

TRANSITION POLICY

"Successful transition support requires a commitment from the sending setting, the receiving setting and the parent"

(SEN Resource File: Early Years Supplement)

The Department of Education and Transitions
Learning to Learn : A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning
"Guidance on Induction and Transition" DE (2015)

SEN Capacity Building Programme: Early Years

Outcome 6: "improved sharing of information by all participating settings with the child's Primary School placement"

The child's transition profile information ... should be used as part of an overall
Education and Training Inspectorate "Evaluation of the SEN Capacity Building Pilot A: Early Years" (2015)
baseline assessment

Influenced by these quality indicators and working within these frameworks at Ballymena Nursery School, we operate the following transition policy.

Transition in the context of our nursery involves 5 clear elements as follows:

1. from penultimate year to pre-school year at Ballymena Nursery
2. from penultimate year at Ballymena Nursery to another pre-school provider.
3. from home to Nursery School
4. from other pre-school settings to Nursery School
5. from Nursery School to Primary School.

It is the policy of our nursery to liaise as closely as possible with our local Primary Schools in order to make the transition from nursery to primary as smooth as possible for the children and their parents / carers and others who will become involved in the lives of our young children.

1. From penultimate year to Pre-school year at Ballymena Nursery School.

We actively support the smooth transition of children within our nursery from their penultimate to pre-school year by:-

Our commitment to continuity of provision by applying whole school strategies such as:

- Jenny Mosley's Golden Rules
- Give me 5 storyroom rules
- visual time lines; daily schedules
- cross room play in the third term
- Teachers sharing storytimes
- nursery assistants meeting the children
- photographs of teachers and nursery assistants provided for parents and children
- exchange of transitional information between teachers.

2. From penultimate year at Ballymena Nursery School to another pre-school provider.

- We support this transition by inviting other pre-school providers to visit the children in Ballymena Nursery School
- We provide penultimate transitional reports forwarded to their new settings.
- We distribute information and encourage parents to attend open days for their new setting.

3. From home to Nursery School/strengthening home/school links.

We recognise that starting Nursery School is an important transitional period for their parents/carers. We strive to make this as smooth as possible in the following ways :

- By inviting the children and their parents to visit Nursery in June, prior to starting in September - introducing them to their teacher, assistant(s) and a group of their "friends" as well as their new classroom.
- By applying our "settling-in" procedure, which will enable the children and parents to gradually meet everyone and build on the positive experiences which they have ahead of them.
- By providing information in an attractive and accessible "Parents' Handbook" which answers many of the questions and queries which parents may have.
- By regularly updating our school web-site
- By providing translation service on our web-site and or interpreter when needed.

- By providing photographs of their child's class teacher, nursery assistant(s) or special educational support assistant when appropriate.
- By providing the children with a child-friendly booklet of their nursery school and daily programme.
- By regularly updating our slide-show of photographic presentations on the Apple TV, available to view in the hallway
- By ensuring that the hallway has information, literature and displays to help keep parents informed and give them and the children an insight into various aspects of "their" nursery
- By being available and approachable for the parents throughout the process as well as for their child.
- By asking the parents to complete a simple profile giving information about their child (such as likes/dislikes, favourite story/toy etc.) which may help us to get to know them a little better and a little quicker and may enable us to build a rapport with their child
- By continuing links with parents and involving them in the life of the school and also with working parents through on-going exchange of information through newsletters; school website; texting service; Tapestry app; parents' whiteboard; Swap, Sell and Share board; suggestion box in hallway.

4. From other Pre-School settings (e.g. Busy Bees, SureStart, daycare) to Nursery School

We appreciate that starting Nursery School, even if a child has attended another pre-school setting, is still a big step for a child and also for their parents/carers. A change of place, face and routine can be daunting. We aim to make this as smooth a process as possible in the following ways:

- By reading any transitional information forwarded to us from other settings. Having noted from the application form or from parent's profile that the children has attended another setting, we ask the parent's permission to contact that setting for some general "transitional" information about the child, particularly their level of well-being, their ability to mix with others, their favourite areas of play, with the aim to make the transition as smooth as possible.
- By teachers visiting Busy Bees, SureStart in May/June prior to joining us and while the children are still attending these groups.
- By providing Ballymena Nursery sweatshirts to these groups together with staff photographs.
- We follow the same procedure as outlined above - visit followed by settling-in.

5. From Nursery School to Primary School

Our Nursery School pupils move on to several primary schools, generally in the Ballymena area. We have built up close partnerships with many of these primary schools - the Principals and the Primary 1 teachers. By the time the children are transferring, we may have visited some of the schools for their school nativity plays or shared activities. We aim to ensure that the well-being of the child is kept central to the process of transition to Primary school.

In response to what is recognised as good practice and more specifically in response to ongoing evaluation involving the parents and the Primary 1 teachers, we have developed the following methods of aiming to ensure that this transition is smooth and supported.

- We introduce parents to many of the schools in our area by displaying posters for open days and having school prospectuses available in our hallway.
- We support our local schools by encouraging prospective parents to visit with their children on Open Days and on days arranged for the new pupils who have secured a place.
- We invite the Primary 1 teachers from our local schools to visit the nursery in the third term when the children will have the opportunity to meet them.
- For children with special or additional needs, we plan a special transitional face to face meeting with the Principal, SENCO, P 1 teachers, educational psychologist, other interested parties and parents, at the receiving school, following the guidelines from SEN Early Years Inclusion Service.
- We send transitional reports to the receiving primary schools
- We provide parents with relevant information, timelines and procedures regarding the transfer of children from nursery school to primary school
- We provide parents with information such as "top tips" as to show they may prepare their child for the transition through our newsletter and website.
- We prepare the children through our summer term focus of interest and discussion, introducing them to their transition to "big school".
- We invite local primary school aged children to visit nursery with their school choir, school orchestra etc.

We believe that throughout the nursery school year, by providing a happy and secure environment, by planning a well balanced range of experiences through our pre-school curriculum and strong links with local primary schools, that many qualities are developed which will help them as they make this transition. These qualities include:-

- A positive disposition towards school and learning

- Development of attention and listening skills to aid future learning.
- Confidence towards adults and the perception of the teacher as someone who will help him/her in their learning
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Language and communication skills
- Emotional literacy
- Positive and acceptable behaviours.
- Autonomy, self-help skills
- An awareness of his/her environment in which he/she is eager to explore and investigate new learning and develop his/her curiosity
- Appropriate concentration levels
- Appropriate perseverance and acceptance that we should try again
- An interest in books as a source of knowledge and enjoyment
- The development of transferable skills, concepts and aptitudes through experiences in each of the areas of learning.

Other related policies/documents

Settling-in Policy

Home School Links

Parent partnership

Pastoral care

TIMETABLE FOR TRANSITIONS

Prior to transition to Nursery School

December

- Application forms for new school year become available.

January

- Closing dates for applications to Nursery School.

June

- Induction Day for new intake of children and parents.
- Distribute information/data gathering information folder to parents together with pictorial information booklet to children.
- With parental permission, take photographs of children and parents to aid transitions and to prepare welcoming board for September intake.
- Gather information from parents for staff to read.

September

- Settling-in period
- Parent information sessions with interpreters, if required.

October

- First parent/teacher consultation - interpreters employed if required.

December

- Open Day for prospective children and parents.
- Visits to local primary school to watch their nativity performances.

January to June

- Visits arranged by local school aged children school choirs and orchestras.

February

- 2nd Parent/Teacher consultation. Interpreters employed if required.

May/June

- Visit by Primary 1 teachers
- Transition reports to receiving primary schools
- Penultimate reports to receiving pre-school settings
- Exchange of information and penultimate reports to Ballymena Nursery.
- Cross classroom play for penultimate aged children in Ballymena Nursery
- Shared story times at Ballymena Nursery
- Special collaborative transition meetings for children with additional or special educational needs.
- Receipt of transition information from other pre-school settings i.e. Busy Bees/Sure Start

