

# Is Your Little One Nursery Ready?

## The Complete Nursery Readiness Checklist for Parents

Brought to you by

**Abacus Nurseries**

South West London

[www.myabacusnursery.com](http://www.myabacusnursery.com)



## Welcome!

Starting nursery is a big milestone, for you and your child. Whether you're considering Abacus or just beginning your childcare search in South West London this checklist helps you feel confident and prepared so your little one settles in happily.



### What's Inside This Checklist

- ✓ **Practical essentials:** what to pack and prepare
- ✓ **Emotional readiness:** helping your child feel confident
- ✓ **Routines and independence:** building helpful habits
- ✓ **Paperwork and admin:** forms and funding sorted
- ✓ **Questions to ask:** make the most of your nursery tour



### How to Use This Checklist

Print it out, stick it on the fridge, and tick things off as you go. There's no rush. Every family moves at their own pace. Think of this as a gentle guide, not a strict to-do list.



#### A NOTE FROM US

No child needs to be 'perfectly ready' for nursery. Our wonderful team at Abacus are experts at helping little ones settle in, build confidence, and thrive. That's what we're here for.



# 1. What to Pack and Prepare

- Labelled spare clothes (at least one full change, because accidents happen!)
- A comfort item from home, such as a favourite teddy, blanket, or small toy
- Nappies, wipes, and nappy cream if your child is still in nappies
- A named water bottle (we encourage children to drink water throughout the day)
- Sun hat and sun cream in summer (labelled with your child's name)
- Wellies and a waterproof coat for outdoor play on the green
- Indoor shoes or slippers (some settings prefer these)
- Any prescribed medication with a completed medication form
- A named bag to keep everything together
- Family photos for their peg area (these really help with settling in)



## TIP

*Label everything! Things get mixed up easily when you have 30 excited little ones in one room. A permanent marker on clothing labels works perfectly.*



# 2. Helping Your Child Feel Ready

- Practise short separations by leaving them with a trusted person for an hour or two
- Read books about starting nursery together (we love 'Starting School' by the Ahlbergs)
- Talk positively about nursery: 'You'll make new friends and do painting!'
- Visit the Nursery before their start date so the environment feels familiar
- Establish a simple, consistent goodbye routine (a special wave, a kiss on the nose)
- Practise independent eating, such as using a spoon and drinking from a cup
- Encourage your child to ask for help when they need it
- Play 'nursery' at home: practise sitting for snack time or tidying up together



## TIP

*Every child settles at their own pace. Some take a day, some take a few weeks. Both are completely normal. Our team at Abacus are experts at helping little ones feel safe and happy. Trust the process, and trust your child.*



## It's okay to feel emotional too

Dropping your child off for the first time is a big moment for parents as well. It's perfectly normal to feel wobbly. We promise they'll be in wonderful hands.

## ★ 3. Building Helpful Routines

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- Practise nursery wake-up times a week or two before starting
- Encourage your child to try dressing themselves (even just pulling up trousers)
- If toilet training, let nursery know where your child is at. There's no pressure at all
- Establish regular mealtimes that roughly match the nursery schedule
- Build a consistent bedtime routine so mornings aren't a battle
- Practise hand washing (we do a LOT of hand washing at nursery!)
- Encourage tidying up toys together: 'Let's put the blocks back in the box'
- Practise sharing and turn-taking with siblings, friends, or even you

### 💡 TIP

*Nurseries are brilliant at helping children develop independence. You absolutely don't need to have everything perfect before day one. Children often surprise us by doing things at nursery they'd never do at home!*

### 🏆 Quick Wins for Independence

- 🧥 Put coat on a low hook they can reach
- 👟 Velcro shoes are a game-changer
- 🍎 Let them choose their snack at home
- 🎒 Give them a small 'job', like carrying their bag in

## 📋 4. Forms and Information

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- Tour at Abacus completed
- Registration and enrolment forms completed and returned
- Checked your eligibility for government-funded hours (15 hours or 30 hours)
- Parent declaration form signed for funded hours (if applicable)
- Key person introduced and contact details exchanged
- Emergency contact details provided (at least two contacts)
- Allergy and dietary information shared with the nursery
- Medication forms completed if your child takes any prescribed medication
- Settling-in sessions booked with the nursery
- Consent forms signed (photos, outings, sun cream application)



TIP

Ask us about government-funded hours. Most families in South West London are eligible for 15 or 30 hours of free childcare per week. We can help you check and sort the paperwork.

## ? 5. Questions to Ask on Your Tour

### 1. What's your approach to settling in new children?

*Every nursery handles this differently. Find one that matches your child's personality.*

### 2. What are the staff-to-child ratios?

*Ofsted sets minimums, but many good nurseries exceed them.*

### 3. How do you communicate with parents during the day?

*Look for daily updates, a parent app, and an open-door policy.*

### 4. What does a typical day look like?

*A good nursery balances structured activities with free play and outdoor time.*

### 5. How do you handle allergies and dietary requirements?

*Important if your child has any specific needs or restrictions.*

### 6. What's your current Ofsted rating?

*Ask to see the full report. The overall grade doesn't tell the whole story.*

### 7. How does government funding work at your setting?

*Check which funded hours they accept and whether there are any additional charges.*

### 8. What are your fees, session options, and payment terms?

*Ask about full days, half days, term-time only, and any registration fees.*

### 9. How do children use the outdoor space?

*At Abacus, outdoor play on the green is central to how children learn.*

### 10. Can I speak to other parents who attend?

*Word of mouth from current families is the best reference you can get.*



## Ready To See Us In Person?

Book a tour at Abacus and see why South West London families love us. Walk through our spaces, meet our team, watch the children play on the green, and ask us anything.



Book a Tour



Chat With Us