Kindergarten Readiness Checklist

This checklist reflects the kinds of skills many NSW primary schools look for when children begin Kindergarten. Children do not need to master every item perfectly before starting school.

Social & Emotional Readiness

My child can:

- separate from parents/carers without major distress
- play alongside or with other children
- take turns and share most of the time
- follow simple rules and routines
- cope with small disappointments
- ask adults for help when needed
- express feelings using words
- begin to regulate emotions after becoming upset
- show curiosity and willingness to try new activities

Independence Skills

My child can:

- use the toilet independently
- wash and dry hands
- open lunch containers and drink bottles
- unpack and pack their school bag
- put on shoes, jumper and hat with minimal help
- recognise their own belongings
- manage basic hygiene such as blowing their nose

Communication Skills

My child can:

- speak in sentences that others understand
- listen when someone is speaking
- follow 2–3 step instructions
- answer simple questions
- participate in conversations
- retell simple events or stories
- recognise and respond to their own name

Learning Behaviours

My child can:

- sit and focus on an activity for short periods
- listen to a story from beginning to end
- attempt tasks even when challenging
- participate in group activities
- show interest in books, drawing or problem-solving
- begin recognising shapes, colours or some letters/numbers through play

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Physical Readiness

My child can:

- hold crayons, pencils or paintbrushes comfortably
- use scissors with supervision
- run, jump and climb safely
- carry their own bag
- participate in playground activities safely

Important Reminder

Children are not expected to:

- read before school
- write sentences
- know sight words
- complete formal maths

Schools teach these skills from Kindergarten onward.

The strongest indicators of success are usually:

- confidence
- communication
- resilience
- independence
- ability to participate in routines and relationships

Questions to Consider Before Starting School

Does my child enjoy being around other children?
Can they cope with a structured routine for several hours?
Are they emotionally ready for bigger environments and expectations?
Do they recover reasonably well after becoming upset?
Would another year of preschool likely build confidence or engagement?

For children with birthdays between April and July, many NSW families consider both age and emotional maturity when deciding whether to start school or wait another year.

Contact us for more information

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