



FREE RECEPTION GUIDE

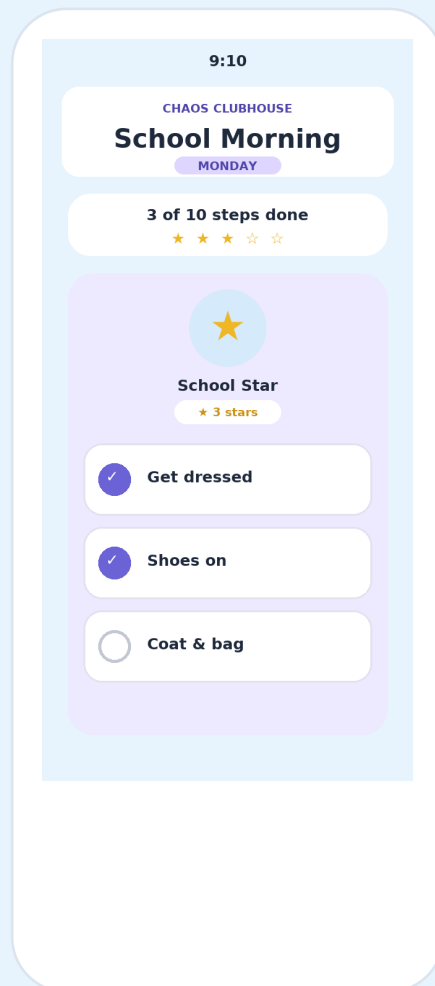
Starting school, without the morning chaos

A calm, practical guide for families preparing for Reception — especially when routines, transitions and big feelings are part of the picture.

Make the next step visible

Practise gently

Protect the after-school reset



Your 10-step routine is ready.

Scan or tap to load the School Morning steps into a free Chaos Clubhouse board.

OPEN YOUR FREE SCHOOL BOARD →

School-ready is not a checklist.

Your child does not need to have everything mastered before September. The aim is to help them feel safe, understood and able to take the next small step.

The hard bits are often the bits around school:

- ✓ getting dressed and leaving the house
- ✓ separation, transitions and unfamiliar routines
- ✓ opening lunchboxes, using toilets and asking for help
- ✓ sensory overload — then doing it all again tomorrow



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A note from Louise

"The calmest days in our house are not the perfect ones. They are the ones where everyone can see what is happening next."

This guide is for parents and carers preparing a child for Reception or early primary school — including families navigating ADHD, autism, SEND, anxiety, sensory needs, speech and language needs, fussy eating, allergies, toileting worries or simply very busy mornings.

A better question than "Are they ready?"

What will help this child feel safe, understood and able to take the next step?

Three routines that do the heavy lifting

You do not need a colour-coded life. Pick the three moments that create the most friction, then make those steps visible.

1. School morning

Wake up • toilet • get dressed • breakfast • teeth • shoes • bag • out the door

Less chasing. Fewer decisions.

2. Night-before reset

Uniform ready • shoes by the door • bag packed • bottle/lunch sorted • parent check-in

Remove tomorrow morning's decisions.

[SHOP VISUAL TIMERS →](#)

3. After-school reset

Shoes off • snack • drink • quiet or movement • reconnect • simple evening

Make space for the crash, not more demands.



Chaos Clubhouse idea

Create one board for each routine. Your child can see the next step, tick it off and build a little sense of ownership — without you having to repeat it all morning.

1-CLICK: LOAD THE SCHOOL MORNING ROUTINE →

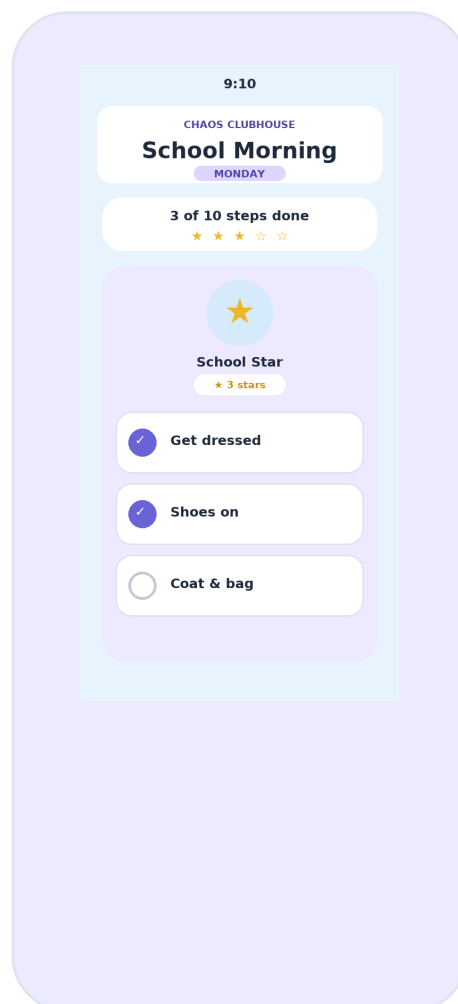
The exact 10 steps from this guide will be waiting on your board.

Make the next step obvious

“Get ready” is a very big instruction. Tiny visible steps are easier for tired brains, anxious children and overwhelmed parents.

Example school-morning routine

- 1 Wake up
- 2 Toilet
- 3 Get dressed
- 4 Breakfast
- 5 Brush teeth
- 6 Hair / face
- 7 Shoes on
- 8 Coat on
- 9 Pick up bag
- 10 Leave the house



● Use fewer words

Try pointing to the next card instead of repeating the whole list. Your child is not being difficult — their brain may be holding too many steps at once.

● Keep it repeatable

Use the same order where you can. Put shoes, coats and bags in one obvious place. Tiny environmental changes can reduce a lot of morning friction.

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Try this language

“First teeth, next shoes, then we go.” Simple. Repeatable. No lecture required.

Tiny skills, big impact

Independence does not mean expecting a child to manage everything alone. It means giving them low-pressure chances to practise the things that will make their day easier.

● Lunchbox confidence

Open the actual lunchbox, bottles and packets. Talk to school about allergies, safe foods or a limited diet early. Safety and confidence first — not pressure.

[Shop easy-open lunch kit →](#)

● Uniform & belongings

Practise coat zips, shoes, changing for PE and recognising their own bag. Add labels now; they save a surprising amount of stress later.

[Shop labels & easy fastenings →](#)

● Toilets & self-care

Try different toilets and hand dryers. Practise locks, taps, wiping, handwashing and asking to go. Pack spare clothes if that helps everyone feel safer.

[Shop handwashing & toilet aids →](#)

● Asking for help

Help your child practise one simple sentence: “Can you help me please?” Talk about who helps at school, who collects them and what happens if they feel worried.

[Listen: school-ready tips →](#)

Keep it playful

Use the real uniform. Set a pretend lunch. Role-play drop-off. Let your child be the teacher.

[Listen: School lunches, fussy eating & allergies →](#)

[Listen: Toilet training & starting school →](#)

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A gentle reminder

If toileting, eating, communication or sensory needs need more support, speak openly with the school. You do not have to wait until your child is struggling.

Support the transition — not just the timetable

Children can feel excited and worried at the same time. A child who is coping at school may still come home tearful, wired, angry, quiet or completely floppy.

Helpful phrases for separation and anxiety

"It is okay to feel nervous and excited."

"Grown-ups at school can help you."

"You can feel worried and still do brave things."

"I will come back after the school day."



[LISTEN: REDUCING SCHOOL ANXIETY →](#)

● For ADHD / autistic / sensory brains

Visual schedules, short instructions, movement breaks, music cues, now-and-next prompts and specific praise can all help. Share your child's strengths as well as what is hard.

[Shop sensory tools & school books →](#)

● One-page profile for school

Include: strengths • signs they are overwhelmed • what helps • sensory preferences • communication style • food or toileting notes • the best way to contact you.

[Listen: neurodiverse children at school →](#)

A useful sentence for school

"They find transitions hard, but they respond well when they can see what is coming next."

If you are worried about your child's wellbeing, development or support needs, speak with their school and an appropriate health or education professional.



Your first-fortnight survival plan

The first few weeks can be tiring for everyone. This is not the time to add more pressure — it is the time to make life smaller, softer and more predictable.

Before the first day

- Walk the route or look at photos
- Practise the uniform, lunchbox and bag
- Make a short visual morning routine
- Tell school anything they need to know

The first school week

- Keep mornings simple
- Expect bigger feelings at home
- Offer food, drink and decompression
- Avoid too many questions after pick-up

The after-school reset

- Shoes off
- Snack and drink
- Quiet time or movement
- Connection with a grown-up
- A simple evening and bedtime

Your only job: choose one thing that will make tomorrow 5% easier.

Uniform out? A snack ready? A visual list on the fridge? Small is still powerful.



YOUR NEXT SMALL STEP

Start with one routine tonight.

Chaos Clubhouse helps families make everyday routines visible, simple and repeatable — from school mornings to after-school resets.



Load your free School Morning board

The 10 visual steps from this guide are pre-loaded. Sign up, add your family and start ticking.

OPEN YOUR FREE SCHOOL BOARD →

It does not have to be perfect. It does not have to be calm every day.

It just has to be visible, repeatable and realistic enough for your family.

More school-starting resources, podcast conversations and practical support:

Visit Mums Work & Chaos: <https://mumsworkandchaos.com/>

Browse Louise's Starting School Amazon Storefront →

Affiliate links may earn a small commission at no extra cost to you.