

Transition to school

What Early Years Practitioners might want to know and ask a school when they are preparing children for transition

In addition to the positive transition work that PVI settings and schools already have in place, this is a suggested list for Early Years Practitioners, to consider asking their feeder schools to help them to know and understand school practice.

The answers given will enable practitioners to support parents when choosing a school.

Please note:

This is not an exhaustive list or a comprehensive list where all questions are asked. Consider which questions are most pertinent to your parents and which they will find most useful to know about.

School Routine and general questions

- Can I visit the school when it is not an open day and can I accompany the parents if they require support?
- How do children with SEND progress in your school?
- How is progress measured?, how frequent is progress reviewed and who tracks this?
- How will the school involve the parents in supporting their child's learning?
- What is the child to adult ratio?
- How do you make the parents feel welcome and how can parents approach school if they have concerns?
- Is there an after school/holiday club provision? Will the school liaise with the staff in the club and share strategies to support the child with SEND?

SEND, Inclusion and additional support questions

- How accessible is all of the school for a child with additional needs? e.g., ramps, size of classroom, quiet areas, disabled toilets?
- How experienced are the staff? E.g. Makaton, PEC's (picture exchange communication), physical handling, Sensory, Speech and language, behaviour, disabilities and Special educational needs.
- Do the whole school use visual communications in the classrooms?
- How do the school support children's individual learning needs, e.g. do they use visual resources, special time, work stations, props with stories and songs etc.?
- Do therapists regularly visit the school?
- Would the child with SEND have to miss lessons in order to receive additional support?
- What additional transition arrangements do school make for children with SEND and how many different school transitions are there throughout the day?
- Is there a Nurture group and Language group?
- Do the school access outreach support from other provisions? E.g. Thomas Outreach, Educational psychology. Primary Behaviour Support team?

- If there is a school trip, how will the children with SEND be supported?

Communication

- How do the staff communicate with parents? E.g. tapestry, communication books, phone calls.
- How do parents contact individual teachers and learning staff?
- How does the school approach the key person system?

Self Help /lunch time/ play time questions

- Do the school have a wet room /changing facility?
- If a child has a toilet accident what happens, who will change him/her?
- Do the children need to learn to dress and undress independently?
- Where do the children eat lunch?
- Is there a healthy eating policy in school and what do you do if a child will only eat certain foods, can they bring a lunch box from home?
- Will there be an adult available to support the child with SEND at lunch time?
- How much supervision is there for children at break/lunch times? Who will they know who to go to if they require support?
- How often are the children allowed outdoors and is the outdoors accessible all year round?

Encourage parents to go and look at several schools before they make their mind up, they will get that 'gut' feeling as to their preference.