

Transition Policy



Love, Learn and Shine Together with Jesus

Transition Policy

Reviewed May 2024

Introduction

“Transitions are milestone events for children and have a definite effect on their development. Getting transition right is vital for every child and is not a single event that merely ‘happens’. Transition should be viewed as a process rather than an event that involves children, practitioners and parents together. Transition has been described as an ongoing journey rather than a destination.”

Transition: The Journey, Early Years Matters (date not specified)

This policy offers clear expectations and guidance to support each child’s journey through transition to reception and transitions that may take place during time at school. For some children and their families transition will be viewed as a natural and comfortable progression on from their previous experiences of, for example play groups, nursery provision or childminding settings. However, for other children and their parents/carers transition can be a time of great uncertainty and anxiety. This is particularly true of children who have limited experience of separating from family members, vulnerable children and children with SEND. It is therefore crucial that, in order to ensure all children have the best possible start to their full time education, that they, their parents, their current settings as well as their schools are all ready to support children through their transition journey

Definition

In this policy, ‘transition’ describes the movement that takes place from one familiar setting (including the home) to another. It is defined as the process where policy and practice has been adapted to support children in settling in to their new learning environment in preparation for future learning and development.

Aims and Objectives

We want our children to experience a smooth transition throughout their learning, so that the pace and quality of learning are maintained to ensure that children continue to make the very best progress.

To establish a secure system for transition that will promote effective communication and shared accountability between all services, settings, childminders, parents/carers and schools across Liverpool

To promote consistency, continuity and progression in learning across the Early Years Foundation Stage and other transition point in school ensuring that skills, knowledge and understanding gained are built on and developed

To ensure the consistent completion of the transition paperwork and EYFS transfer form

To ensure that parents/carers have adequate information regarding transition to effectively support them through the process and that will allow them to fully support their child(ren)

To establish the process of transition as a journey, with the children’s emotional wellbeing at the heart of this, in order that all children are given the opportunity to be fully prepared and ready for their school life

This policy addresses issues of planning and assessment as well as classroom organisation and teaching styles.

School Readiness

As a city, we have adopted the concept of school readiness suggested by UNICEF. UNICEF state there are 3 dimensions of school readiness, all of which are essential and must work in tandem to effectively support a child to be school ready.

These are:

- Ready children, focusing on children's learning and development
- Ready schools/early years provision/services, focusing on the school/early years environment along with practices that foster and support a smooth transition for children into primary school and promote the learning of all children
- Ready families, focusing on parental and caregiver attitudes and involvement in their children's early learning and development

School Readiness: A Conceptual Framework, 2012

Transition agreement

To embed successful transition for all children across the city it is vital that all childcare providers, receiving schools and, where applicable, local services work cooperatively and complete key actions as part of the transition process, as detailed in the Transition Timeline (appendix 1), in a timely manner. Communication and shared accountability will be an integral part of the transition process. It should be recognised by sending settings including childminders and receiving schools that they are jointly responsible for secure information sharing within the transition process.

Policy Principles

- Approaches to teaching and learning are harmonised at the point of transition.
- Planning is based upon assessment information from the previous class / setting.
- Styles of teaching and learning meet the needs of the children and not pre-conceived notions of what is appropriate for the next phase / key stage.
- There is a professional regard for the information from the previous setting / phase.
- Children are able to enjoy new approaches at transition.
- Transition motivates and challenges children.
- Staff allocation gives attention to the particular needs of the children.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

The children and parents are actively involved in the process and their perceptions about transition are explored and valued. Measures are taken to ensure pupils with learning or access difficulties experience a similar ease of transfer as other pupils.

Successful transition will enable children to:

- develop new friendships
- settle well into school life
- show an interest in school
- be familiar with routines and organisation
- experience continued curriculum progress.

In addition, four guiding principles should shape practice in early years. These are:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See “the characteristics of effective teaching and learning” at paragraph 1.18). The framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- These principles should be referred to by sending settings and receiving schools in the planning of transition arrangements to ensure that all children are fully supported in their journey to reception. Some children may already be resilient and capable of managing change while others will need more support to cope with new environments and in building new relationships. Through careful consideration of the needs of children who may find transition particularly challenging and ensuring flexible approaches can be adopted to offer additional support, early years providers can work together to ensure that transition works effectively for children, their families and their settings.

Continuity of Teaching and Learning

At St Matthews Catholic Primary School, we use the following processes:

Due to Covid 19 restrictions, the following processes will be amended to ensure the school is compliant with national and local regulations.

Transition from Pre-School Settings/Home to Early Years Foundation Stage:

- St. Matthew's is keen to develop links with other providers. Teaching staff are given the opportunity to visit children in their pre-school settings in order to spend time with them in their familiar environment. This also enables our staff to discuss relevant transfer information.
- EYFS practitioners offer home visits in the Summer term.
- Individual tours offered to all incoming parents and children.
- Parents receive an 'information pack' with information about the school and children are invited to 'stay and play' sessions during the summer term, prior to their child starting school.
- To support the new children as they start in the Reception class, Year 6 pupils write each new entrant a welcome letter, telling them about life at our school.
- During the first couple of weeks of the new term, Reception pupils will be admitted on a staggered start.
- Through observations a base line record is completed within the first few weeks of entry to the Reception Class. This will also highlight the needs for any early intervention (SENCO will also be involved with initial visits.)
- A meeting for parents is held during the Autumn Term.
- The Reception staff are always available before and after school to chat to parents. They are proactive in talking to parents about issues that may arrive with individual children.
- A 'Learning Journey' is kept for each child during their Reception Year. This is shared with parents each term so that they are kept informed of their child's progress.

Transition from the Reception/Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 1:

We aim to ensure that learning experiences in Year 1 build upon the practical approaches and structured play in Year R. We involve subject co-ordinators and co-ordinators for special educational needs in planning for curricular continuity from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1.

The Year 1 curriculum at St. Matthew's aims to build on and extend the experiences children have had during the Foundation Stage where a kinaesthetic approach to teaching and learning is maintained and built upon to offer a creative, hands on method of teaching and learning. The Year 1 classroom aims to reflect a similarity to the Reception classroom as it exhibits areas of learning available to the children e.g. role-play, art and creativity, music, ICT, reading and quiet areas. Although Year 1 is the first year within which the National Curriculum is followed, we continue to develop the independent learning skills established in the Reception Class. Children in Year 1 are encouraged to select resources and activities independently and use decision making skills in their learning.

Before the children move from the Foundation Stage into Key Stage One teaching staff meet to discuss the children's progress. Reception teachers inform the future teacher of the child's level of ability, special educational needs and any other information relevant to the well-being and development of the child. Information passed onto the Year 1 teacher includes:

- Knowledge of sight words.
- Knowledge of letters and sounds (phases).
- Reading ability.
- Writing – profile level.
- Printed version of each child’s Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) highlighting each of the targets achieved.

Information is used to group pupils, adjust/fine-tune the curriculum and set future targets. Links are made between Early Learning Goals (ELG’s) and National Curriculum (as many statements within the Foundation Stage curriculum are similar to the key objectives for numeracy and early criteria for literacy skills) Once transferred to Year 1:

- We carry out a baseline assessment for each child for Literacy and Numeracy within the first half term.
- During Year 1 we complete a phonics assessment booklet, keep a reading record for each child and we continue to make observations and review the steps they have reached to ensure successful access to the National Curriculum.
- During the Autumn term the children engage in focused learning work and active play as they did in Reception

Transition in Subsequent Years throughout the School

- Children are encouraged to share good work with teacher of ‘next class’.
- Teachers meet in summer term to discuss individual children.
- All children visit new classes and work alongside new teachers on Transition days in the summer term.
- Annual tracking of children’s progress through optional and Key Stage SATs, spelling and reading assessments. Data informs next teacher of targets for the following year.
- Throughout the year, there are shared assemblies, buddy reading systems, PE coaching and house based opportunities where children throughout the school mix together to enable them to get to know other teachers and staff and each other.
- Teachers meet to discuss individual children’s progress as they move from class to class.
- Targets in reading, Writing and numeracy are continued over from July to September.
- Books move with children to provide evidence of previous years’ progress and targets.
- Transfer of records e.g. Play Plans, Tracking and Assessment data, phonics phase records sheet for Years 1-3).

Children Joining from Year 1 to Year 6

- Individual tours offered to all incoming parents and children, time for the child to stay with the current class is also offered to help get the acquainted with their new surroundings.
- Parents receive a brochure with information about the school.
- New children assessed after they have settled in by class teacher and/or SENCO.

- A 'buddy' identified to help the new child to integrate.
- Records from previous school made available to class teacher and SENCO.

Transition from Year 6 to Secondary School.

The children transfer to a wide range of secondary schools at the end of Year 6 and over the years we have continued to work closely with the majority of these schools to develop the transition of children from Year 6 to Year 7.

Transition arrangements include:

- Transition coordinators from many of these schools visit throughout the year, arranging visits and activities for both Year 5 and Year 6 children.
- Transition coordinators spend time with the Year 6 children to work with the children and discuss their thoughts and concerns ahead of transfer (other receiving schools are also welcomed).
- Formal meetings between the Year 6 teacher and classes and the Year 7 Tutors or Heads of receiving secondary schools.
- Year 6 teacher liaises with Year 7 receiving school to create a profile of assessment data and transition needs for each child.
- Identified children (e.g. SEN) receive additional support before and after transition.
- Transfer of records to secondary schools.
- Year 6 children attend their prospective secondary schools for a Transition Day during the summer term.

Key roles and responsibilities for sending and receiving settings

Sending setting/childminder		
Action	Person responsible	Timescale
Ensure parents/carers have received information and guidance for completing school preference forms	Leaders Key workers Childminders	October
Distribute any information made available by schools to parents/carers	Leaders Key workers Childminders	Autumn term
Encourage parents/carers to complete their school preference forms on time, offering support or signposting to local services if needed (for example do all families have access to the internet in order to access the application forms?)	Leaders Key workers Childminders Local services where applicable	Autumn term Reminder after Christmas before closing date
Begin to make links with schools that have been allocated to children attending setting	Leaders Key workers SENCo Childminders	May
Invite staff from children's receiving school to visit the setting	Leaders	May/June
Attend city wide transition event	Preschool leader/Preschool key workers Childminders	May
Complete and send Transfer Forms to receiving schools	Leaders Key workers SENCo Childminders	June
Ensure all other information held about children has been sent to the receiving school	Leaders Key workers SENCo Designated Safeguarding Lead	July <i>For children attending the setting through the summer the end of August may be more appropriate. The receiving school should be made aware of this in advance of the summer break.</i>

Receiving school

Action	Person responsible	Timescale
Provide information about the school to prospective parents/carers. Where possible work with childminders, nursery schools and settings to distribute this information to prospective parents/carers	Headteacher Senior leaders Governors Admin teams	Autumn term
Offer visits to the schools either by appointment or at set times e.g. an open day/open evening for prospective families	Headteacher Senior leaders Governors PTA	Autumn term
Begin to make links with sending settings including childminders	EYFS lead Reception teachers	May
Attend city wide transition event	EYFS lead/reception teachers	May
Host a welcome meeting for new to reception parents/carers	Headteacher EYFS lead Reception teachers SENCo	June/July
Offer guidance to parents/carers about ways in which they can prepare their children for reception over the summer	EYFS lead	June/July
Offer visits to classrooms for children-minimum of 1 visit Some flexibility should be available for children in need of enhanced transition arrangements	Headteacher EYFS lead SENCo Reception teachers	May/June/July
Ensure all information has been received for new to reception children including transfer forms	Headteacher EYFS lead Designated safeguarding lead SENCo	June/July
Ensure that SEND registers have been updated to reflect new to reception cohort	Headteacher EYFS lead SENCo	July/September
Ensure that any information related to safeguarding and child protection has been collected,	Headteacher Designated Safeguarding Lead	July/September

collated and safely stored for the new to reception cohort		
Settling in sessions to introduce children to new routines, environments and staff Some flexibility should be available for children who may find settling into new routines and environments particularly challenging	Headteacher EYFS lead Reception teachers SENCo Links with other agencies where applicable	September
Information events for parents/carers e.g. phonics and reading workshops Opportunities for communication between parents/carers and staff so that they may contribute to baseline judgements	EYFS lead Other leads-for example English or phonics lead SENCo Reception teachers	September/October

Timeline for transition

Appendix 1

Guidance referring to children who attend more than one setting

Children may attend more than one setting prior to starting in St. Matthew's. This may include breakfast club or other wrap around care, nursery and a childminder or a school nursery in the morning and a private nursery in the afternoons. For these children it will be important that all practitioners involved work together to share and exchange information in order to gain a holistic view of each child. The transfer form should be completed by the setting where the child attends for most of their time, taking into account any information shared by the partner setting(s). In the case that a child's time is split equally between 2 settings, the settings may wish to each complete a transfer form or could work collaboratively to complete one form together

Enhanced transition for children with SEND

Sending settings including childminders should work closely with their SENCo to ensure that a secure plan is in place well in advance of a child with SEND leaving the setting to support

their transition into reception, as per the *Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years*, DfE and DoH 2015, reference to follow;

“5.47 SEN support should include planning and preparing for transition, before a child moves into another setting or school. This can also include a review of the SEN support being provided or the EHC plan. To support the transition, information should be shared by the current setting with the receiving setting or school. The current setting should agree with parents the information to be shared as part of this planning process.”

As soon as information is available regarding which school a child is to attend the child’s key worker and setting SENCo should begin to make contact with the school to discuss transition arrangements. The sending setting and receiving school should take a flexible approach to transition for children who require, for example, additional visits to their new school. Parents/carers must be kept informed throughout this process and thought should be given to the ways in which families are supported through the transition process for their child.

The sending setting SENCo and receiving school SENCo must be fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to transition arrangements for children with SEND and should be available to offer support and advice to their colleagues working with/due to work with children with SEND. The SEND code of practice outlines the SENCo role as follows:

5.54 The role of the SENCO involves:

- ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the setting’s approach to identifying and meeting SEN
- advising and supporting colleagues
- ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting, and
- liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting

It is also recognised with the SEND code of practice that ‘starting early’ is key to success, particularly in relation to children’s transition from one setting to another as detailed in section **8.6**:

“Early years providers and schools should support children and young people so that they are included in social groups and develop friendships. This is particularly important when children and young people are transferring from one phase of education to another (for example, from nursery to primary school). Maintained nurseries and schools must ensure that, subject to certain conditions, pupils with SEN engage in the activities of the nursery or school together with those who do not have SEN, and are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the nursery or school and in any wider community activity.”

It will be important for sending settings and receiving schools to fully consider this statement when planning transition activities to ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate fully.

Involving parents/carers in the transition process

Parents/carers must feel secure and confident in their choices for their child's education and should be supported to know how best to prepare their children for reception.

Communication with parents/carers throughout the transition process is essential. It is the responsibility of both the sending setting, including childminders, and the receiving school to ensure that parents/carers have all the information they need to enable smooth transitions to take place. Parents/carers may also be connected with local services and/or health services. It is important that such services are in contact with settings and schools so that information is shared effectively and securely and that this is used to fully support children in their transition to reception.

Acknowledgements

This document and supporting items was developed in cooperation with a group of education professions from across the city. The group included representation from:

School Improvement Liverpool-Quality Improvement Team

Liverpool Learning Partnership

PVI Representatives

Liverpool Headteachers

Liverpool City Council Early Years Team

Liverpool City Council Specialist Support Services

Liverpool SEND Early Years

School Admissions

**Policy updated March 2024 to reflect that the city wide transition event will take place in May rather than June, following requests from sector leaders and reps.*

**Policy updated March 2024 to reflect updates to the EYFS Statutory Framework.*

