

Transitions for children with Special Educational Needs and/or disability: from home into an early years setting; changing between providers; or moving from a setting into school.

It is important that when children start in a setting or move from one setting to another (at any stage of their childhood) they have a comprehensive transition which includes the passing on of all relevant information about them personally, socially, emotionally and academically to the new provision as this helps the receiving practitioner to better anticipate and therefore be able to meet their needs and gives rise to better outcomes, ensuring the best possible chance of a smooth transition and a successful placement.

Transition for all children

Transitions should be seen as a process not an event, and should be planned for and discussed with children and parents. Settings should communicate information which will secure continuity of experience for the child between settings.

Early Years foundation Stage Practice Guidance, 2008

If transition is a process, the key to its success lies in the preparation and planning beforehand and the settling in, or follow up, afterwards.

The voice of the child

Transition is a time of change and can be a source of both excitement and anxiety for children and for their parents/carers. Throughout the transition process, young children need to feel secure and confident that their needs, wants, likes and dislikes will be understood.

Early years providers [.....] should know precisely where children and young people with SEN are in their learning and development. They should ensure decisions are informed by the insights of parents and those of children [.....] themselves.

DfE and DH (2015) SEN and disability code of practice: 0-25 years, para 1.25

Young children are dependent on the adults around them to share this important information. Practitioners and parents should be encouraged to share their observations of children's choices, and the preferences reflected in these, at every stage. Respecting the different ways in which children communicate, toys, pictures, photos of people and settings, creative role play using puppets and dolls in different scenarios, can all be used to promote communication and enable children to express their views.

Transition into a setting/new environment

Planning and preparation for transition may involve a range of different elements, though these are not necessarily separate activities. They are likely to include:

- establishing relationships
- sharing information
- visits
- creating continuities
- preparation in the setting
- training and support
- settling in and follow up

You should also find the EYFS Bury Standards Transition Pack a useful resource to support a smooth transition. Completing the pack will ensure that all relevant information and paperwork with regards to a child with SEND is shared.



Transition
2020.docx

Transition and settling into your environment/setting

Transition should also be considered and valued in respect of settling in and including new children into your setting. It is crucial to gather and obtain as much information with regards to the child's individual requirements prior to the child starting at the setting, in order to make any adjustments or adaptations that will support the inclusion of the child.

On entry you may find it useful to ask the following questions to parents/carers:

- Does your child have Special Educational Needs and or a Disability?
- Does your child have any specialist professionals involved e.g. SALT, Physio, OT, Paediatrician, Community Nursing team? Names and contact details
- Does your child have Social Care, or Early Help involvement?
- Is there a Story So Far, CIN plan or CP plan in place?
- Who is your HV? And when did the HV last make contact?
- Do you have any concerns regarding your child's learning or development?
- Has your child attended any other childcare setting? Which? Are there any ILDP's in place?

All parents/carers should be informed of the role of the SENCO, Early Identification, Inclusion and supporting individual children within your setting.

If concerns regarding the child's learning and development are shared or identified then the Early Identification and Graduated Approach should be followed.

Supporting families of children with SEND

It is important to recognise that transitions can be more difficult for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Therefore when you are considering moving a child into a different room in your nursery or their transition to school, careful planning should be considered and managed to ensure the child's individual needs are supported.

Most families will have their reception place confirmed around April, therefore it is vitally important to begin to make plans for their transition as soon as possible after this date.

A person centred transition meeting is an ideal opportunity to enable you to share information about the child's likes, dislikes, what works well and what support is needed. The meeting should involve the child's key person, the nursery SENCO (if possible) the child's parents, staff from the new school and any other professionals involved. This will ensure that all the relevant information is shared and the transition period is planned carefully with all parties involved clear of the process and what they can do as individuals to support the child.

It is also important that with parental consent, you share your records of SEN support, ILDP's and development assessments to illustrate what progress the child has made and identify the ongoing

support they will need. During the meeting you can decide at what point the information will be transferred to the new setting.

Provide parents/carers with sufficient information to help them make an informed choice about future education settings/schools, including special education schools

Support and empower parents/carers to communicate the child's strengths, what motivates them & what will promote their self-esteem and sense of belonging in the new environment

Communicating with settings and families regarding specific resources/equipment/intervention/support/training that will be needed to meet the child's needs

Supporting families with understanding, developing and practising new routines prior to starting at the new setting/school

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UNICEF – Ready for School

The United Nations World Fit for Children mission statement of 2002 is an example of current concepts of school readiness - a good start in life, in a nurturing and safe environment that enables children to survive and be physically healthy, mentally alert, emotionally secure, socially competent and able to learn. The WFFC goals highlight the importance of a caring, safe and stimulating environment for the holistic development of young children.

<http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Early%20years/School%20Readiness/UNICEF%20-%20Child2Child.pdf>

The three dimensions of school readiness are:

Ready children, focusing on children's learning and development.

Ready schools, focusing on the school environment along with practices that



foster and support a smooth transition for children into primary school and advance and promote the learning of all children.

Ready families, focusing on parental and caregiver attitudes and involvement in their children's early learning and development and transition to school.

All three dimensions are important because school readiness is a time of transition that requires the interface between individuals, families and communities

<http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/school-readiness>

Supporting parents/carers with transition/preparing for school - Helpful information for parents/carers of children with SEND

Children with Speech, Language and Communication needs

Starting at a new setting can bring a mixture of emotions for everyone involved and these can be heightened if a child has speech, language and communication needs. Lots of questions can come up such as 'will they make friends?', 'will people be able to understand what they're saying?', 'will they be able to ask for things like a snack or going to the toilet?' and 'how will they be able to tell me what they've done all day?'

As experienced childcare professionals you are well placed to support parents with transition. You know the child and, may have successfully seen both parent and child through one transition, so you have what it takes to support the moving on process.

How to support parents with transitions

Encourage parents to use pictures of their child's teacher or key person (if they have them from a settling in visit) so that they can remember who they're going to see. This can help them visualise the people they're going to meet. It prepares them mentally for what's going to happen and to recognise some familiar faces when they start.

- Encourage parents to make up their own transition document so that they can share information with the school. This could be a communication passport or an 'All about me' booklet that tells the new setting how their child communicates, what helps them feel settled (e.g. a quiet start to the day or using a visual timeline to know what's going to happen). You can both share information on the best ways to support the child.
- You can work with parents on showing children how to ask questions or how to ask for help. For some children using phrases and demonstrating gestures helps prepare for new scenarios. For other parents using signs and pictures may be more suitable support.
- Ask about the daily routine and for the first few weeks; encourage parents to talk to their child about what's going to happen and what to expect.
- Practice the child's route to the setting. If walking try talking about all the things you see on your way, for instance, "we have to turn at the post box"..."then past the really tall tree".

What you can do to support children

- Talk about what's going to happen so that children are expecting it and it's not a shock when September arrives. This will also help you to know if they are anxious and have any questions. Sometimes children worry about what they need to do and if there is somewhere Teddy will be safe. You can discuss these things before school so that they are looking forward to it.

- Build starting school into play e.g. through making your home corner into a school. Some children enjoy planning and building their own school so they can talk about their experiences and hopes around transition.
- Sing some familiar nursery rhymes so that they are confident with these and can join in during group times.
- Let the new setting know how the child you support communicates - do they use words, are they speaking in sentences or do they use lots of gestures and signs? Do they speak different languages at home? If so let the setting know which languages and how your child is doing speaking and understanding these.
- If a child has any speech, language or communication needs let the setting know so that they are prepared to help your child. Also inform them if the child is supported by a speech and language therapist or any other professional. It's often helpful to meet with the SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) or Inclusion Co-ordinator so they are aware of your child's needs. Try to give as much information about how the child communicates children communicate so the setting carry out training assessments for instance for Makaton.
- Talk to the setting about how they can let parents know what their child has been doing - for young children and children with communication needs. Talking about their day at school or nursery can be challenging and a photo, a few words or some information in a home/setting diary can help you know what they've been doing and give you a starting point for a conversation. (Amanda Baxter - I CAN)

[https://www.pacey.org.uk/Pacey/media/Website files/school%20ready/PACEY_preparingforschoolguide.pdf](https://www.pacey.org.uk/Pacey/media/Website%20files/school%20ready/PACEY_preparingforschoolguide.pdf)

<http://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/02155-NCSE-Starting-School-Guidelines-final-08.02.16.pdf>

Checklist of action for transition into setting or school

Transition to nursery/preschool from present to the end of the summer term		
1.	Make time to liaise with the child's key person in their current early years setting, find out all about the child, including their experiences during the Covid 19 epidemic. Good practice would also be to request a virtual tour in order to see the environment that the child has been used to, and use this as an opportunity to make any notes for future planning	
2.	Gather as much information as possible about the child. Use admission forms, All About Me booklets, transition records and one page profiles	
3.	Arrange a virtual transition meeting with parents setting or school staff, parents and any professionals involved before the child starts. Consider broadening communication methods that are working well for 'current' children to new starters and their families, for example online parent accessible systems such as Tapestry. Good practice would be to agree any virtual messages that can be used to support the transition process in absence of physical comforters such as, "a parent's kiss they can keep in their pocket" or "an imaginary heart string that can't be broken by distance". Childcare providers are requested as best practice to offer to host a virtual story session with new child/ren, which can be supported by the child's keyperson/parent. Thus enabling them to start to build a relationship with the child	
4.	Think about who would be a suitable key person. Support and create opportunities for them and the SENCO to build a relationship with the child and parents	

4.	Ensure the Early Years Foundation Stage Transition Record which has been created by the child's previous early years setting in partnership with parents has been read.	
5.	Ensure staff receive any training that may be needed before the child starts at the setting or school	
6.	Have in place any specialist equipment the child may need, plan ahead as this may take time to source	
7.	Audit toys, books and other resources to ensure they are suitable and accessible for the child	
8.	Consider the room layout to ensure mobility, the provision of a quiet area, toilet adaptations, changes to lighting, flooring or furniture	
9.	Where a child has an EHCP or top-up funding, plan for any additional staff who may need to be recruited, inducted and given the opportunity to get to know the child and parents	
10.	Agree an admission and settling in plan with parents	
Transition from nursery to school September		
1.	Support parents face to face (social distancing) or via telephone/virtual meeting so that they know what to expect as their child transitions into their new school, and encourage them to attend virtual meetings with schools in order to gain information, and ask relevant questions	
2.	Make time for the child's key person to liaise with schools so that they can find out the expectations school will have post Covid for the new cohort of children and ensure that individual children are discussed with the new school/setting, and any individual requirements/parents comments or concerns are passed on. This is as an opportunity for childcare providers to refer to the completed transition document to highlight the child's areas of strength and areas for development	
3.	Closely liaise with schools and provide an opportunity for the child to have a virtual chat/ listen to a story read by their new teacher, with a familiar person there also to offer support. Whenever possible carry out a virtual tour of the setting and share with the child's new teacher so they are able to see the environment that the child has been used to	
4.	Complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Transition Record with parent/carers. Work in partnership with the SENCO virtually or over the phone to ensure the child's individual needs and requirements are fully discussed, and also they are made aware of what support has already been accessed.	
5.	Plan the following enhancements to support the transition process; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital photograph albums relating to the identified schools/settings are shared with children and their families and parents advised to share with their child at home • Signpost parents to specific books and about starting school, and signpost to the Bury Directory for other transitional tools and resources that may offer support • Display about all schools/settings identified is developed for children and families to see • Consider sharing positive practice and routine methods with schools, for example hand washing support videos so that schools can build on practice children are already familiar with Contact all identified schools following the transition to check the progress of the child/children and evaluate the process	

In order to support the smooth transition from nursery to school, schools are asked wherever possible to support with the following

1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend school website on a regular basis to update it with frequently asked questions related to new transitions and where possible provide a reception email address so that parents can email directly to ask any particular questions. • Provide a virtual tour around the new classroom, outdoor areas and other areas of the school, so that children can see what the environment looks like. Include routines such as lunch time and outdoor play. Where possible Provide personal video profiles of staff in reception, and staff that children will come into contact with. • Liaise with previous childcare provider with regards to routine practices (such as handwashing) that have already been established by the setting and consider how these might be replicated in school. 	
2.	<p>Offer the following resources (where possible) to support the early years settings in preparing children for school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital photograph album (email/on school website) relating to school e.g. teachers, classroom, bathrooms, dinner, outdoor area, cloakroom, route into school etc • Offer some key skills that you know will help support children when starting school and provide some guidance about topics that will be covered in the first term at school • Think about what additional transition support is in place for those children moving into reception without a cohort of friends? Children who come to school in groups from settings will have the advantage of friendship groups • Consider how developing relationships between children and families could be implemented – perhaps virtually to support cohort cohesion <p>Use any agreed virtual messages consistently to support children transitions into school daily</p>	
3.	<p>Contact early years settings following the transition, to share children’s progress in their new setting and provide any feedback on the transition document/process in general</p>	