



Transition policy

Rationale

Children's lives today are so much more hectic than ever before. Going to a setting for the first time, moving to another one, starting school or moving into a new class are seen by many people as a normal part of the lives of children. Yet transitions are milestone events for children and have a definite effect on their development.

They are times of exciting change certainly, and times of new opportunities and growth for every child. They can also be times of uncertainty where surroundings are not the same, expectations and procedures different, and faces as yet, unfamiliar.

Getting transition right is vital for every child and is not a single event that merely "happens". Transition should be viewed as a process rather than an event that involves children, practitioners and parents together.

Transition has been described as an on-going journey rather than a destination. (Early Years Matters 2015).

Within our establishment our children will experience a number of transitions in a relatively short period of time, therefore, it is important as staff that we review and update our procedures to ensure we "get It Right for Every Child".

This policy has been written to provide a guide for staff working within the nursery and to provide information to parents whose children attend nursery and may be approaching their next birthday. At present our rooms accommodate different age groups and this means the children making transitions and moving to new rooms throughout their time with us. As with any new child settling into nursery, moving to a new room can prove to be upsetting or daunting too. Many children who are moving may have been with the same children and staff for a significant period of time and could find this time difficult. Some may also be quite young and not fully aware of the situation around them. For this reason we recognised the need to set out some clear guidelines to assist parents and staff at these times. Following a review of this policy staff have found that moving children on their birthday is not always practical or beneficial to the child. Therefore we are trialling moving the children in line with school terms i.e. Term 1 August – December, Term 2 January – March, and Term 3 April – June. By moving children whose next birthday fall between these dates we feel this will ease transition and allow them to move with their friends

- Before any child moves the keyworker will meet with their parents to discuss suitable times and dates to start the transition period. Each child is individual and some will take longer to settle than others but this is a matter which should be agreed by all parties. As a guide 4 weeks before the child's birthday is usually a sufficient period of time to start this process.
- We aim to make the transition between departments as smooth and stress free as possible and will involve both the current and new keyworkers in this process.

- Any information held on the child in their record of achievement will be shared with the receiving keyworker in order that staff have a good overall view of the child as an individual. This should be done out with the playrooms at an organised meeting time in order to maintain confidentiality and provide staff with the opportunity to discuss settling strategies for the child.
- The transition period will be gradual. A first visit would last for 1/2 hour and the current keyworker is encouraged to stay with the child. This will allow time for the keyworker to introduce the child to the new staff and environment.
- The second visit would last for 45 minutes – 1 hour and again the current keyworker would stay with the child. During this time the keyworker can encourage the child to become involved with the activities on offer and can interact with the other children in the room.
- For the third visit both keyworkers should agree a suitable length of time and the amount of time the current keyworker should stay for. If the child is willing, it may be appropriate for the keyworker to leave for a short period of time.
- Visits to the new department should be on a regular basis to encourage familiarity with the new surroundings and staff.
- As the transition period progresses the child's time in the new playroom would be extended gradually by 10 or 20 minutes at a time if suitable. This would allow the child to experience social situations such as snack and lunchtimes and outdoor activities with their new friends.
- It should be agreed by both keyworkers when, and by how much the current keyworker should reduce their contact time with the child. At times it may be more suitable to keep the current keyworkers time short in order to avoid causing the child any distress.
- In some cases it may be smoother and less upsetting for the child to have another member of staff aid them with this transition as opposed to their own keyworker.
- If any child were experiencing a particularly difficult time then the parents would be informed and if suitable a meeting between staff and keyworkers should take place to discuss strategies and alternatives to attempt to resolve the difficulty and minimise the distress to the child.
- We recognise the need to keep parents informed of their child's progress throughout this time and would encourage parents to talk with the new keyworker and room staff in order to establish a relationship and gain information about their child.

There are other instances where transitions present themselves, such as when the pre school children move on to school. Again we recognise that this can be a stressful time for both the children and their parents and we believe that we can help to make this transition smoother in a number of ways.

- We will discuss openly with the children school, and the type of activities and challenges that they may find there.
- We will discuss with the parents their child's progress and readiness for school at a formal parents evening. We will share all of the child's records and assessment paperwork as well as their transition report. No transitional information will be passed to schools without the consent of parents/guardians.
- We will encourage communication between the receiving schools and ourselves prior to the children leaving us. We may, with the parents consent invite receiving schools to visit the children in the nursery to meet them and observe them informally.
- We will offer children the opportunity to 'play out' their knowledge and experiences of school by encouraging role play in our imaginative area. The children will be consulted and involved in setting up and establishing this area before use.
- We will promote school in a positive way and discuss with both the parents and children any concerns or worries that they may have.
- We will encourage parents to take the opportunities to visit the school with their child if available. Each school is different but most offer a couple of short afternoon or morning sessions for children to come along and meet their teacher, have a look around the school and meet their class mates.

It should be recognised again that each child is different and that some may find this time exciting and look forward to the challenge it brings whilst others may need some additional support.