



# Welcome to Grade One

By Christina Giessen-Hood

Educational Psychologist

[giessenc@djsimail.co.za](mailto:giessenc@djsimail.co.za)

+27 83 447 8663



Your child has successfully navigated Grade 0 and is now finally ready to enter Grade One.

During your child's Grade One year your child will undergo massive changes in

- Cognitive Development (development of language, problem solving, memory, reading, spelling etc.)
- Physical Development (fine tuning gross motor skills and fine motor skills)
- Social Development (rule based play, friendships)



Here are some pointers that can assist parents to help assist their First Graders:



## *Develop Independence*

- You as parents will have to “learn to let go” and for those parents with “separation anxiety” learn to separate from your child
- Your child will be expected to say goodbye to you once you drop him or her off at school in the morning and walk to his/her classroom by him/herself
- Encourage your child to dress him/herself for school in the mornings, pack his/her own schoolbag or sports bag, etc.
- Give your child opportunities to make choices or contribute an opinion (e.g. “would you like ham on your roll or peanut butter?”, “would you like to do cricket or tennis on Thursday as an extra mural activity after school?”)

## *Develop punctuality for school*

- Ensure your child's good start to the school day by arriving on time for school
- Many children become anxious and stressed if they arrive late as they are seen as being disruptive and also miss out on important, valuable teaching time
- Make sure your child is getting plenty of sleep and is ready for school each day.



## *Help your child get organized for school work*

- Make sure your child has all necessary materials with him/her (all required stationary, pencils that are weekly sharpened, sport bag for sports, etc.).
- Make sure that your child has a proper school bag where books can be transported without getting damaged (to avoid paper accumulation please check on a regular basis)



## *Help your child get organized for homework*

- Help your child with his/her homework every day
- Provide well-lit work areas, equipped with needed supplies (pencils, eraser, scissor, glue)
- Limit meaningful distractions (ie. radio, TV)
- Be supportive and encouraging, avoid criticism and punishment
- Praise efforts (authentic) and independence (“I really like how you wrote all the letter “A”s on the line neatly and correctly all by yourself- well done!) – this will promote self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Check your child’s completed homework or neatness and accuracy and give feedback.

## *Enhancing attention, effective learning, homework and listening skills*



- Ask your child to read an instruction to you or if he/she cannot read yet to tell the task requirement to you – through this you will gain a sense of understanding if your child has understood the task correctly.
- Praise your child for every step that he/she has explained correctly and tell him/her that he/she can begin with the task
- Review the work once it has been completed
- Praise your child for every correct answer and demonstrate genuine happiness

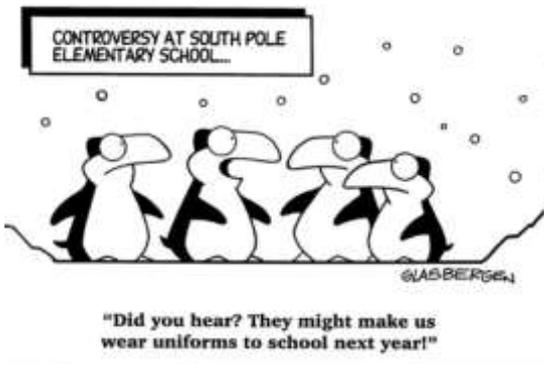
## *Enhancing communication level*

- Ask your child about school and encourage them to talk about their day
- Stay involved and contact your child’s teacher with any question or concern
- Do not talk negatively about your child’s teacher or school in front of your child
- Encourage your child to communicate in full sentences with you
- Read with your child every night
- Enjoy games together (word games such as scrabble, hangman, memory, pick up sticks, jenga, etc.)
- Limit TV watching and iPad

## *The importance of rules*

- School rules are an important part of learning as they teach children what they should do and what not to do.
- Class rules, such as raise your hand when you want to talk, work quietly while you work, treat your fellow classmates with respect, etc. exist to foster a healthy learning and teaching environment.
- As your child enters Grade One, he or she is starting to develop a strong sense of fairness and rules.
- Rule based play often becomes evident when interacting with their peers.
- Children also show the most respect for adults who make fair rules and apply them fairly and consistently.
- Rules provide a sense of security for the child.





## Promote respect for rules

- Explain why rules are important and need to be respected, at home or at school (too much TV could get in the way of doing well at school, you have to be quiet whilst completing a task so that you can concentrate on the task and do your best, etc.)
- Enforce the rules and consequences – be consistent (i.e. constantly chatting during story time will result in a time out from the story, etc.).
- Praise your child for obeying the rules

## Developing respect at school and home

- Treat all members of the family and your child's teacher with respect
- Use positive language rather than putting a child on the defensive (i.e. you can go and play with your Playmobil after you have finished your homework rather than "You cannot play until you finish your homework", "you can spend the last 15 minutes playing games on the carpet after you have finished your maths")



- Listen with full attention – Don't interrupt your child
- Keep your promises
- Encourage self-respect by promoting exercise, good eating habits and smart decision
- Manners matter (please and thank you)
- Be fair – listen to your child's side of a story before reaching a conclusion
- Respect your child's privacy and belongings
- Don't insult or make fun

## Developing social skills and competencies

- Get your child to think about how others feel (i.e. Tom is new in school. Can you imagine how he feels? What could you do to make him feel more part of the DSJ?)
- Ask your child about his or her feeling (i.e. after watching a sad television show ask your child how he/she would feel if he/she were the suffering character)
- Promote tolerance by teaching your child about other cultures
- Teach your child the importance of saying sorry if they have done something wrong



*Wishing you and your child lots of fun and success in Grade one!*