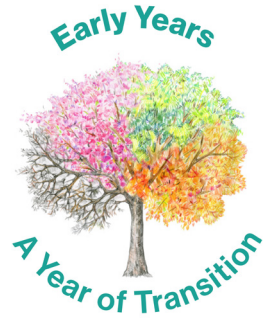




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Cumbria Early Years Transition Toolkit



Introduction

This toolkit aims to support Early Years settings, childminders and schools to work together to ensure children's transitions from one setting to another are a positive experience for children and their families. It is primarily aimed at supporting children moving into the Reception class of a school at the start of an academic year, but many of the resources are equally useful for children moving to a school nursery from another setting, or for children moving between or within settings at any point in the year.

The toolkit draws together a series of resources for schools and settings to use to plan a successful transition for their children. It contains resources to help settings consider the skills and attributes children will need to prepare them for the move and how to support them to develop these. It also contains tools to support families during what can be a daunting process for some, acknowledging that they are their child's primary educator and that their expert knowledge of the child is vital to the transition process.

It is acknowledged that many schools and settings have developed successful transition processes already. For others this is an area they wish to develop. This toolkit may help you to evaluate your current practice and suggest ways to improve the experience for all. Each of the resources can be downloaded separately and you are free to use those you feel will be useful to your transition process.

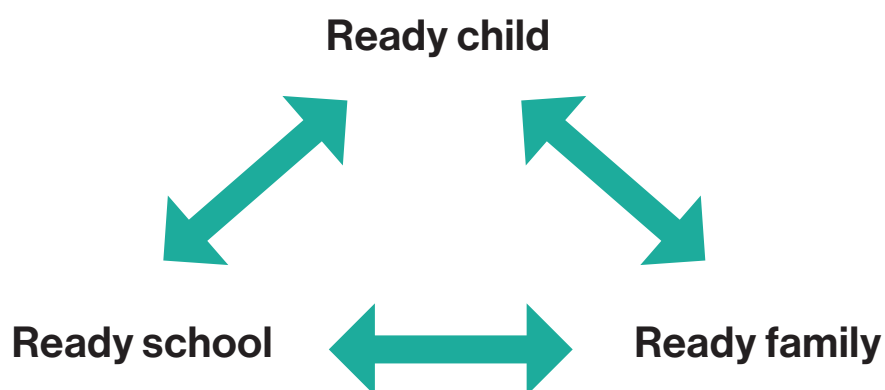
The current version of this toolkit will be available on the early years pages of the Cumbria County Council website.



Principles of transition

The 3 dimensions of transition

The term 'school readiness' is often used in relation to attributes, skills and knowledge children need for a successful school start, but this is only one part of the jigsaw. According to UNICEF (School readiness - a conceptual framework, 2012) there are 3 dimensions to school readiness, and all 3 must work together.



Ready child – does the child have the skills, knowledge and attributes they need to enable them to be happy, secure and ready to learn? What exactly do they need and how can we support them to gain these skills? This may look different for each child. Settings will need to support children to develop these skills over time, it can't all be done in the summer term before they leave! Within the toolkit, the documents Transition ideas for Early Years settings, Developing independence and resilience, Preparing children for Reception – useful skills and the Transition year planner for Early Years settings suggest ideas to help with this.

Ready school – does the school have all the information they need to support the children that are arriving? Have they collected this information from previous settings and parents, preferably via face-to-face meetings? Have they met the children and got to know them a little? Have they reflected upon the unique needs of this cohort when planning their provision and transition procedures and altered them accordingly? The toolkit documents Transition year planner- Reception class and Transition ideas for schools may help schools to consider this.

Ready family – Do the family feel they are part of the process? Do they have all the information they want and need? Do they know how they can support their child through the process? The document Transition ideas for parents can help with this. The SEND Code of Practice also states that, for children with additional needs, settings should agree with parents what information will be shared with the receiving setting/school, so you will need to discuss this with families.

One size doesn't fit all

Any plan that you have for transition should be flexible enough to meet the needs of all children and families. The document Transition support for all highlights the minimum recommended arrangements for all children, plus the enhancements that would be good practice for children who may be especially anxious, have short term needs, have an open Early Help or an EHCP. The document Points to consider when supporting enhanced transitions gives further practical advice on this.



Transition is a marathon, not a sprint

Transition to school is not just a process that happens in the last few weeks of a child's nursery year. Helping children to be resilient, confident learners, who settle well into school is a process that takes a long time. The Transition year planner - Early Years settings and the Transition Year Planner - Reception classes can support this thinking.



You can't do it alone

Successful transition requires partnership working between nurseries/childminders, schools and families. No one partner is responsible. Other agencies may also need to be involved, especially when the child has additional needs, is looked after or has an Early Help open. Transition processes work best when good relationships are established between all parties, who respect each other's contributions.

