

Empowering the Young to Grow and Transform

The Emoji Transition to Primary School



How to prepare yourself and your child for an easy transition from nursery to primary school, while feeling more confident about the big and exciting changes that are about to happen.

Libby Steggles-Ginn
The Emoji Coach
www.theemojicoach.com

Index

Introduction.....	2
Manage your own Emotions.....	3
Listening and being present.....	5
Communication and the language you use.....	8
Practice, practice, practice.....	12
Nail that school run!	13
Play is still so Important.....	16
Friendships.....	17
Summary.....	19

Hello,

If you're reading this mini eBook then I'm guessing your child will be starting primary school.

How are you feeling? Excited? Apprehensive? Emotional? Or maybe a mixture of all of those?

These first years are an exciting time for your child. You will find some children will sail through it without batting an eyelid, and some who will find it worrying and stressful.

I wanted to write this book to help you prepare yourself and your child for an easy transition from nursery to primary school and to help your child enjoy this transition. I am a Mum myself, and I still remember the first day my son went to primary school. I'd have loved a book like this to help me during that time. Preparing your child for the start of primary school will help them to feel more confident about the big and exciting changes that are happening. It will also help them in understanding what to expect at their new school.

My name is Libby and I am the creator of the Emoji Coach - Empowering the Young to Grow and Transform. I am a qualified International Transformational Coach and NLP Practitioner, advanced PSYCH-K and a Mindfulness facilitator. I also have an advanced DBS check.

I work with children, parents and schools and I am passionate about ensuring that children can grow and transform.

Testimonial from a teacher and mother.

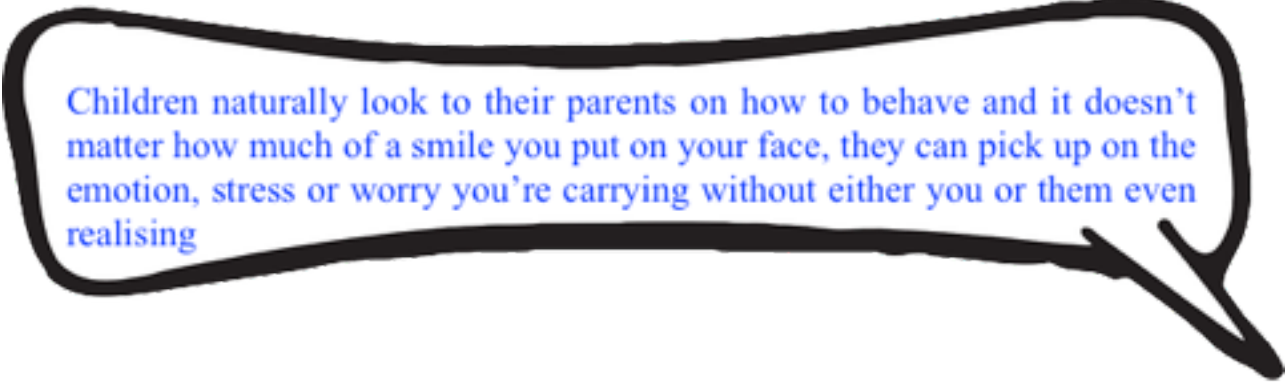
My son had been experiencing some mild anxiety symptoms for months and as time went on the anxiety became more and more extreme. At this point Libby stepped in. We never dreamt that after the first session with Libby he would be almost anxiety free! Over the next few weeks, she gave him tools to deal with his thoughts. The strategies Libby taught him empowered him so that he didn't feel so helpless and scared any more; he was in control! Happily, my son is now anxiety free!

I am married and a mother to two children, (Cameron 14 and Charlotte 12), and as well as being a business woman and entrepreneur, I understand how important it is to have a good work/life balance. Equally I understand how to clear the blocks and challenges that can appear before us, and the importance of keeping the communication flowing throughout the family so feelings can be safely expressed.



Manage your own emotions

From the moment your child is born they will function more from the feeling than from your words. “I’m hungry” will feel a certain way to them, so will “Mum isn’t happy”, “This isn’t right” and “Mum is happy.”



Children naturally look to their parents on how to behave and it doesn't matter how much of a smile you put on your face, they can pick up on the emotion, stress or worry you're carrying without either you or them even realising

Whenever my kids are not themselves or are showing different behaviour, I always check in with myself first and see how I'm feeling. Quite often when I clear any negative thoughts or feelings, or change a situation that I wasn't happy with, their behaviour also changes. Amazing isn't it?

When you see your child upset and in pain you just want to make it better for them, and you would rather their pain was transferred to you. It is important to understand that it's not actually their pain you're feeling, it's yours! Often our subconscious minds bring up past experiences without us even realising it.

It's really important to remember that the current anxiety your child is displaying is their stuff and not yours. Although you can see they are worried, upset, etc, it doesn't mean that those emotions present themselves in the exact same way as you might have experienced them in the past. For example, you may have had an unhappy experience at school and your child's worries might trigger those experiences for you. Therefore you might feel more anxious and really worry when you see or hear your child's concerns. Or perhaps you had a great time at school and loved it, so when you see/hear your child feeling concerned, you just don't get it!

4

When I studied counselling they taught us to be there for the client, but not to get caught up in their story. We did this by having one foot in their story and the other foot out firmly on the ground so we were balanced. This enabled us to listen and show empathy whilst recognising it was their story and not ours.

This is something you can practice while listening to your child, so you will be able to comfort them and help them more effectively.

As a mindfulness facilitator I know the importance of being in the present moment and ensuring that you're listening to their story and not the one of your past.

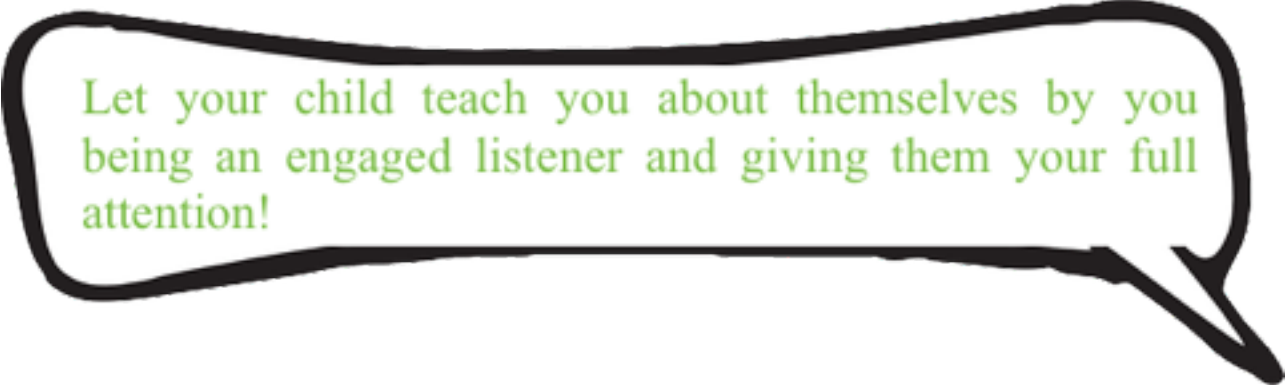
Listening and being present

Sadly, because of society and the busy hectic lives we live, many parents have become desensitized, and are unaware that they're not fully present with their children. Contrary to popular belief, human beings cannot multi-task! Now I know there's a saying that women can but men can't, and there may be some of you reading this who are probably telling me out loud all the things that you do daily which involves multi-tasking, yet can you truly listen when doing something else?

Have you ever been doing something, such as washing up when your child comes into the kitchen and asks if they can watch TV? You know too well that they should be doing something else but you are so busy being in your head, (planning the week's dinners, thinking about what you've got to do next, etc) that you say "yes that's fine", without really noticing it. Then you realise that they are doing something they shouldn't be doing so you question them, to which they reply "but you said yes."

Can you relate to that?

The truth is, you can't effectively attend to two things at once. You can't be washing up, putting things away, sending text messages and at the same time be really listening to your child. Your child will not be receiving the **eye contact** they need to know that you're listening, and you can't pick up on body language clues.



Let your child teach you about themselves by you being an engaged listener and giving them your full attention!

If you're busy and they come to you and you carry on with what you're doing only half listening then your child won't feel heard or important, and you may miss that key message. It may also discourage your child from talking to you.

TOP TIP

So you can either:
Stop what you're doing and go to your child to listen

or say

"I can see this is really important to you and I want to be able to listen to you and give you my full attention, so once I have finished this, I will come and sit with you and you can tell me how you are feeling."

Allocate a time when you and your child know that's when you talk. It could be at lunchtime or story time. If you have other children then make some quality one-to-one time when you can sit quietly.

By doing this, you are helping your child feel important and valued, you are giving them a safe and secure environment to open up and talk. They will know that they can come to you any time and you will listen.

Not all children talk about what's going on for them, they just "get on with it" and that's okay as long as they're not dealing with something by themselves or pushing a problem down.

You can also listen by watching your child's body language. When you are so in tune with your child you will pick up if there is something that your child is worried about even if they don't communicate it with you straight away.

We all have a busy lifestyle whether you have one, two, three or more children and there is always something to do.

Being a Mum myself, I know the importance of being organised with the household chores, work etc, but it's about putting it all into perspective and having a balance.

Over the years I've reminded myself that having a happy, adjusted child is more important than a perfectly tidy house.



Z

Make time to listen to your child.

The next time you listen to someone, be aware of your thoughts and feelings. Are you truly listening to them or are you running an experience of your own and listening to that? Once you become aware, you can put yours to one side and just listen.

TOP TIP

A great technique for being in the present moment is to imagine your thoughts are like butterflies and when your thoughts are taking you away from the present moment, whether it is a worry about something present or past, imagine yourself catching it in a net just like a butterfly and bringing it back to the moment when you can release it, letting go of that thought and coming back to the now.



Or

Imagine you have a stop button and every time a thought comes into your head, imagine yourself pressing it, and bring yourself back to the present moment.



Communication and the language we use

Once you begin listening to your child, it's very tempting to try to fix things rather than carry on listening. Like I said before, the last thing you want is to see your child in pain.



TOP TIP

When listening to your child it is really good to reflect back to them. If your child says "I'm really worried about starting big school."

Rather than saying "Oh you'll be fine, don't worry."

Try,

"So, you're feeling really worried about starting big school because..."

Your child will immediately feel understood and tell you more.

If your child says: "I won't make any friends, nobody will like me."

Rather than,

"Oh don't be silly, of course you'll make new friends, you're so lovely who wouldn't want to be your friend?"

Try,

"So you feel like no one will like you?"

This again will encourage your child to tell you more as they will immediately know you understand them and how they are feeling.

Once you have more information you can then build on that.

For Example:

“Okay, well let’s look at the friends you do have now and how much they like you.”

Ask them what they feel they like about themselves and what they think their friends like about them to start building self-esteem.

Q: “Who do you know that’s going to school with you that you like?”

Build on your conversation, reflecting back and allowing your child to talk. Often, just giving them that space enables them to change their thoughts themselves.

Asking questions builds and encourages their awareness and they will start to work through their worries just by talking and answering the questions themselves.

Remember, give them your attention instead of giving them your verdict.

I am or I Feel?



Quite often when we talk about our feelings the language we use is “I am angry, I am worried, I am stressed”, and this is something that children also do.

If this is something you or your child does then let's change this now!

When you say, "I am angry" you're taking ownership of that emotion and it's a lot harder to change, it's almost like it becomes your identity.

So change it to "I FEEL angry" or "I feel sad, I feel worried", etc.

It's easier to change your emotions when you say I Feel.....



TOP TIP!

If your child is saying "I am scared" it is important when reflecting back to change the I am and say:

"So you FEEL scared...."

If your child is saying "I am worried..."

"You're feeling worried."

Practice this and you will automatically start changing the “I am” to “I feel.”

Talking about your feelings is great and so important, as is connecting with your emotions.

If your child is quite anxious or worried then ask them:

Where in your body are you feeling this emotion?

What colour is it?

If it was a shape, what shape would it be?

Are there any sounds with it?

Quite often just by connecting with the emotion in this way it can change, so just allow your child some space to sit with it.

You can ask your child, “If it were a calmer feeling...”

- What colour would it be?
- What shape would it be?
- Would the sound be different?

Suggest to your child that they can now change the emotion to the feeling that they want so that they feel calmer and happier.

This will also help your child learn that emotions aren't scary monsters. Emotions also just want us to listen to them!



Practice this yourself and you too can change how you feel.

We don't have to try to be perfect in front of our children or hide all of our emotions.

Start to talk to your children about how you're feeling so if you're feeling bit grumpy then just say:

“Do you know, I'm feeling a little grumpy today and that's okay as I know I will start to feel better”

Some children think it's their responsibility to help you feel better. By telling them it's okay, you're taking responsibility for your feelings.

Practice, Practice, Practice

As important as it is to watch, children also learn by doing. Therefore it makes sense to give your child opportunities to help prepare for school. This will also help them to define themselves as being helpful which will help grow their confidence and self-esteem.

If your child tends to worry try practicing routines or packing bags, etc, this will really help.

So let's look at what they can practice.

- Some children struggle with getting dressed and undressed.
- This is where practice comes in. If your child is worried then practice getting dressed, allowing your child to do this by themselves. Explain that making little mistakes is just showing them how not to do it next time, but always encourage and reassure them that they can do it!
- Buy a uniform which has no clasps so they have easy pull-up skirts or trousers. Buy velcro shoes if they can't yet tie their laces.
- A child was recently worried about getting his sports kit back into his bag after PE. Even though the teachers help out, this can be a big thing for your child. Practicing at home increased his confidence in preparation for school.

Once they practice and get the hang of it their confidence will grow. Encourage and empower them all the way by asking them how they feel now they have practiced, and if it has helped.

What else is your child worried about that they can practice?

*As Important as It Is to watch,
children also learn by doing.*



Nail that school run!

Being organised is crucial for a stress-free school run both for yourself and your child. The last thing you want is your child having to rush around, risking being late or last minute into the playground, and for your day to start from stress.

On the morning.

- Get up earlier than your child/children and get yourself organised and ready then you can concentrate on your child/children
- Make breakfast nice and simple. I have known parents to get breakfast cereals out on the side the night before so their child can easily help themselves. This will empower them and help build their confidence.
- Give your child/children plenty of time to get dressed and ready so they don't feel under pressure and have to rush, as this can start to add stress to their day.
- Make sure there is time to listen to your child if needs be.

If you've already practiced the school run, then your child will be familiar with the route to school.

Your child should also know where you will be picking them up from, which will again reassure them.

Saying goodbye!



This is where you say goodbye with none of your “stuff” getting in the way here. You will have already prepared your child for this moment as you’ll have told them what time you will be picking them up. They will be fine, and even if they seem a little apprehensive, this is normal. As soon as you go all will be well and they will enjoy their day. The more you try and make it better for them the worse you can make it as you are passing on your emotions and worry.

You may find this day very emotional, as many parents do. I’m not for one minute saying don’t care about how your child is feeling, but remember that this is their experience and not yours. Many of us, especially mums leave their child and have a few tears on the way home or in the car and can’t wait to collect their child from school to hear all about their first day. It’s a big day for you all and that’s okay, but just be aware of what are your emotions and what are your child’s; let go of your experience and concentrate on theirs. You may remember your first day at school and you may remember feeling sad or anxious when your mum left you, or you may have felt happy and it was no big deal. Such memories may be triggered by your child’s first day but just remember that they can’t feel exactly like you did because this is their experience, not yours!

The teachers are there to help and support.

If you have any concerns at all then discuss them with your child’s teacher as they have an important role to play in your child’s life, whether it be in supporting them to make friends or to settle in and enjoy their time at school. Communication is key!

In the evening

- Make time to talk and listen to your child! Ask questions like “How are you feeling about your day?”, “What was your favourite part of the day?”

Remember, connecting them to their feelings is important!

You might talk about your day whilst having dinner so the whole family can talk about it including you, or you might choose to make some more time which is special to you all.

- Get into the habit of going through the bags. Any important letters or invitations that should be read, signed and then put back into the bags ready for the next day.
- Update your calendar or phone. You can use different coloured pens for each child or each event so it is easier to read and take in.
- Sync phone calendars with other members of the family so you all know what’s happening and when.
- Have a designated folder for all the school newsletters
- Empty the packed lunch boxes and wash them ready for the pack up.
- Prepare the packed lunches the night before.
- Get clothes ready for the next day and involve your child or children with this as it helps them to get into a routine and empowers them.
- Plan ahead your meals for the week

What can you add to this list that will work for you and help you all be more organised?

Phew! Are you feeling tired yet?

This is where it’s important to have some you time! Now that you’re organised, what can you do for you, so you can relax in the way that works for you?

Play Is still Important!



I talk to a lot of parents and many say that their child's behaviour is fantastic at school but when they get home they are really naughty. Those are the parent's words not mine, after all what is naughty behaviour? A lot of parents define naughty behaviour as anything they don't like their child doing, but that's a topic for another book, so let's get back to play.

Remember your child is going through a big change at school and has to sit and do as they are told. Although it is only primary school, a lot is expected from them at such a young age and although there is still some play available for them there is also a lot of sitting, listening, and not being able to fidget or talk when they want to. Therefore when they get home it's as if they just need to get it out of their system.

TOP TIP



A great way to help them is to play!

Taking them to the park for a run around or letting them play in the garden when they get home is great, as they still need to explore and feel free!

Friendships



Friendships are important when it comes to emotional health. As parents we want to see our child/children making and keeping new friends. I feel this is really big for parents and have many conversations around this subject.

Have realistic expectations about your child's friendships. What you want in a friendship may be very different to what your child wants. You might like to see your child with lots of friends but your child might be happy with just one or

two. Not all of them last, even if the parents stay best friends, and that's okay! There is no point in comparing their siblings' friendships as we are all different.

Friendships are so important to children and ourselves. They see each other making new friends and want that too. Some children find it really easy to make friends and others are a little more wary.

TOP TIP

To support your child:

- Organise playdates for your child as at this stage you're still their manager moving into a coaching role.
- Let your child know that if another child doesn't want to play with them, that's okay, they can play with another child and still have people who like and care about them.

Help your child learn how to cope when friendships go wrong. Sometimes a friend may do something that upsets your child, this doesn't always mean that the friendship is over and has to end. This will help your child to understand that everyone makes mistakes and that disagreements and conflicts are a normal part of growing up. Mostly conflicts are not considered bullying, no matter how upsetting, but they do need to be resolved. However if another child oversteps the mark and continues unacceptable behaviour towards your child it's important that your child learns that they don't have to accept that and it's okay to move on.

Help your child to see that to forgive doesn't mean they accept the other person's behaviour or even trust the other person, but that it means they can move on and let go of the hurt.

Again, it's easy to want to solve this for them and sometimes on rare occasions it is right for the parent to step in and talk to the school or parents about it.

TOP TIP

Talk to your child about ways of making new friends. What do they think they can do to help them make new friends?

For example: smile and look at other children, say hello etc.

Remember you're not the problem solver; empower your child by encouraging them to come up with ideas for themselves.

Summary

Manage you own emotions

Have one foot in your child's story and one firmly out, this is their journey, not yours.

The next time you listen to someone, be aware of your thoughts and feelings. Are you truly listening to them or are you running an experience of your own and listening to that? Once you become aware, you can put yours to one side and just listen.

Listening and being present

Your child just wants to be heard, we all do and like I've just been saying, it's about listening, truly listening and being present so you're not in your past or joining in with your child worrying about the future. Be there for your child so he or she can express themselves. Let go of all the things happening later on, in 5 minutes, next week, what happened this morning. Let go of everything from yesterday, work, your childhood, YOUR STUFF. To be fully present with your child you have to mentally let go of all the loose ends in your life.

It is so important to **give eye contact!**

Communication and the language you use

Once you begin listening to your child, it's very tempting to try to fix it rather than carry on listening.

To really help your child, listen and reflect back what you heard

Change I AM to I FEEL

Practice, practice, practice

If your child tends to worry then practicing routines or packing bags, etc will really help.

Nail that school run!

Have a routine

Give up stuff that's not working in your life!

If you find your routine isn't working for either you or your child, change it until you find one which does work.

Play Is still Important!

Let them be children and play!

Friendships

Have realistic expectations about your child's friendships. What you want in a friendship may be very different to what your child wants.

Encourage your child at all times and help your child to see that learning is fun!



Talk to their teacher

If you have any concerns at all then discuss them with your child's teacher as they have an important role to play in your child's life, whether it be in supporting them to make friends or to settle in and enjoy their time at school. Communication is key!

Keep doing the things you did before they started school like bedtime reading, etc until they no longer want it.

Don't put too many expectations on yourself or your child, this is a learning process for you both.

For our children and for ourselves, it's about staying positive and trusting that you are doing amazingly well. It's all about looking at things that you feel aren't working and saying:

"How can I do this differently?"
"What can I change about this?"
"What can I do differently?"
"What can I learn from this?"

TOP TIP

If your child is feeling anxious and worried, a great tool to use is positive affirmations. You can talk to your child when he/she is in bed and drifting off into sleep. Now you may be wondering why to do this when they're falling asleep! Well, this is when they are in a trance state, so they will still hear your voice before drifting off. It's a bit like being in a hypnosis trance. Their subconscious mind will listen to your voice and take in the information.

So you can say:

- You are strong
- You are amazing
- You are confident
- You are happy

Is there anything else that you can think of?

It's a really affective tool!

Listening to guided visualisations before they go to sleep is another way of helping them. You can download The Emoji coaches starting school visualisation from the website.

This mini eBook is designed to help parents and children prepare for a happy and successful transition from nursery to primary school. I'm sure your child will have an amazing time at primary school and the transition will be a smooth and happy one.

Please let me know how you get on. You can email me libby@theemojicoach.com

I have many more tools and tips to help you or your child. If you are concerned about your child regarding school or if you feel you are struggling, then please do contact me as I offer one-to-one coaching working with parents or children. I also offer family packages when there is more than one family member.

COMING SOON:

- The Emoji Chart to help your child express and communicate how they're feeling using tools to empower them to change from a negative feeling to a positive one.
- Online courses for parents, teachers and children/young people.
- Guided visualisations for parent, teachers and children

If you feel your child's school would benefit from the Emoji Coach programmes, please direct the appropriate person in the school to the website www.theemojicoach.com or you can also email me at libby@theemojicoach.com

If you would like to sponsor a school to run the 8 week programmes then contact me to find out how to do so.

See you soon

Libby

The Emoji Coach

Empowering the Young to Grow and Transform

Working with children/young people

- Parents
- Families
- Teachers
- School programmes
- Workshops

www.theemojicoach.com

libby@theemojicoach.com

07882 333386





“I am passionate about helping kids and young people grow their self-esteem and confidence so they can be who they truly are instead of being lost in the dark, so they can feel happy and free and live a healthier and more resilient life.

I have the empathy and understanding to be able to connect with children, as they all deserve to believe in themselves and understand themselves. Everybody does!

I was a very insecure girl with no confidence, and quite often I felt alone and scared. I have a huge amount of passion to make a difference to the lives of children and young people.

This is where my heart lies.”

Libby has worked on a one-to-one basis with children and youths who have self-harmed or suffered with depression and anxiety, and she has successfully helped them to leave it all behind and move towards the happy and healthy life which they deserve.

Libby has recently co-run a programme for year 7 girls in a free school helping them with their confidence and self-esteem. She has had great results!

Libby also co-wrote another programme designed for KS2 children to help them with their confidence and self-esteem.

Her expertise and experience enables her to specialise in helping children to tap into their potential by providing interactive programmes to help and support them to access and control their emotions.