



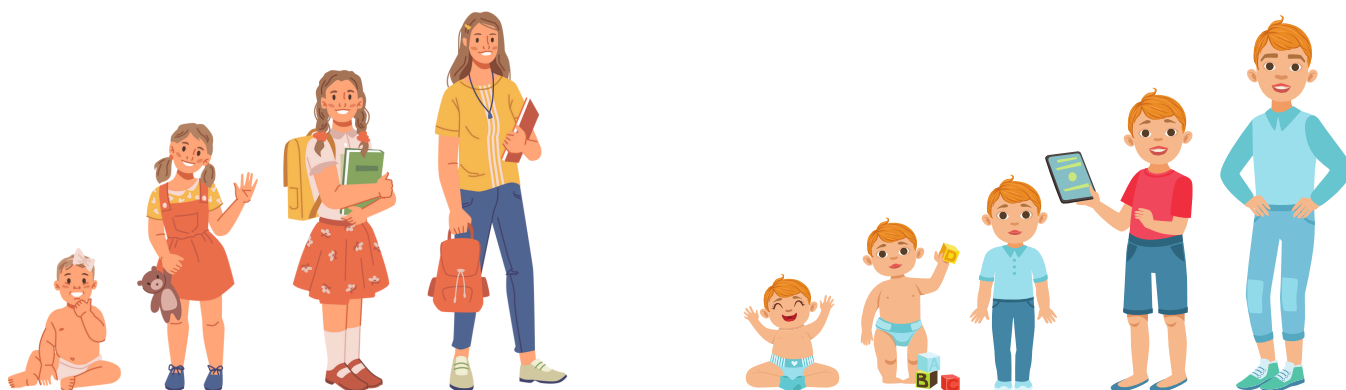
# School Transitions



Children experience many transitions during their time in education.

These may include:

- starting at a pre-school or nursery
- moving from pre-school to primary school
- moving from primary to secondary school
- moving from secondary school to post-16 education such as college
- moving from post-16 to post-18 education such as university or an apprenticeship



In some areas children move from first school to middle school then to a high school, so they have an extra transition.

Children may also experience a school move when they join a new foster family.

Children also usually move up at the end of each academic year, which can involve moving to new teachers and new classrooms.

So how can we support our children, and ourselves, through these transitions?

If you would like further information about transitions please contact Kate – FCC  
Education Specialist Phone: 07515 098172 Email: [education@fccharity.org.uk](mailto:education@fccharity.org.uk)



# School Transition Support Strategies



## 1. Start Planning Early:

- Attend the PEP (Personal Education Plan) meetings as these are a key opportunity to discuss and agree on a personalised transition plan for your child.
- Communicate with the designated teacher for children who are looked-after to ensure that information about your child's strengths and needs is shared with the new teacher/s. This is even more important for a transition to a new school.
- Ask for the contact details for new teachers, including the key adult for your child, and share your preferred contact details so that working together and communicating about your child is established as early as possible.
- Visit potential schools, when appropriate with your child, and ask about their transition support, especially for children who are looked-after or who have additional needs.
- Plan rest times around key transition points so you all have time to reflect and recover.

## 2. Build Familiarity:

- Ask school for a transition booklet which includes photos and notes about the new teacher, classroom, school and routines. Read this with your child as needed such as during the school holidays.
- Encourage your child to attend transition days or summer schools offered by the school.
- Ask for extra transition support if your child has additional needs – see point 4 below.
- Practise the route to school together, especially if it involves your child travelling independently or using public transport.
- Help your child get used to timetables, uniforms, and school routines. Support them to go through their timetable each evening, do any homework, get the right clothing ready and pack their bag with the books and equipment needed for the next day.
- Some children benefit from a visual timetable – your school should provide one if needed. You could also use a visual timetable for routines such as getting ready each morning and tasks for each evening.
- Some children appreciate practice time, such as getting used to wearing new uniforms or shoes, practising getting things in and out of their school bag.

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# School Transition Support Strategies



## 3. Emotional and Social Support:

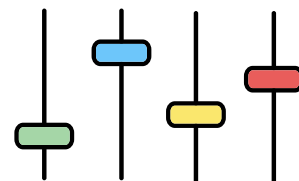
- Encourage your child to talk openly about their feelings and expectations. Reassure them that it's normal to feel nervous. Give them chance to ask questions.
- Remind them who their key adult is and where they can find them if they need help.
- Encourage friendships by supporting involvement in clubs or activities. If appropriate, support your child to meet up with peers over the school holidays.

## 4. For Children with SEND or EHC Plans:

- Ask schools about their transition package for children with SEND.
- Discuss how provision agreed in the EHCP will be achieved in the new class / school.
- Ensure the school understands your child's needs and makes reasonable adjustments.

### Example strategies and reasonable adjustments:

- A colour-coded map of the school
- A colour-coded timetable
- Photos or videos of places and processes such as getting lunch
- A social story about the new class or school
- Summer school or activity clubs at the school before starting
- A buddy system involving peers or older pupils
- Whole school awareness to facilitate peer support
- Interest clubs to facilitate social time
- Extra school visits and time with new teachers in new rooms
- A visit to the dining hall to eat lunch with a support group prior to starting
- Meeting the SENDCO in advance to find out about support and quiet spaces
- Break time, start of the day and end of the day support



## 5. Celebrate achievements past and present:

- Remind them of times when they've managed transitions in the past.
- Celebrate your child's steps towards, during and after the transition.



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Sometimes children can't identify or explain their worries about transitions so asking them open questions using PACE might help.

I wonder whether you're thinking about:

saying goodbye to the friends, teacher or school you're used to?

how you will make new friends?

how you will find your way around?

becoming the youngest in a new school after being the oldest in a school you're used to?

how others will behave in your new class or school?

how you will remember new rules?

how you will get to school?

who you can go to for help?

where to eat your lunch?

where and when you can go to the toilet?

how you'll manage your homework?

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# EDUCATION SUPPORT & ADVICE

## School Transition

### Support Strategies



#### Possible responses to your child's worries using PACE:

**Reassure your child that you're there to help them manage the transition and there will always be trusted adults at school they can ask for help.**

**Help them plan strategies they can use in school and at home, reflect on what works or how they can adapt strategies as needed.**

saying goodbye to the friends, teacher or school you're used to? What would you like to do to say goodbye e.g. write a card?

how you will find your way around? Let's look at the map & plan who will help you try out your routes at first.

how you will remember new rules? Teachers will remind you & they will be on the walls.

where to eat your lunch? Let's ask your key adult where the possible places are.

becoming the youngest in a new school after being the oldest in a school you're used to? I know it can feel worrying. Let's think of the new things you'll get to do. Remember the older pupils will help you too.

how you will get to school? Let's practise the route so you're happy with it.

where and when you can go to the toilet? Let's ask your form tutor / key adult and see where the toilets are.

how you will make new friends? Teachers will lead get to know you activities. Let's look at what clubs you could join.

how others will behave? Teachers will help everyone know and follow the school expectations.

who you can go to for help? Let's make a list including where to find them. Let's look at their photos on the school website too.

how you'll manage your homework? We can make a homework timetable together.

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