

Managing Transition in Early Years Settings

Guidance for Practitioners

The Context

The introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage has raised practitioners' awareness of the need to plan for and successfully manage the transition process within and across each sector.

Guidance Aims

This document is intended to support practitioners, children, parents and carers at key transition points in Early Years settings. Each transition will bring challenges and opportunities for children and the aim of this document is to create a smoother transition into school and between settings by examining:

- strategies to ensure continuity of experience
- methods of record keeping which can be used to support the transition process.

Foundation Stage Curriculum Principles of Good Practice

“These principles require practitioners to work in partnership with parents to support each individual child and ensure no child is disadvantaged or excluded.” This is demonstrated when practitioners:

- manage carefully the transition between home and setting and between different settings, to support everyone involved
- establish feelings of trust and respect with parents and children
- treat children as individuals to ensure each child has equality of opportunity
- find out about the child's ethnic, faith and cultural heritage and home experiences, so that familiar experiences and interests can be used as starting points for learning and teaching
- promote self-confidence and positive attitude to learning in all children, whatever their gender, ethnicity, home language, special educational needs, disability or ability
- recognise that being successful and feeling confident and secure are major factors in protecting children against failure
- inform parents of the value of a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise
- ensure all parents are made to feel welcome

Exploring strategies for ensuring continuity of experience

The following strategies and ideas are examples of good transition practice an Early Years setting should consider:

- liaise with nursery or provider/previous setting – visits by staff to meet children and parents, and by children and parents to the new setting;
- create an appropriate environment for good communication with parent/carers, for example, information displayed about the settings, photographs and explanations of children playing in different areas of provision;
- involve parents/carers in the process of induction – provide a parents pack to include information on staff, policies, daily routines;
- send parents/carers regular newsletters;
- invite parents/carers to story sessions, lunches and events;
- be aware of and support parental needs, for example, literacy difficulties, English as an additional language (EAL) and special educational needs (SEN);
- send photographs of staff/setting home, prior to children starting to familiarise them with the setting;
- develop flexible settling strategies, for example, building up the number of sessions the child attends in one week;
- collect information to support initial interests - be adaptable and flexible in your approach to the curriculum to build on children's interests - observe young children and use this to identify next steps;
- talk with other professionals who know the children;
- add a section to the prospectus that contains questions commonly asked by parents/children with appropriate responses;
- make the provision fun for children - show you enjoy being with them and that you value/respect them – support the building of their self-esteem and confidence;
- pass on information about children's progress to next setting e.g.records, summative assessments
- settings to use this information to inform their planning;
- arrange school welcome meetings - make parents/carers aware of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and invite the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to attend;
- encourage school staff to adapt similar routines, expectations and activities in Reception and Year 1;
- liaise with Local Authority Consultants to access local and national materials as they are produced.

Methods of record keeping which can be used to support the transition process

Reception to Year 1	
Possible information to be shared in the summer term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation Stage Profile data (cohort and individual level) • Class lists with groupings for key areas • Child's school report • Guided reading/mathematics groups • Book band levels • Communication, Language and Literacy Development Phases (CLLD) • Mathematics key objectives class record • Reading/writing targets statements class record • Information from the child (interests, achievement, likes and dislikes)
Between settings (playgroup, pre-school, nursery)	
Possible information to be shared between settings	<p>Information about the child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family (siblings) • Name preference • Diet/food allergies • Health • Likes and dislikes • Friendships • Fears/phobias • Emergency contact details • Dummy/special toy or comforter • Birth to three matters or Foundation Stage records/summaries (EYFS summaries from September '08)

Elsewhere in this guidance pack is an example of a pre-entry profile to be completed by parents/carers prior to starting nursery. Elements can be adapted for starting school booklets or information sharing between Early Years settings.

Documents and information to support transition in Early Years settings

A study of the Transition from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1
(DfES Research Report SSU/2005/FR/013).

www.surestart.gov.uk/ensuringquality/research

www.dfes.gov.uk/research/

Seamless transitions - supporting continuity in young children's learning
(DfES Ref: 0267-2006PCK-EN Tel: 0845 60 222 60).

Newcastle Early Education Team March 2008