

# Early years universal transition guidance

---

## Contents

About this document .....	2
Aim .....	2
Introduction.....	2
Children with SEND or other additional needs .....	3
Principles of transition .....	3
Information Sharing .....	3
Key elements of good transition practice .....	5
Moving from a pre-school setting into school .....	7
Documentation to support the transition to school (templates and examples)....	8
Appendix A - Transition Event Record example .....	10
Appendix B - Transition Summary example .....	11

## About this document

This document was co-produced by the Early Help Service, and Education and Skills, in consultation with colleagues from schools and the wider early years and childcare workforce.

It has been developed to build on existing good practice and to ensure that all children in the Foundation Stage have access to a transition experience based on best practice.

In this document, we have used the term *pre-school setting* to refer to the range of early years settings that children attend before they start school. For simplicity, the term "setting" has been used where the information refers to both pre-school settings and schools.

## Aim

The aim of this guidance is to:

- establish a coherent county wide transition procedure for all children in the early years, including those with special educational needs and disabilities; *and*
- provide children, parents, teachers and practitioners with tools and materials to support this process.

## Introduction

In the early years, children go through many transitions including starting at a setting for the first time, moving on to a new activity, moving between rooms, or moving to a new setting.

Effective transitions are important for children's emotional wellbeing and achievement, and planning for these transitions is fundamental to effective early years practice.

To ensure continuity of experience for children, transition should be seen as a process rather than as a one off event. Discussions involving the child, parents and others throughout the planning process will support successful transitions.

Each child will have a different response to transition, so it is important to try to understand the child's individual needs and responses based on previous experiences. This will help practitioners to plan support to meet children's emotional needs through the process of transition. Practitioners should also observe children's behaviour to try and understand how they might be feeling through the process and adapt support in response to these observations.

## Children with SEND or other additional needs

Most children, given appropriate support, will make a smooth transition and will quickly settle in their new environment and new routines. For some children and families, transitions can be particularly challenging. Additional planning will be needed to ensure are positive learning experiences for children. This would include making appropriate adaptations to the learning environment and routines within the setting to support the individual child. More information and guidance to support settings can be found on the [Tools for Schools and Education Settings](#) website.

If you are working with a child with identified SEND, emerging needs, multi-agency involvement or any other vulnerability, the universal transition offer may not completely meet their needs. To ensure the appropriate level of information is shared and planning put in place for a smooth transition, practitioners should additionally arrange to complete a [Supported Transition](#).

## Principles of transition

The following principles are appropriate for all transitions:

- the child's and parent/carers views are central to, and in evidence in, the planning for a child's transition;
- effective communication between the setting, parents and other people involved with the child;
- fact finding about a child's needs, including current and previous involvement of other agencies, the child's interests and any specific details that will help them to settle;
- reflection on how the child has responded to previous transitions and using this information to plan for the next transition, considering the child's experiences and development since then; *and*
- discussion about changes to the environment/routines that may be needed

## Information Sharing

Information sharing builds on the good practice of parent partnership and recording accurate, information about any concerns and actions taken. Parents should always be aware of any concerns identified by the setting unless this would lead to harm to the child. In most circumstances, parents should be aware of, and have access to, any records held about their child. All information recorded should be factual, precise, and recorded in a way that makes clear any concerns identified, the impact for the child and what actions are being taken to mitigate the risks identified.

To support children's safety and wellbeing, it is crucial that key information gathered about a child is shared between settings at transition points. This is important to ensure continuity of support for the child and family as well as allowing the new setting to have the full picture of the needs of the child in order to safeguard them and support their wellbeing.

Children starting at a new pre-school setting or school can be seen as a "fresh start" for them and, while this is a positive approach for children it is crucial that the new setting has the full information they as a protective factor to support a fresh start. With all the information to hand, practitioners at the new setting can provide appropriate support and be alert to any change in circumstances that may signal and issues re-emerging.

Key information that you should share with the new setting includes:

- A list of professionals currently involved in supporting the family – including their role and contact details
- Any safeguarding / child protection records that you have kept whilst the child has been attending your setting
- Information about any vulnerability factors that you know about the child or family using tools such as the Children's Learning and Well Being Audit (CLaWBA), including the previous involvement of Early Help or Social Care
- Information about the child's learning and development within the setting, including assessment data, Learning Journals and any information about a child's SEND and other support needs

When passing on information to a new provider, you need to make arrangements to share the information securely and you may wish to have a record of the information given to the new setting, signed by both parties. Where possible and appropriate, a conversation between providers should accompany the transferal of recorded information.

Safeguarding information can be shared without parental permission. However, it is good practice to discuss this with parents so they are clear of your worries and your actions to support them and their child, unless sharing this information would put the child at greater risk of harm. Please see [West Sussex Information Sharing Agreement](#) for more information.

If a child for whom you have significant concerns leaves your setting without informing you of where they will now be attending, you need to notify the local authority to discuss next steps.

In some instances, for example if a family enters a refuge, it is important for information to be shared without disclosing the child's previous location. In this situation, please contact your Early Years and Childcare Advisor (EYCA) or the Family Information Service (01243 777807 or

[family.info.service@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:family.info.service@westsussex.gov.uk)) who will support the transition of documents to the new provider.

Please ensure that you understand, and share with parents, the [privacy notice](#) for parents of children accessing early years and childcare provision so that they are aware of and understand what information is shared about their child and why this is important.

## Key elements of good transition practice

### Transition is made a priority

Transition should be seen as an ongoing process throughout the child's life. Key information should be shared prior to the child starting in a new setting, or moving within the setting and within their daily routine to inform transition planning. Adults should be mindful about what the child's behaviour is communicating about their current support needs and respond to this communicated need.

### Providers should consider to what extent their policies and procedures ensure the following

- Let parents know what kind of information you will need to help their child to settle.
- Make it clear who is responsible for gathering information about a child and who will need to contact other professionals for more information.
- Talk to parents about the information that will be shared with other professionals and why this is important.
- Parents complete and discuss with the new setting an "All About Me" profile and registration document to ensure that the child's Key Person is aware of their strengths interests and needs and can provide appropriate support when they start. These documents should be updated as the child grows and develops.
- The setting asks to see the child's Personal Child Health Record (the Red Book) to gather health information.
- If there is a gap between allocation of a place and start date, ask for an update on the child's learning, well-being and development from the family and sending setting to ensure you have all the information you need to plan for a successful transition.

### When starting a new setting children are familiar with the people, places and routines

Children should have opportunities to visit their new environment. Children have opportunities to talk about their new setting and remind themselves about what they have seen on their visits. Consider providing children with photos, books or videos showing key staff, spaces and routines.

### **Parents feel confident about their child's transition so they can support their child well**

Support parents to access key information and attend events to explain the transition process and what the new setting will be like. You could consider events for parents to meet each other or peer support for any parents who are particularly anxious about their child's transition.

Ensure parents understand what the routines are to drop off and collect their child so that they can communicate this positively to their child. Parents understand how that they can discuss any concerns that they have about their child's experience within the setting.

### **When starting a new setting children are given opportunities to make frequent visits setting**

Arrange sessions for children to attend and familiarise themselves with the new environment and meet the new staff. Offer opportunities to visit with staff from their current setting and with family members. If parents cannot attend, it might be helpful for children to attend with another family member. Offer flexibility in the number of, and timings of, the visits to meet the individual needs of a child.

### **Children receive a home visit before starting in a new setting**

Visiting children and their families in their home environment can give valuable information about the child's background and help to build a positive partnership to support the child's learning and experience in the new setting. These should take place as close to the child's start date as possible.

### **Parents are involved, consulted and supported**

Research shows that parental engagement has a significant impact on the outcomes for children. Consider how your setting gathers, values and responds to the information, hopes and concerns of families.

Each family should know their child's Key Person to enable an ongoing partnership in their child's learning journey. The Key Person should have the knowledge and understanding of the child and family's cultural capital to build on their strengths and interests within the setting.

### **Children's friendships are acknowledged**

Consider how your groupings support can be used to support children's existing friendships when starting in a new room within the setting or when starting school.

### **The setting is flexible in meeting individual needs**

It is important to understand the children's individual feeding, sleeping and toileting needs so you can be ready to meet these when they start. It is important to understand the child's current stage of development, rather than

their age, to support their needs and next steps in learning. For example, if a child is not yet able to join a small group time, consider how to support the child to access similar learning opportunities in a different way.

### **Those requiring a supported transition are identified and planned for as early as possible**

Gathering information from the child's family, current setting and any other professionals supporting the family will enable you to identify, plan for and meet the needs of all children. You will then be able to make a more detailed transition plan for children with additional needs. The hopes and wishes of the family should be reflected in your planning.

Refer to [Supported Transition](#) Plan for guidance to support you in planning for the transition of children with additional needs. This will enable you to have all the resources that you need ready for the child's start and ensure that successful strategies from the child's previous setting are implemented within their new setting.

Pre-school settings can discuss planning for supported transitions with their Early Years and Childcare Advisor (EYCA).

## **Moving from a pre-school setting into school**

All of the above principles should be considered when planning the support for children and families before they start school. In addition to the usual processes, for children starting school West Sussex holds *Transition Events* each May, following the school offers going out to families.

The purpose of this is for the sending pre-school setting to give a brief overview to the receiving school of all children who will be attending from September. At these events it is not possible, or appropriate, to give detailed information about children who will need additional transition support, but these children would be identified so the school and setting can start the [Supported Transition](#) process.

It is important that all schools and early years settings engage with this process by attending [Transition Events](#) and following this guidance to ensure the effective sharing of information between pre-school settings and schools and that schools can start to plan for the children arriving.

Attendance at the events will reduce the time that pre-school settings and schools spend in contacting individual settings to share information and plan visits and other meetings needed.

## Documentation to support the transition to school (templates and examples)

The following templates and examples do not present a definitive model of transition, rather examples of good practice to inform your own policies and procedures. However, schools have requested that the information shared by pre-school settings is presented in a consistent format, so this template is designed to offer this consistency.

There are two templates available to support universal transition:

- a Transition Event Record; *and*
- a Transition Summary.

These are [available to download](#) from our website.

### Transition Event Record

#### Purpose

To provide prompts to support professional discussions between pre-school settings and schools in sharing the information considered key to effective transitions.

To identify and plan for those children and families who require additional transition support.

#### Timescale

The document should be completed by the relevant practitioner(s) within the pre-school setting before the Transition Events. If possible, the information should be recorded on a separate sheet for each school, so that a copy can be given to the school at the event. If this is not possible, the information will need to be recorded by the school on a blank template. Information about children should only be shared with the school where the child is expected to start attending.

#### Guidance

The event record is designed to support professional discussions that take place around transition times. The headings do not represent an exhaustive list of key information and colleagues should exercise professional discretion in what they choose to record from their discussions.

#### Example

For an example of a completed Transition Event record, see Appendix A.



## Transition Summary

### Purpose

To provide a consistent format to share key transition information for every child moving on to school.

### Timescale

To be completed by the Key Person during a child's final weeks at their pre-school setting and, once verified by the pre-school setting manager, passed on to their receiving school. Recognising that children will make progress in their learning and development through to the end of their time at their pre-school setting, this document **is not** designed to be shared at Transition Events.

### Guidance

Pre-school settings should complete the double-sided document for every child moving on to school. The document can be completed electronically and emailed to the school, or printed to complete by hand and delivered to the school.

The information recorded will enable receiving staff to prepare for the child's arrival in school, ensuring that their interests are reflected in the environment and experiences offered. With relevant information, any support needs can be put in place prior to entry, minimising anxiety and disruption for the child.

This is a summative record and therefore should reflect levels of attainment on leaving the pre-school setting. It is anticipated that a best fit judgement will be entered for each area of learning. For pre-school settings using an electronic progress monitoring tool, please transfer those judgements on to the progress review.

### Example

For an example of a completed Transition Summary record, see Appendix B.

## Appendix A - Transition Event Record example

**Event Date:** 15/5/21 **Setting:** Anytown Nursery **School:** St Swithin's Primary

Name	DOB	Key Person	Number of hours accessing	Friendships	Key strengths and interests	EYPP	EAL	SEND	Other areas to highlight Examples: Discussed in Early Help Consultations, delays in learning and development, or CLAWBA information, current and previous support from other agencies such as: CDC, Social Care, Early Help, SALT	Supported Transition needed
Amy Cranston	17.04.17	Belle Beau	15 hours	Erin Jacques, Jacob Smith	Outgoing, sociable, determined, excellent language, enjoys role play	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-care, needs some support with toileting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Lauren Evans	21.12.16	Belle Beau	30 hours	Erin Jacques. Would benefit from not being in same class as OI	Enjoys playing alongside adults, needs reassurance. Very creative and will concentrate well on self-chosen activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lacks self-confidence. Poor attendance. Communication and Language delay, but no outside agencies involved as parents are not yet ready to engage with external professionals, support within setting only	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> parents anxious about Lauren starting school due to shyness
Erin Jacques	19.08.17	Rick Smith	22.5 hours	Lauren Evans	Happy to come into the setting. Strong attachments key person	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Uses PECS and needs visual timetable. Known to SALT and CDC. ASC diagnoses	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to ensure continuation of strategies and support

## Appendix B - Transition Summary example

Child	FSM eligibility	Setting name	Key person	Parent/carer name(s)	Discussed with parent/carer (tick or signature of parent to confirm)	Verified by manager
Name: Oliver Polhill DOB: 25.03.17	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2yr FE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EYPP	Anytown Nursery	Jenny Bull	Beckie Best Dylan Todds	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>S.Mills</i>

<p>What are my strengths, talents and interests?</p> <p>E.g. characteristics of effective learning, things I enjoy, what people admire about me</p>	<p>I am usually very happy – Daddy says that I have a joyful nature and that my smile and laughter make him happy. I really enjoy sensory play. I am good at exploring different messy experiences with all my senses (running my fingers through paint, smelling the shaving foam and mouthing play dough). People can tell that I am enjoying myself as I usually have a big smile on my face. When playing like this, I am good at communicating with other adults through gesture, eye contact and simple phrases.</p> <p>Daddy says that I speak more often with him and my step-mum.</p> <p>I am starting to play alongside my peers, but I need an adult to help me with this.</p>
<p>What's important to me?</p> <p>E.g. spending time outside, familiar routines or knowing who will collect me</p>	<p>Daddy and Beckie (my step-mum) are important to me.</p> <p>I love to play outside – whatever the weather is like – so being able to free-flow inside and out will help me.</p> <p>I feel more secure if there is an adult I know nearby to help me if I need it. This helps me to be confident to explore and engage in learning through play.</p>
<p>What can you do to support me?</p> <p>E.g. providing visual clues, help with toileting</p>	<p>I like to know where my Daddy is and when he is coming to collect me. Please use my visual timetable to show me what is happening each day. This will help me to settle as I can look at what is happening and when Daddy is coming.</p> <p>When I'm at nursery, Jenny makes sure that she gives me some learning experiences outside as this helps me to concentrate and learn – more than I do when the same activity is inside.</p> <p>Please join me in the play that I am engaged in. When I am involved in my own play, I am happy for you to join in and we can talk about what is happening. You can talk about what I am doing and leave gaps for me to add my own words. If you give me chances to respond, but don't make me, then I will use some words that I know and copy some of what you say.</p> <p>I am starting to enjoy playing with others, but I need some support to do this. If you use words about playing with others, it helps me to remember what I need to do to play with others.</p>
<p>How has COVID-19 impacted me?</p> <p>E.g. attendance, impact on my learning, impact for my family and on my wellbeing</p>	<p>I started coming to the setting in January 2021 but didn't attend during the first lockdown as we were worried about getting ill. I started going to nursery again in July and have been going all the time since then – apart from when I've been ill. I haven't had COVID-19. When I was at nursery, there weren't very many children there, so I had lots of help and did really well, but I'm glad my friends are back now and I enjoy playing with them more now than I did before because I can talk to them and share more than I could when I first started,</p> <p>My Daddy was on furlough and then lost his job, so he has been sad and sometimes a bit cross but he still played with me and we had fun together. Beckie (my step-mum) is a nurse so she is very busy and gets tired – but that means I get more cuddles which I really like.</p>

## Assessment

Date assessment completed	26/06/2021
Age in months at time of assessment	51

Area of learning and development	Personal, Social and Emotional Development			Physical Development		Communication and Language			Literacy		Mathematics		Understanding the World			Expressive Arts and Design	
	Making Relationships	Self-confidence and self-awareness	Managing feelings and behaviour	Moving and Handling	Health and self-care	Listening and Attention	Understanding	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Numbers	Shape, Space and Measures	People and Communities	The World	Technology	Exploring, and using Media and Materials	Being Imaginative
Assessment (EYFS age band in months)	22-36	30-50	22-36	30-50	30-50	30-50	30-50	22-36	22-36	30-50	30-50	30-50	30-50	30-50	30-50	30-50	30-50

Other agencies <b>currently</b> involved in supporting child or family	CDC Speech and Language Therapists
Other agencies <b>previously</b> involved in supporting child or family	Early Help
Other information that the new setting needs to know For example, child's first language(s) if not English, cultural background, family circumstances, SEND needs, CLA, other factors increasing child's vulnerability, any other specific needs that the school should be aware of – for example, specific sensory needs or strategies that support the child.	SEND – C&L delay Significant sensory needs – needs lots of opportunities for sensory exploration and time outside. Will need support with lunch – especially if the meal has lots of sauce on it as Oliver will want to explore his food. Having a sensory activity before lunch and then clearly stating “play – finished, now - eating” with visual prompt helps him to know that this is lunch and not a sensory play activity, but he will need reminders during the meal.

## Records to be passed to child's new setting/school

Outline the information that needs to be shared, when and how this information will be shared – ensuring that sharing is secure and timely

Records	Information to be shared	Date for information to be shared
Learning Journal	Yes – hand delivered to school.	20/07/2021
SEND information - Including the list of all professionals involved, EYPARM outcome if appropriate	Latest professional reports and SEND log– hand delivered to school.	20/07/2021
Safeguarding information - Including log of concerns - Information from CLAWBA - Notes and actions from Early Help Consultations	EHC notes – hand delivered to school.	20/07/2021
Medical Needs - Include current health care plan, risk management plan, and any other relevant documentation		Click or tap to enter a date.
Any other records currently held by the setting		Click or tap to enter a date.