



PARENT TOOLKIT

School Transitions



Transitions—such as moving to a new class, changing teachers, or starting a new school—can be exciting but also challenging for children. This information sheet provides practical tips to help parents support primary-aged children through these changes.

Why Transitions Matter

- Change can feel overwhelming, even when it's positive.
- Children may need extra reassurance and structure during transitions.
- A smooth transition helps build confidence, resilience, and emotional wellbeing.

Types of Transitions in Primary School

- Moving from one year group to the next
- Starting a new school
- Changing teachers or classrooms
- Returning after school holidays
- Changes in routine (e.g., new timetables, clubs, or support staff)

How You Can Support Your Child

1. Talk Openly About the Change

- Discuss what will be different and what will stay the same.
- Answer questions honestly and simply.
- Share positive stories about new beginnings.

2. Visit the New Environment (if possible)

- Attend transition events or open days.
- Look at photos of the classroom, teacher, or school.
- Plan the journey together.

3. Build Predictability

- Create a simple daily routine at home.
- Use visual timetables or checklists for morning and evening routines.
- Practise school-related routines (e.g., packing a bag, getting dressed).

4. Encourage Independence

- Let your child make small decisions (e.g., choosing their snack or outfit).
- Support self-help skills like organising belongings.

5. Acknowledge Feelings

- Let your child know it's OK to feel nervous or unsure.
- Share times when you experienced change and coped.
- Teach simple calming strategies (deep breathing, counting to 10).

Supporting Children Who Need Extra Help

Some children may need more time or reassurance.

- Provide extra previewing (photos, videos, stories about school).
- Arrange meet-and-greet sessions with new staff where possible.
- Use social stories to explain what will happen.
- Keep communication open with school staff.

Working with the School

- Let teachers know if your child is anxious about the transition.
- Share strategies that work well at home.
- Ask about any transition support offered by the school.
- Attend parent meetings or induction sessions.

After the Transition

What to Expect

- Temporary changes in behaviour (clinginess, tiredness, irritability) are normal.

How to Support

- Keep routines steady.
- Offer lots of praise for small successes.
- Encourage your child to talk about their day.
- Allow time for rest and calm activities.

Tips for Managing Worries

- Practise breathing exercises or mindfulness.
- Create a worry box at home.
- Keep good sleep routines.
- Read books about change and school.

If you have any questions or concerns about transitions, please contact your child's teacher or the school's Family Support Worker. Together, we can help your child feel confident, safe, and ready for their next step!