

Provide 

Children & Family SERVICES

Transitioning from nursery to school

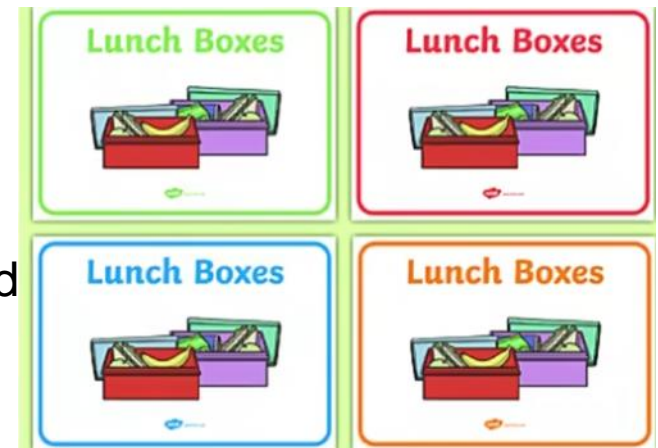


- Transitioning to school is not a single event, it is a process
- Not all of the ideas here will be relevant to your child – have a think and choose those which may best support your child
- The key throughout is communication!
- Identify the best people to communicate with in the school – SENCo (Special Educational Needs Assistant); class teacher; LSA (Learning Support Assistant); occasional assistant or head teacher
- Talk about school calmly and positively with your child



Transition visits

- These will depend on the school and their policies
- More visits may be appropriate for your child
- Quieter visits at the end of the day to meet the teacher and classroom with fewer people around
- Practicing the journey and going past can make it easier when it comes to making the journey for real
- Agree with the school staff a key person/people for the child to go to if they need support and ensure they know this
- Familiarise your child with their new uniform/bag/drinks bottle etc.



Click here for some helpful links:

<https://www.hacw.nhs.uk/childrens-speech-and-language-resources>

Photos

- Where available, gather photos of: the classroom; playground area; lunch hall; any other key areas e.g. library; key staff members
- Consider putting these together in a transition book
- Could be in the format of a social story:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/communication/communication-tools/social-stories-and-comic-strip-conversations>

- Revisit this book frequently prior to transition visits and during the summer holidays. You could leave it out for your child to look through independently.

Communication between home and school

- Ensure staff are aware of your child's needs
- Be honest!
- Where possible encourage liaison between preschool/nursery staff and school staff. If things have worked in nursery ensure this information is passed on – this could include behavior support plans
- Share recent reports and care plans
- How does school engage with parents and parents with school? Engage with this. Download any apps that are required.
- Is there helpful information that you could provide to class each morning and they to you at the end of day which would help e.g. anything going on at home, sleep, what they have been interested in recently
- Photos of what your child has done at school/home to help talking with the child about their day/weekend

Communication Passport / All about me book

If your child struggles to communicate, this may be useful both for your child and for classroom staff. Include:

- Likes and dislikes
- Anything that causes anxiety
- Sensory difficulties that may cause anxiety/and sensory strategies that help
- Strategies that help
- How your child communicates
- Include any specifics e.g. any gestures/sign attempts specific to the child. Any words that maybe are a bit different and specific to the child
- What and what is important to them
- Important routines

<https://www.essexice.co.uk/easyread/easy-read-templates/communication-passports/>

School start

- Some schools/parents are keen to do a gradual transition to school, starting with part days
- Discuss this with school in terms of what they allow but also what is best for your individual child
- For some children a gradual transition is helpful. For others actually starting as you intent to go on and going in the same as the other children from the beginning can be best
- Ensure any specialist equipment or communication supports from home/nursery are also transferred across to school and that staff are aware of these
- Ensure that information from other professionals involved is shared with school staff e.g. care plans, reports, training opportunities



Visual supports

- A visual timetable within school to help children know what will be happening but also help them to see when they will be going home
- A calendar so that they can see which days are home/school days
- Visuals to support the journey to school e.g. a first/then board or objects of reference
- If going to school is tricky, consider talking to school about if there is a calming/motivating item or activity they can have on a visual for when they arrive
- Social stories for what to expect in the day
- Identify any times that may be particularly stressful and discuss strategies with staff e.g. visuals, buddy systems, making the time more structured

Other ideas

- Some schools may offer visits to home/preschool (this may also be affected by Covid)
- Transition meeting or phone calls may be an option
- Have and share with school realistic goals for the first fews weeks of school
- Starting school can be overwhelming and tiring – when your child comes out of school, try giving them some time to process rather than asking lots of questions.
- After giving them some time, try wondering out loud or tell them a bit about your day e.g. “I went shopping for our food today. I wonder what you did...”
- If appropriate for your child, give them time and space to share their worries with you
- Relaxation techniques: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/joinin/seven-techniques-for-helping-kids-keep-calm>
- Celebrate the positives

Useful resources

- Free training for early years settings e.g. reception class staff:

<https://ican.org.uk/eysend-partnership/>

- National Autistic Society website:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/communication/communication-tools>

- Local services and support:

<https://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/>