

09 Childcare practice procedures

09.14 Prime times – Transition to school

Moving on to school is a major transition in a child's life involving separation from familiar adults and children. Older children have a more secure understanding of 'people permanence' and are able to approach new experiences with confidence. However, they need preparation if they are to approach transition to school with confidence and an awareness of what to expect.

Partnership with schools

- Details of the school that a child will be attending are recorded in the child's file along with the name of the reception class teacher if known.
- Every effort is made to forge and maintain strong links with all schools that children may attend. The setting manager will approach schools in order to open lines of communication where these have not previously existed.
- Details of the new school's transition or settling in procedures are requested by us and are referred to if sent from the receiving school or setting, so that members of staff are familiar with them and can develop a consistent approach to transition with teachers, parents and children.
- Teachers are welcomed into the setting and sufficient time is made for them to spend both with the child, and with the key person or manager, to discuss and share information that will support the child's transition to school. Please note during an epidemic or pandemic it may be necessary to hold these meetings over the phone or via Zoom or Microsoft Teams.
- A child's EYFS profile and online learning journal is forwarded to the school (if they are using the same online system) along with other information that will aid transition and settling in. Parents are given the opportunity to download their child's online learning journal prior to it going to the school.
- Any action plans relating to a child's additional needs are also shared, where this is in place.
- Other formal documentation such as safeguarding information is prepared in line with procedure 07.6 Transfer of records.

Partnership with parents

- Key persons discuss transition to school with parents and set aside time to discuss learning and development summaries. Parents are encouraged to contribute to summaries.
- Key persons are available to discuss with parents how they are preparing their child for school and will share information about how the setting is working in partnership with the school to aid transition.
- Key persons will make clear to parents the information that will be shared with the school, for example, information regarding child protection and work that has taken place to ensure the child's welfare.

Increasing familiarity for children

- During the summer term we provide school uniforms of the surrounding schools in our role play area for children to try on.
- We also ask the schools for photos of their classrooms, teachers etc. which we place in the book corner to help children to become familiar with their new school.
- We encourage parents and children to attend all of the settling-in sessions the new schools are offering.

Preparing children for leaving

- Children and parents form bonds with adults and children in the setting and will need preparation for separating from the relationships they have formed.
- The child's last day should be prepared for in advance and marked with a special celebration or party that acknowledges that the child is moving on. This may differ during an epidemic or pandemic as we will follow the guidance given to us at the time.
- Parents should not be discouraged from bringing the child for the occasional brief visit, as separations often take time to complete, in fact we encourage parents to visit the pre-school and to keep in contact after they have left. Sometimes children need the reassurance that their nursery/pre-school is still there and that they are remembered.