



WHEN BIG THINGS HAPPEN

HELPING YOUR 3-5 YEAR OLD THROUGH NEW BABIES, NURSERY AND MOVING HOUSE



TINY HANDS BIG ADVENTURES

INTRODUCTION

Big changes are part of family life. A new baby, a first day at nursery, a house move. These are ordinary things that happen to families every day. But for a 3–5 year old, even a happy change can feel enormous. Because their world is small, and you are the centre of it.

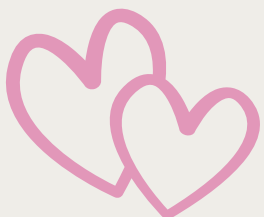
Children this age don't yet have the words for what they're feeling. So instead they show you. They act younger, cling tighter, push you away, fall apart over the wrong cup or the broken biscuit. It can be exhausting and confusing, especially when you're in the middle of the same change yourself.

The thing is, you don't need to fix the feeling. You just need to be alongside it.

This guide covers three of the most common big moments families face: a new baby arriving, starting nursery, and moving house. For each one you'll find what to watch for, what genuinely helps, and some things worth saying when you're not quite sure where to start.

There's no single right way through any of this. Staying close, letting your child know their feelings make sense, being honest when you don't have all the answers.

That's most of the work right there.



Love,

Amanda xx

A NEW BABY IS COMING

What kind of behaviour you might see

Don't be surprised if your child starts acting a little younger than usual. Wanting a bottle, talking in a baby voice, needing more cuddles than they have in months. You might also notice them becoming clingier, or swinging the other way and pushing you away. And big emotions that seem to come from nowhere. Tears, frustration, the odd meltdown over nothing. All of it is normal.

What might help

- Tell them before it becomes obvious. Children notice everything, and finding out late can feel like a secret was kept from them.
- Keep their routine as normal as you can. When everything feels uncertain, familiar things matter more than ever.
- Let them be involved in small ways, choosing a toy for the baby, helping fold tiny clothes. It shifts them from bystander to big helper.
- Don't oversell it. "You're going to love having a baby brother!" puts pressure on a feeling they haven't had yet.



A NEW BABY IS COMING

Things worth saying

- “Things are going to change a bit, and it’s ok to feel funny about it.”
 - “You’ll always be my [name]. That will never change”
 - “It’s ok if you feel a bit wobbly sometimes.”

It's important to remember that regression isn't a step backwards. It's your child telling you they need a little more of you right now.



STARTING NURSERY

What kind of behaviour you might see

They might tell you they don't want to go, even if they were excited about it last week. At drop-off there might be tears, or clinging, or they might hold it all together and save every feeling for the moment they get home. Some children sleep more than usual when they start nursery. New environments take a lot out of little ones. Others seem absolutely fine and then dissolve over something tiny later in the day. All of it is their way of processing something big.

What might help

- A consistent drop-off routine matters more than how long it takes. A kiss, a wave, the same words every time. That predictability is genuinely steadying for them.
 - Avoid the slow goodbye. Drawn out farewells are harder for children, not easier. Warm, confident, and quick is kinder.
- Talk about nursery in ordinary, low-key ways at home. Not "did you have fun?" but "what did you have for snack?" Smaller questions get bigger answers.
- Trust that the wobbles at drop-off usually pass within minutes. Most nurseries will let you know if they don't.



STARTING NURSERY

Things worth saying

- “I’ll always come back. Every single time.”
- “It’s ok to feel a bit nervous. New things feel like that at first.”
 - “Tell me one thing you did today.”

It's important to remember that the drop-off is hard because they love you.

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MOVING HOME

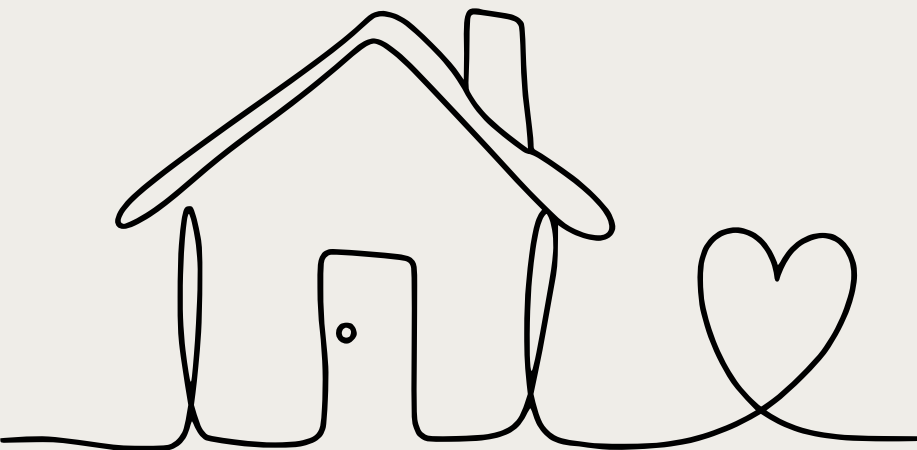
What kind of behaviour you might see

Expect the same questions on repeat. Where will my bed go, will my friends still come, can we take the garden. At night they might find it harder to settle, or want to be closer to you than usual. Some children seem completely unbothered right up until they aren't. The reaction often comes after the move, once the dust has settled and it starts to feel real. Watch for them holding on tightly to familiar toys or objects.

That's them finding their anchor.

What might help

- Let them see the new place before moving day if you can. Even a quick visit, or photos if that's not possible, makes the unknown a little less so.
- Pack their things last and unpack them first. Having their corner of the world set up quickly makes a new house feel like home sooner.
- Acknowledge what's being left behind. It's okay to say "I know you'll miss this house" without rushing them past the feeling.
- Keep routines completely unchanged where you can. The same bedtime story, the same weekend ritual. Familiarity travels.



MOVING HOME

Things worth saying

- “It’s ok to feel sad about leaving. This was a good home.”
- “Your things are coming with us. Your people are coming with us.”
 - “We’re going to make the new place ours together.”

It's important children take their emotional cues from you. If you can hold the change calmly, they'll find their feet sooner than you'd expect.



BEFORE YOU GO

Big changes don't have to be seamless to be okay. Your child isn't looking for a parent who never gets it wrong. They're looking for a parent who stays.

The thing is, children are remarkably good at finding their feet when they feel safe enough to wobble. And that safety comes from you. Not from having the right words at the right moment, not from keeping everything calm and together, but from showing up consistently and letting them know that whatever they're feeling, you can hold it with them.

Some days that will feel easy. Some days you'll be navigating your own feelings about the change at the same time as theirs, and that's a lot to carry. I get it. Give yourself the same patience you're giving them.

There's no tidy ending to a big change. Things settle gradually, in small moments. A morning that goes smoothly. A question they stop asking. A night they sleep through. You'll notice it before they do.

Whatever big thing is happening in your world right now, I hope this helps.

With love, from my little village to yours.

Amanda xx