



Information for those starting school for the first time.

Starting school is an exciting time and an important milestone in your child's life and maybe also your life – particularly if this is your first child to come to school. We look forward to working with you and your child to make the transition from preschool to school a positive experience. The staff at Tapu School welcome you, your family and your five year old, and recognise the importance of a smooth transition into school. At Tapu School we have an open door policy and see communication between home and school as an integral part of your child's learning. If you have any questions, please come and see us so we can discuss these. If this is your first child at school often it is new for you as a parent as well as so much has changed perhaps since you were last a student.

Some children are comfortable and gain confidence quickly while it is natural for some to take a little longer to settle into school life. We recognise that children bring many different skills and experiences to school with them so along with the literacy and numeracy skills that are focused on in the first year, we encourage the children to begin to develop the key competencies through our school programmes. These are the skills identified in the *New Zealand Curriculum* that they will need to be successful life-long learners.

Thinking, Relating to others, Using language, symbols, and texts, Managing self, Participating and contributing



Classification of new Entrants

This causes much confusion so generally we say the time of year your child starts school will determine their initial year group classification. Five year old children starting school from the beginning of the school year and during the first term will usually be classified as Year 1. Five your old children starting during the second term and during the remainder of the school year will be classified as Year 0. Sometimes there are exceptions to this but consultation with parents will be involved if there are changes.



Lunches and Snacks

To help your child develop healthy eating habits please:

Fill their drink bottle with water only – no fizzy drinks

Remember a sugar free snack is best for morning tea

Don't send lollies or chocolate to school

Often children when they begin school don't eat all the food that is sent along. This can be because they are keen to go and play or too much food has been sent along. Once they settle into school they will be happy to sit for longer periods of time and eat more food. It is a good idea to pack lots of little snacks so they have choices. Food that is not eaten at school will come home in the lunch box and they can eat it when they get home. We prefer that you don't send things that need to be heated up.

Food scrapes and packaging comes home in their lunch box to be disposed of at home.

Children at Tapu School can order their lunch through the office on Thursdays. The order, with correct money, should be handed in to the office on arrival at school.



More and more students are arriving at school these days with some sort of food allergy. Please make sure the school is very aware if your child has any food allergies or intolerances.



Project Energize who work in schools in our area have an excellent website that offers suggestions for healthy low-cost lunchbox ideas. They also have a great range of tip-sheets including ones for breakfasts and snacks and so enjoy spending time looking at their website. <http://www.projectenergize.org.nz/>



Help your child to prepare for their first day by:

Talking about school with enthusiasm

Downplaying any unhelpful comments that people might make about school

If possible, try to purchase stationery so you can have it all ready for your child on the first day – a stationery list is included in the Booklet

In the morning before you leave:

Get up early so you have plenty of time to have a good breakfast and get ready. This way you and your child won't feel rushed or stressed.

If you don't have your uniform yet, make sure you choose clothes and shoes that are easy for your child to manage by themselves for toileting or if it is summer and likely to be swimming happening at school. Don't forget to pack togs and towel.

Remember a hat if it is Term 1 or Term 4. The school sunhat can be purchased through the school office. You may wish to apply sunscreen at home before you leave as well.



Name all your child's clothes and footwear. This will make it easier to reunite them should they become separated!

The first few days will be easier if your child is really familiar with the school. Come in during the weekend and play in the playground and walk around if possible, pointing out the classroom and toilet block where they will be working.

When it comes time to leaving, make your goodbyes brief. Teachers have a lot of practise helping children to settle in and managing an upset child. If you appear upset this may upset your child. Most children settle down quickly and we recommend you still leave if they appear upset. You are welcome to phone when you get home to check. Rest assured, we will always phone you if we have problems or concerns.



After School

Remember, your child might be very tired after school for the first few weeks. They might also be very hungry – remember there is probably leftover food in their lunch box.

Independence

Encourage personal independence - teaching and encouraging independence helps to develop a 'can do, have a go' attitude which develop a sense of ownership and responsibility.

Parents can help their children on this path by encouraging them to be able to do these things:

Dress themselves

Go to the toilet and wash their hands

Blow and wipe their nose

Be able to put on their sweatshirt and shoes themselves. Laces and buckles are tricky – embrace Velcro and Gumboots in winter!

Carry, unpack and hang up their school bag by themselves. Test drive their bag before their first day – can they open and close it and manage all the zips. Make sure you get a school bag that will hold a book bag, lunchbox, drink bottle and hat. You might want to get a separate swimming bag for togs and towel.

Listen and follow instructions

Know how to tidy up

Being able to tell the teacher what the need or want.



Helping your child with a confident start to learning

Some parents ask “what should my child be able to do when they start school?” Please keep in mind that all children start at different places in their learning.

Here are some ideas of activities you could do with your child that will help them when they arrive at school:

Help them to recognise their name – they may want to try to write it as well – just remember a capital only for the start and lower case letters for the rest.

Read with your child every day – a bedtime story is a great way of enjoying books with your child. Talk about the characters and ideas in the stories. Recite Nursery Rhymes together. They will learn how to hold a book correctly, which way the printed message goes, the front and back of books – all important early reading skills. They may also begin to recognise letters of the alphabet and you can help them learn the different sounds some of these have. Look at the pictures together and encourage your child to retell the story in their own words. **Never cover up the pictures**, these are important for young children as they start learning about reading.



Have lots of paper, crayons and pencils for your child to use.

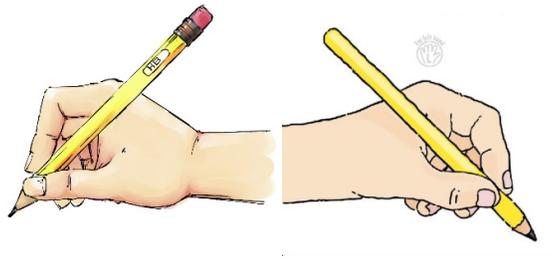
Use your camera to record events and write stories together about these.

Do lots of counting – everyday objects and situations – match numbers and shapes to objects in your environment. Play games that involve counting in order. Talk about shapes.



Remember to use positional language – ‘over there, BEHIND the shoe, BESIDE the table’ etc. Don’t forget to use other maths language with your child e.g. heaviest, shortest etc.

Help your child to hold their pencil or crayon correctly and manage scissors



Learn some basic colours.

Play games that encourage learning – snap, I spy. Jig saws are also popular with some young children. Magnet letters on the fridge is a good way to encourage children to find letters.



Playdough is a great favourite and you can use it to make shapes or letters.



: