If your child is starting at a new school, it helps to visit the school together so your child can feel comfortable with their new surroundings.

It pays off to keep interested in your child’s learning. Make time to meet with the principal and teacher. Talk to them about what your child likes doing and any particular needs your child might have, such as extra help with maths or writing.

Make things easier by getting your child’s uniform and backpack ready the night before. Remember a sunhat in the summer.

Second hand uniforms can be bought on TradeMe or sites such as www.uniformme.co.nz. Get the best quality shoes you can so they last longer. Buy stationery early so you can get it at a reduced price.

For ideas on inexpensive, tasty and healthy school lunches go to www.kiwifamilies.co.nz/articles/school-lunches.

Walking to school gives kids a great start to the day. Many schools have ‘walking school buses.’ They’re good for getting to know the neighbourhood and making new friends. Ask if your school runs one. If not, you could help set one up. See www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/walking-school-bus-coordinators-guide.

A well-designed backpack can help your child stay comfortable on the way to and from school. It should be no more than 3 cm above your child’s shoulders and not lower than his/her hips. For more go to www.vitalchiropractic.co.nz/vitals-back-to-school-tips-ensure-your-childrens-back-pack-is-fitted-correctly.

All the evidence shows that attending school regularly has a significantly positive impact on your child’s learning and progress. Even a few days absence can result in your child falling behind.

Take a look at www.educationcounts.govt.nz and the Education Review Office for school profiles, contact information and great information about primary and secondary schools in your area.