



Transition and Settling-in Policy

Introduction

"Transition as we know it involves moving from one environment/situation to another and hence it is a continual process for children. They are almost always on a journey, and almost permanently in transition. The process of transition itself may therefore be viewed as one of adaptation.

Research has shown that the best adaptation takes place where

- conditions are similar*
- communication is encouraged*
- the process of change takes place gradually over time".*

(Gould T 2012 – Transitions in the EYFS).

Transitions are not one-off events, but something that is ongoing. Children may move between several schools/settings in the course of a day, week, month or year.

Aims and objectives

This policy aims to support both staff and parents/carers in recognising that all children bring different experiences, interests and competencies that affect their ability to learn.

The objective of this policy is to ensure that, during the transition process, all staff maximise their efforts to recognise and meet the specific and additional needs of individual children.

Transition and settling in

We recognise that schools/settings that are successful in handling transitions/settling-in are those which make planning for transition/settling-in a priority.

We aim to make any transition as seamless as possible and a positive experience for the child and their family.

All staff will work with parents/carers and children to ensure that children settle in well and make successful transitions.

Practice to support effective settling in and transition

We will plan to ensure that the child's key person works alongside parents/carers in all arrangements and events in the transition/settling-in period.

To achieve this we will ensure/provide:

- all staff are supported to adopt a consistent approach in line with this policy that is open and transparent to all involved parties;
- all staff communicate effectively in a consistent way with parents/carers and children about transition beforehand and include visits wherever possible;
- guidance for parents/carers on how they can prepare for and support their children's learning and development in our school/setting or the one they are moving to.

Prior to the child starting our school/setting, their key person will meet with the parents/carers to share information about how the school/setting operates, for example, timings.

At the point of transition the parents/carers will also share information about their child with their child's key person including:

- the important adults in the child's life;
- child's interests;
- favourite foods;
- sleep patterns;
- how the child usually shows anxiety or distress;
- what soothes/comforts him/her;
- child's motivation/schemas (patterns of play);
- how the parent would like to approach the first separation.

Our staff will also do a number of other important things to support transition/settling-in into our school/setting including:

- clearly signposting the entrance, office, toilet and other key areas;
- providing a bright, welcoming and informative environment that reflects cultural diversity;
- making sure the person who shows parents/carers round the school/setting is both knowledgeable and friendly;
- making sure all practitioners (including administration staff) are aware of and clear about the transition process and schedule;
- bearing in mind that parents/carers may be anxious about whether their children will get a place at the school/setting;
- completing any necessary forms in partnership with the parents/carers;
- providing a translator where needed;
- helping parents/carers to make informed decisions about their children by giving them full information and answering their questions.

Bilingual children

We recognise that settling in is a particularly important time for bilingual children and it is important, for the success of this, to ensure that the environment and resources reflect (in some way) their family, ethnicity, religion and culture.

All staff value and celebrate language diversity and recognise the importance of maintaining and developing the child's mother tongue, as language is closely linked to identity and self-esteem.

Bilingual children and their families often have very specific needs, which we will take into account in order to help them settle into their new environment; for example:

- Parents/carers may have had very different educational experiences from the ones we are offering. Schools/settings may need to provide extra support to help their understanding of how and why we plan for young children to learn through play.
- Recent-arrival families or asylum seekers and those with refugee status may be coping with particularly difficult social circumstances, which practitioners need to be aware of in order to support the child appropriately.

Children with special needs

It is important that we know and understand the needs of children in order for us to successfully meet them. Where necessary we will adopt a multi-agency approach for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), which, with their parents/carers permission, will be shared with their next school/setting.

This will help prevent vital information being missed on admission and provide a balanced profile on individual children allowing the receiving school/setting to liaise with other involved professionals to gain necessary resources and/or equipment.

Strategies we will employ include:

- meetings with both SENCOs, the sender and receiver, to discuss the child's individual needs (Transitional Review). This provides the opportunity to share information between all involved and help to prepare for the comprehensive integration of the child into the school/setting, including any further strategies to be put into place which will support the individual needs of the child and those of their parent/carer. This will help to make the transition as smooth as possible.
- extra/additional transition/settling-in visits will be planned on a needs-led basis to enable the child and parents/carers to familiarise themselves with the new school/setting and its routines and for the child to be observed in their responses to the new provision. These visits will normally take place when the school/setting is operating and children are in situ and should be arranged when time can be given to the child and parents/carers.
- all information and records (e.g. statements, medical history, IEPs, reports from other agencies) will be handed over to the receiving school/setting in good time and before the child starts to make any visits to the school/setting. Further meetings will be arranged to clarify/confirm information concerning the child, as appropriate.

- in the case of a transition from home to a school/setting, we will liaise with professionals from any pre-school Special Needs Services and/or other agencies who have vital additional information on the child or insight into their needs. We will ensure consent from the parent/carer is obtained before information is passed to the receiver.

Taking Into account the feelings and views of parents/carers

Developing a close working relationship with parents/carers is most often key to a positive transition experience for the children, the families and the school/setting.

All staff at our schools/settings will take into account the feelings and views of individual parents/carers and make every effort to reassure them.

To support our overall good practice we will:

- always put the children's social and emotional well-being at the centre of the transition process;
- ensure that transition/settling-in is not seen as an event but an ongoing process;
- provide all staff with appropriate training on transition/settling-in so they understand the Transition/Settling-in policy of the school/setting;
- make sure that sufficient time is allocated for consultation with parents/carers, children and the receiving school/setting staff;
- ensure all staff have an induction period when transition/settling-in is highlighted. Recognition of the importance of the flexibility of the transition process will be a key part of the staff induction process and updated training for all staff as a team;
- ensure that enough time is allocated to visits by the child to the new school/setting;
- prioritise giving staff time to talk to parents/carers each day so we are will be able to minimise concerns about change;
- use an "all about me " type booklet which will be completed by parents/carers then shared with the child's key person.

Monitoring and review

This policy was agreed and implemented on 20th October 2025 and is due for review on August 2026

There will be ongoing monitoring of this policy particularly should there be any incidents which take place relating to it that give cause for concern that aspects of the policy may need amending/updating before the review date.