on a coat peg, book bag, or jumper label (they do *not* need to write it fluently yet!).

[ ] **10. Following a Simple 2-Step Instruction:** Can follow calm group prompts such as *'Pop your water bottle in the tray and sit on the carpet.'*

Bedtime Story Companion for Starting Reception:
Read ***Nutmeg's Pocket Hug (A Welly Boot Wood Story)*** by Oliver Woods — the gentle woodland rhyming picture book that teaches children aged 2–6 how to carry a parent's hug in their pocket on their first day at nursery or school.
• **Full Interactive Guide:** wellybootwoods.co.uk/resources/starting-reception-school-readiness-emotional-checklist.html
• **Available on Amazon UK (£9.99 Paperback):** amazon.co.uk/dp/B0H32NJPDJ

© Welly Boot Woods by Oliver Woods • Free to print and share with parents, childminders, nurseries & UK Reception classrooms • https://wellybootwoods.co.uk