

**TRANSITION POLICY FOR
HOME –
EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE
– PRIMARY 1
2014 (Updated 2018)**

TRANSITION POLICY FOR HOME – EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE - PRIMARY 1

Rationale

Transitions are a key current policy priority for the Scottish Government which is highlighted throughout *Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)*, *the Early Years Framework* and *Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)* and *Building the Ambition*.

‘.... children need to be prepared as much as possible for any key transitions’
(Building the Ambition Scottish Government 2014).

Dumfries and Galloway Council recognises that positive transitions are significant for children's personal, social and emotional well-being, cognitive development and achievements. It is vital to acknowledge children's individual circumstances and prior experiences in order that the transition process is flexible and focussed on meeting the needs of children and families.

Working closely with families is key to supporting effective transitions. Parents and carers have a significant role to play in preparing and supporting children at times of change and it is essential to acknowledge them as partners and involve them as fully as possible.

Transition should be viewed as a process and not an event; planned carefully to ensure children have positive experiences and the move from home to Early Learning and Childcare to primary is as smooth as possible. Adults should be interested, reliable and responsive to help young children develop a sense of trust and security.

‘The changes in the Act (Children and Young Peoples Bill 2014) to provide for eligible 2 year olds needs to be carefully considered in terms of transition and an appropriate plan put in place.’

‘We should not expect some younger children, for example a 2 year old, to immediately manage the transition of suddenly being with a larger group of older children without careful preparation. In this instance, it may be helpful to relax often more formal regimes of moving a child from room to room in a setting just because they are a year older, rather than making the decision as to what is actually best for him. We know that, depending on the child's stage of development, they still need the encouragement and confidence of being able to hold on to the familiar things they know as they increasingly let go to enjoy new experiences. On the other hand, some younger children are more adept and confident and can make their transition with ease. As we already know, children have an uneven pattern of development. This is nothing new and to be expected.’

(Building the Ambition Scottish Government 2014)

‘There is evidence that children ‘dip’ at transitions, in both cognitive and social-emotional areas, that they face a range of changes – in environment, in relationships, in identity, in learning expectations, in curriculum and in the pattern of their days.’

(Dunlop and Fabian 2007)

‘.....transition from pre-school to primary school is a critical time which is full of opportunity and potential approaches (should) ensure that every child has meaningful and progressive learning experiences across the sectors and within the Early Level.’

(Curriculum for Excellence, Pre-School into Primary Transitions May 2010)

This will mean extending the approaches which are used Early Learning and Childcare into the early years of primary.

Principles of Transition

Transitions should provide opportunities for:

- families to be involved
- developing positive relationships
- building on previous experiences
- managing change and new challenges
- flexible approaches to meet individual children's needs
- collaborative working
- meaningful, progressive learning experiences
- continuity of experience (home to pre-school)
- continuity of learning environment and pedagogy within the Early Level,(CfE)

Roles and Responsibilities of Practitioners

Positive transitions are a shared responsibility of parents and early years and primary staff, each valuing the expertise and crucial role that all have to play.

- Create time for dialogue with parents, carers, colleagues and relevant agencies to gather information about the child's learning and development.
- Respect issues of confidentiality when sharing information.
- All relevant information (eg medical, Child Protection chronologies, Speech and Language input, Educational Visitor involvement) should be transferred with the child to the new setting.
- Create a Personal Plan for each child within 28 days of the child accessing Early Learning and Childcare to meet the health, safety and welfare needs of the child as set out in the Scottish Statutory Instrument 210 The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 This plan must be reviewed at least every six months and more frequently where appropriate
- Acknowledge and take account of individuals' skills and prior learning, making effective use of Personal Learning Portfolios which should reflect the action planning from the Personal Plan.
- All practitioners have a responsibility to meet the planned outcomes for children contained within the Personal Plan.
- Ensure a supportive, nurturing ethos.
- Develop an appropriate learning environment which supports progression.
- Plan a programme and timeline for the transition process.
- Develop a shared understanding of pedagogy.
- Develop a shared understanding of Experiences and Outcomes, Early Level, Curriculum for Excellence.
- Plan an enhanced Transition programme for children with Additional Support for Learning Needs.

Activities to Promote Successful Transition

Home – Early Learning and Childcare and Transfers between settings

- Arrange home visits where appropriate
- Invite children to visit the centre prior to starting Early Learning and Childcare.
- Include children in Early Learning and Childcare events e.g. Christmas concert, picnic etc.
- Develop a transition booklet/DVD for children, which might include staff photographs, key areas, routines etc.

- Develop personal transition boxes with familiar and important items.
- Provide an informative handbook for families (e.g. include information about the curriculum, staff, snack, suitable clothing, complaints procedures etc).
- Arrange meetings (including Personal Plan meetings) with parents/carers, playgroup staff, relevant agencies to discuss aspects of the child's development.
- Devise a settling in process to meet the individual needs of each child and family.
- Arrange meetings with parents, carers to share curriculum and practical information.
- Identify a key person with whom the child can develop a secure relationship and who will be identified as the key contact/s for the family.

Practitioners must ensure relevant risk assessments for visiting children and adults are undertaken and ensure that:

- a robust signing in and out procedure is in place
- that visiting adults are never left alone with a child or group of children
- that visiting adults are not left unsupervised in the toilet area and can only assist with their own child

In the event of a child not settling after two weeks and the parent continues to support their child, the parent will require to register as a volunteer (see the Volunteer Policy 2014 and the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Guidance for Schools 2014).

Activities and Ideas to Consider for Successful Transition

Early Learning and Childcare– Primary 1

Throughout the pre-school year take every opportunity to forge links with Primary 1.

- Plan a transition programme.
- Develop a liaison calendar to support staff collaboration e.g. September - staff meet to plan events etc. November – staff discuss enrolment arrangements, February – staff discuss induction day arrangements, May – staff meet to discuss children's progress.

Throughout the year:

- Invite children and staff to school events e.g. festive occasions, assemblies, sports day, fund raising events etc.
- Plan joint projects, active schools sessions, joint Story sack scheme, joint enterprise with P1. Make visits in small groups to P1 to take part in activities.
- Encourage early years staff to visit Early Learning and Childcare centre to become familiar with children and their experiences
- 'Buddy' children with P6 pupils. Take photos of buddies.
- Use shared spaces throughout the year.
- Invite future P1 children to end of theme presentations.

Summer Term

- At enrolment, ensure that the transition programme accommodates all children (from home; child-minders; all pre-school providers).
- Talk and listen to the children about their expectations of school.
- Make sure the children meet all the staff who will be involved with them.
- Provide opportunities for parents/carers to visit the new setting with their child.
- Create a presentation/slideshow/video by P1 children addressing questions posed by nursery.
- Make a booklet with photos/DVD of the school-entrance/staff/playroom/ toilets/snack/outside area- so that children can remember the setting during the holiday before they start.
- Meet with parents and staff to share curriculum and practical information and ideas to support their child's learning.

- Ensure time for teachers to listen to and observe children in the Early Learning and Childcare centre.
- Ensure time for staff to share Personal Learning Portfolios.
- Plan for specific induction days.
- Support children at playtimes and mealtimes etc
- Familiarise children with transport arrangements e.g. meet the driver

Start of the new session

- Hold information evening for parent/carers of children within Early Level, (CfE).
- Display children's prior work in their new setting.
- Plan a settling-in period to allow children to develop confidence in their new environment ensuring continuity of learning experiences and pedagogy.
- Release a member of Early Learning and Childcare staff when possible to support children in P1 on first day/s.
- Plan 'Stay and Play' sessions

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