

Making your child as relaxed as possible is key.

Visit the school as often as possible with your child, prior to the assessment day.

They will pick up on your anxiety, so it's important that you keep calm too.

Use terms such as play date rather than assessment.

Don't make the assessment the focal point of the day. Have a treat planned for after.

Basic Manners

Saying thank you, excuse me and please go a long way. Holding their hand over their mouth when they cough. The confidence to shake hands and give eye contact. Knowing what appropriate behaviour is and following those rules.

Routine

Stick to your normal routine on the day as much as possible.

Depending on the timing, bring your child to nursery as normal and then pick them up later for the 'play date'. (Assessment)

Being Alert

Do consider what activities are planned in the days before the assessment. Your child needs to be awake and alert, so arriving back from holiday on a long flight the day before is not a good idea.

Toileting

Encourage a toilet stop before the assessment starts.

Parents

Prepare questions you wish to ask if you are given that opportunity. You have a role to play too!

Arrival Time

Try not to arrive at the school too early. A long wait can build anxiety.

Communication

Your child will be expected to interact with children they do not know. Lots of play dates will help them interact naturally with new friends. They will need to be able to talk openly with an unfamiliar adult about themselves, their family and the things they know and interest them.

Prepare them for separation

The assessments are mainly held behind closed doors, so children need to be prepared for that. Prepare them for the fact that some children may cry. Maybe the person they separate most easily from should take them e.g. mum instead of dad or vice versa. Prolonging the separation is generally not helpful. Taking opportunities for trial separations with unfamiliar adults is advisable e.g. a piano lesson.

Distraction

In case you are kept waiting at any point - have their favourite book or a notebook and crayon with you as a distraction.

Clothing

Make sure they are dressed comfortably. We would recommend the BLS nursery uniform, if this is what they are used to.