Transitions in and between education settings –
Learning from Parents and Carers

Promoting the education of children and young people in care and previously in care

Virtual School Brighton and Hove

April 2019
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1. Introduction

Parents and carers of children in care and previously in care frequently tell us that dealing with change in and between education settings is a major challenge for their children. We know that these transitions are also hard for other children to manage too, particularly those with adverse childhood experiences and social emotional and mental health needs. Consequently staff working in schools have developed some really positive ways to support children and young people with the changes they can find challenging.

Parents who are Adopters and Carers who are Special Guardians of children previously in care were consulted in 2018 for their views of what has helped their children negotiate change in school settings. They were also asked what else they think would have helped their children. This resource is based on their views, with input from school staff and other professionals. It contains ideas and examples for you to add to your existing ‘transitions’ toolkit – focussing on day to day transitions as well as transition between settings.

Please use these ideas and resources, as part of your wider provision for inclusion, alongside the guidance issued in May 2017 on supporting transitions from Years 6-7 (see page 18), the Brighton and Hove SEND guide and protocols such as the Early Years and SEND Transfer forms.

Thanks very much to all who contributed their time and thoughts so far – your contributions are much appreciated. Families (parents and carers and young person) you haven’t been named here because of confidentiality, but many thanks to the 11 of you who took part. Thanks also to Lucy Roberts, Elm Grove Primary, Kelly Kanapka, Family and Friends Team, Nicki Berry, Queens Park Primary, Penny Denman, Patcham High School and Aldrington C of E Primary, Helen Beaumont Early Years, and colleagues in Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Service (BHISS) and the Virtual School team. Hopefully, this will be a developing resource that young people, parents and carers, school staff and other professionals can add to. Please get in touch if you would like to contribute your ideas and experience to a future version.

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Education Support Worker - Adoption/Previously in Care, Virtual School, April 2019

Please note: The focus here is on transitions in and between schools. Early Years’ transitions material can be accessed through BHISS@brighton-hove.gov.uk and the Brighton and Hove Early Years Team helen.beaumont@brighton-hove.gov.uk.
2. Background context

In their survey of over 2,000 parents and nearly 2,000 young people, Adoption UK found that:

79% of adopted children and young people agreed with the statement:
“I feel confused and worried at school.”

47% of adopted children said they had been bullied or teased because they are adopted.

74% of secondary-aged adopted children feel that their teachers do not fully understand and support their needs.

81% of secondary-aged adopted children agreed with the statement:
“Other children seem to enjoy school more than me.”

*Bridging the Gap: Giving adopted young people an equal chance in school, 2018, Adoption UK*

These findings are no doubt also relevant to children in care, as well as other children who have experienced early life challenges.

Parents and Carers of children previously in care who contributed to this resource for Brighton and Hove said:

*Our children and young people are dealing with*

- separation anxiety
- fear of abandonment
- being acutely aware of differences in their family situation
- worries about what to say about their family background and how to say it
- not wanting to feel any more different than they already feel
- fear of being “wrong”
- difficulty managing relationships
- their vulnerability being overlooked if they seem to be doing ok

*Bridging the Gap: Giving adopted young people an equal chance in school, 2018, Adoption UK*
These feelings can be evident:

- leaving home to get to the setting
- travelling to and from the setting
- at the start and end of the week (Sunday to Monday/Friday to Saturday)
- playtime/Breaks
- at the start and end of holidays
- when adults leave i.e. after drop off/to go to work
- changing year groups, class mates and teachers
- changing class or form rooms (other changes to the physical environment)
- starting/changing settings: Early Years/Primary phase/Secondary/6th Form
- AT ANY TIME OF CHANGE!

On transition to Secondary School there are additional changes for young people to negotiate:

- A completely different school system including multiple teachers
- An unfamiliar uniform and rules (school rules and informal peer rules)
- Moving from lesson to lesson along noisy and busy corridors
- Getting to and from spaces to have lunch that are busy and noisy
- Taking the right equipment with them to and from lessons
- Homework expectations across multiple subjects
- More activities on offer and after school options
- Unfamiliar consequences e.g. schools using detentions, inclusion space etc.

These ordinary everyday systems and situations may not seem at all challenging when they are second nature to you and to your school. For young people who are already anxious and stressed, the accumulation of change, challenge and newness can be too much to handle.

‘Stress that builds up at school can burst out at home’ Parent/Carer

So some children and young people can contain their feelings during the school day, whereas, as you will know well, others cannot. However:

‘People often don’t see what’s really going on [for our children]
– like a swan gliding on the surface, legs paddling hard away underneath’

Parent/Carer

One of our tasks here is to help make visible additional needs that may not be obvious – addressing the ‘invisibility factor’.
3. Developing Whole School Approaches

Some Parents and Carers interviewed said their children are highly sensitive to being seen as ‘different’ at school because of their family backgrounds. They suggested that whole school approaches to support their children to manage change would help to address these concerns.

*Consider whether you can change the whole system rather than creating special arrangements for one child who then stands out as different.*

*Parents/Carers*

- **Elm Grove Primary School** has changed their start of the day arrangements – not only is the playground opened early where ‘meet and greet’ by key adults can be put in place for their most vulnerable children, but they now open the school building 10 minutes early, so that all children can go directly to their classrooms where they are met by their class teacher with a smile and a handshake to start the day off positively. The staff have found a solution which is school wide and also addresses individual need and a calmer start for all to the school day.

  ‘Inclusivity comes through using a whole school approach – not [automatically] treating X child as different’

  *Parent/Carer*

- Building in **sensory regulation strategies** throughout the day across the school can also help all children and young people settle to learn. Additionally, it will help already challenged children avoid a build-up of stress that will inevitably burst out at some point – whether at school or home. Music, rhythm, brain breaks, task cards (e.g. please sort out the pencils), meditation, mindfulness, squishies, doodle sheets are among many strategies being used in schools to help young people to regulate. For more primary age ideas see Whole Class Happy Pack, Inner World Works, [http://www.innerworldwork.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Whole-Class-Happy-Pack.pdf](http://www.innerworldwork.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Whole-Class-Happy-Pack.pdf) and for all ages [https://beaconhouse.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Brainstem-Calmer-Activities.pdf](https://beaconhouse.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Brainstem-Calmer-Activities.pdf). Remember that different types of strategies may increase dysregulation for some children - so you will need to bear their needs in mind when selecting whole class regulation activities.

- **Whole class** transition activities can also help normalise concerns which are shared by most pupils when it comes to changing settings. See the STARS project including downloadable booklets for children, parents and teachers: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/pals/research/clinical-educational-and-health-psychology/research-groups/school-transition-and-2](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/pals/research/clinical-educational-and-health-psychology/research-groups/school-transition-and-2)
'Many children with difficult early life experiences have (unconscious) fears about the safety and trustworthiness of adults. A quiz can be a fun transition activity to help them ask the questions they have about the new teacher. This quiz can include the whole class and can be facilitated by the current class teacher: what is the new teacher’s favourite colour, have they got any pets, do they like chocolate'

Transitions Tips for Transition Time at School, 2018, The Centre for Adoption Support

There are changes that can be really significant for children without being costly, such as a change in perspective – staff acknowledging (and understanding) the range of impacts of challenging early life experiences & how best to address them in their setting

Parents/Carers

➢ Training delivered by Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Service can assist the whole school in understanding the modern day realities of the care system, permanency placements such as those through Adoption, Special Guardianship and Child Arrangements/Residence Orders, as well as the huge importance of a stable school life for children in care and previously in care. From this understanding comes the potential to transform systems to be fully inclusive.

➢ See also free downloadable resources Survival in School, Survival in Secondary and What Survival Looks Like at Home, Helen Townsend, http://www.innerworldwork.co.uk/. These engaging resources can help staff and families better understand what might be going on for children and young people in school. Not only that but they also offer suggestions about what you can do to help when they are in Fight, Flight, Freeze or Submit, as well as what works preventatively.

Approaches to managing behaviour which include ‘punishments’ such as detentions, or loss of ‘Golden Time’, can be a too distant consequence and feel irrelevant to children and young people for whom the ‘worst has already happened’

Parents/Carers

As well as reiterating the importance of relationships and understanding trauma when responding to an individual child/young person’s behaviour, some parents/carers also thought whole class strategies were really useful. For example, in primary a whole class pot of marbles can be added to by staff as they notice something positive an individual child has done (or not done) showing immediacy, a whole-class effort in contributing to, and benefitting from, marble rewards and helping to create connections for the child.

4. Supporting individual children and young people

It is really important to remind ourselves that transitions such as moving on to Secondary School can be really exciting and positive for children and young people, as well as feeling challenging. Focussing on the strengths of a young person to manage the change, as well as on the potential gains can help create a positive narrative shared between home and school.

Ask what strategies help a child/young person cope with change

Parents/Carers

Young Person’s View:

Knowing that [the Key Adult] was understanding, available and ready to listen – when I asked them to.

“I didn’t have to go to them as sometimes that’s very off-putting - they came to me”

Everything is ready from day 1 and I know the when, where, what and who.

Let me know if there are any changes (like staff not being there).

“I hate guessing”

I’ve been through so much I don’t want to be picked out as ‘different’
Involve the child/young person themselves, as well as parents/carers, to explore what helps – bearing in mind that some young people will not want any additional support that they feel identifies them as ‘different’.

Individual ‘Heat' Maps* can be carried out so that children and young people can have a ‘walk’ through of the school day (like a safety walk) and scale each element of it from cool green to red hot (consider linking to Just Right state language). For example, in Secondary:
- leaving home
- travel to school
- arriving at school
- form time
- getting to first lesson
- moving to another lesson
- break etc.

You can then explore with the young person what strategies can be put in place that are preventative and identify together what might help build their resilience to manage particular issues. *Concept heard at Trauma Informed Schools, Beacon House, Stuart Guest – Head Teacher.

A resource which could be used for transition planning as part of the Personal Education Plan (PEP) process is What Survival Looks like for Me, Helen Townsend, 2017, Inner World Works, or use your school’s One Page Profile/Passport or Me and My World, PAC UK https://www.pac-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Me-And-My-World.pdf

Continuity, consistency and care helps to address anxiety, anxiety, anxiety

Providing a Key Worker and Team Around the Child who can be available on a consistent basis can help support children and young people with everyday changes as well as the bigger transitions. See Attachment Aware School Series, Louise Michele Bombèr, 2016, Worth Publishing.

‘….they made a safe space in the classroom…..but it didn’t help Y to work through …feelings, just run away from them. [Now Y is able to express feelings to the key adult and when ready return to class with them]. Having a key adult identified earlier in Y’s school life would have been a great tool.’

Parent/Carer
Team Pupil Support groups funded by the Virtual School and delivered by TouchBase are available for school staff who are involved in a Team Around the Child. The facilitated sessions provide an opportunity to build knowledge and skills and share experiences. Contact the Virtual School or info@touchbase.org.uk for more information.

In some Brighton and Hove schools, Attachment Leads have been employed to focus on supporting children in care and previously in care. As well as working to support individual children in partnership with families, they can also help integrate their attachment aware and trauma responsive practice throughout the school.

**Build resilience through relationships**

- How can you support pupils to build relationships with: Class and Form teachers – Teaching Assistants - Attachment Leads/Champions – SENCO – School Counsellor – School Nurse - staff in the office or school base? Don’t forget other school staff as pupils might form bonds with mid-day supervisors or toilet attendants who can be part of their secure base in school.

- Also consider whether you can match a child/young person with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) who can have an active role in a pupil’s school life. At Patcham High School, for example, all staff are encouraged to take on a key adult role for a student. Senior staff often read with individual students during the daily DEAR (drop everything and read) session. Senior staff also mentor students. The Head Teacher meets with different groups of students for tea and biscuits every week. This includes a group of disadvantaged students.

**Build a good relationship between parents/carers and staff**

- Remember parents and carers are experiencing transitions as well, whether as a new parent/carer themselves or providing ongoing support for their child in managing change. Two – way communication using strategies such as communication books, emails, phone calls, a chat at the end or start of the day/week, can all help to build a positive partnership between the school and parents/carers. Identifying a member of staff (and an alternative) as the key point of contact for each family will also be helpful.

  ‘It would be helpful if schools provided us with a standard structure for home-school engagement, with the child at the heart.’

  **Parent/Carer**
Cardinal Newman Catholic School organised a transition forest school gathering – the Designated Teacher for Children in Care and Previously in Care and the pastoral team at CNCS invited the parents of Year 6 children adopted from care to a ‘forest school’ gathering with parents of pupils adopted from care already at the school. It was an opportunity to learn about the support the school offers, to build links with other parents who are adopters and to check out any concerns – all this whilst learning to whittle!

Establish Systems – this is a looked after/previous looked after child so what do we need to put in place in our whole school approach

When you know that you are welcoming a child in care or previously in care to your school what are the systems that will automatically be in place? Do you give priority when it comes to in-class systems as well as any opportunities for clubs and after school activities etc? When you are allocating form places and considering friendship groupings, how will you ensure that a child who may struggle with friendships is in the best situation? Do you prioritise the needs of these children? Have Learning Mentors, Teaching Assistants and parents/carers been consulted as well as the child themselves?

‘My child said by week 5: “the teacher hasn’t heard me read”
Whereas, I would have liked them to prioritise getting to know my child’

Parent/Carer

Involvement in termly PEP meetings for children in care and previously in care can help in building your transition plan, as well as in monitoring and reviewing it. With the necessary consents in place\(^1\) ‘handover’ PEPs provide an opportunity to strengthen transition planning.

\(^1\) Previously in care PEPs are not yet statutory and parents/carers and children and young people (as age and stage appropriate) should be asked whether they agree to share them with a new setting.
Proactive schools work with child/young person and parent/carers – planning ahead and regularly reviewing what’s working and not working to adjust the plan

- See Primary & Secondary examples of ‘Enhanced Transition’ plans (pages 16/17).

- Using your assess-plan-do-review process in the PEP will also be key in identifying and responding to the day to day challenges of change.

  ‘More regular meetings… would have helped … [identify] the tension building up with peers…’

- Did you know that the Virtual School recommends using **Early Years PEP forms** (or an equivalent planning tool) for children previously in care in Early Years Settings? Ask the setting if they have a PEP system in place to aid transition planning.

‘Transfer’ to a known adult in school can help develop feelings of safety and reduce anxiety e.g. a child/young person being met at the start of the day, or going in early to a quiet area to meet with a member of staff

- Patcham High School have a daily greeting at their front and back entrances. SLT and Heads of Year greet the students and shake their hands as they arrive at school each morning. This is to ensure that every student has a positive interaction with a member of staff each day. Teaching staff are also directed to “meet and greet” at the start of each lesson and are expected to stand by the door of their classroom and greet the students as they enter the classroom.

Parents/Carers

- Aldrington C of E Primary has a staggered start to the school day which facilitates Positive Greetings at the Door. Some children have a named adult for meet, greet and settle time which includes making the connection back home by asking about pre arrival at school. ‘How did the start of your day go?’, for example. Settle time can also include a look at the timetable for the day to identify any changes to the usual plan and consider how to manage them. The member of staff may then return to see the child at break time to check that all is well.

Parents/Carers

- We know from experience that anxious, excited and stressed children and young people can find it really hard to settle at the start of the school day – it can be hard for all children and young people. **Aldrington C of E Primary** has a staggered start to the school day which facilitates Positive Greetings at the Door. Some children have a named adult for meet, greet and settle time which includes making the connection back home by asking about pre arrival at school. ‘How did the start of your day go?’, for example. Settle time can also include a look at the timetable for the day to identify any changes to the usual plan and consider how to manage them. The member of staff may then return to see the child at break time to check that all is well.
See also: Positive Greetings at the Door Tweet by Newton Grange School
https://twitter.com/newtongrangeps/status/104047049233965312?s=11 and

Breaks during the day can also be hard to deal with and protected lunchtime arrangements, nurture groups and other safe spaces and people can help.

Know who can help and where to go if things get too much

Parents/Carers

Strategies to prevent the build-up of stress need to be backed up by clear plans for what to do if things reach boiling point or boil over. This applies to children and young people as well as to parents and carers and should be a core part of the plan to support a child. Bear in mind that ‘time in’ relationship may often be more appropriate than ‘time out’, unless ‘time out’ still enables connection (see parent/carer comment at Page 9 above).

‘Offer a ‘safe place’ or ‘base’ or ‘chill out zone’ for pupils to use if they cannot cope with the rigours of secondary school experiences.’

‘Link every pupil with SEN [and child in care/previously in care] with a secondary school ‘buddy’ - begins from early visits.’

From Moving On – Suggestions for busy teachers to support pupils with SEN moving from primary to secondary school, 2013, Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities, Mental Health Foundation
https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/moving-on-15042013-d2125.pdf

Establish who will be the main point of ongoing contact in school for the parent/carer (and alternatives if they are not available) including preferred contact method and time. Will it be the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked after Children (i.e. children in care and previously in care) – SENCO - Head of Year - Key Adult - School Office or Base, for example?

Use visual aids and pre visits when changing settings –

also for school trips

Parents/Carers

One parent described finding it really useful to be invited in to school to take photos of anything she thought it would be helpful for her daughter to know about.

‘my daughter when she arrived was able to say OK I know that is where everything is and she felt relaxed’ Parent/carer
The BHISS team have begun to look at using multi-media to aid transition e.g. using Skype and Google Maps/Earth with young people to familiarise themselves with school information, including locating and viewing school buildings and pictures of school staff. They have also worked with a child to make a small video clip on a tablet to help navigate their way around school. This video can be shared with the parent/carer, as well as with other pupils moving on to the same school. It has the advantage that it can also be looked at multiple times.

See also Reducing Trip Trauma, 2018, PAC UK (link below) for ideas about preparing in advance of school trips.

Introduce systems that children probably won’t have encountered before, such as using urinals and carrying a tray at lunchtime

*Parents/Carers*

‘If the child needs to use a locker then make sure that you have spare locker keys or know the combination numbers as the young person may lose keys and this can create tension and anxiety.’ [https://www.boxofideas.org/ideas/primary-school/preparing-for-secondary-school/transition-to-secondary-school/](https://www.boxofideas.org/ideas/primary-school/preparing-for-secondary-school/transition-to-secondary-school/)

Recognise that change is inevitable and although we can try to make things seamless the real world gets in the way

*Parents/Carers*

When something unexpected happens it helps if it’s communicated clearly by someone known to the child/young person whenever possible using the steps:
- connecting with the child/young person,
- naming the change (why, how long for, what will happen instead)
- acknowledging that they might be feeling wobbly and
- reminding them about their successful strategies and
- when they’ve coped well before/in a similar situation

Letting parents/carers know about the change can be useful even if it’s already happened - so that they can plan de-stressors and respond to any fall-out. Similarly, parents/carers can be asked to let schools know any changes in routine at home which may have an effect on school life, such as birth family contact for example.

Consider with parents/carers and pupil best strategies in advance for dealing with school events that are not routine such as: Sports Day, Curriculum Outings, Fancy Dress/Non-school uniform days, Plays and Special Assemblies. The content of some of these may be challenging, not just the change in routine: an NSPCC presentation in assembly, or a wartime ‘evacuation’ role play, for example.
Build skills and confidence through relevant tasks - making it real – recognising ‘pseudo independence’ which can mask the real age and stage of a pupil

- Parents/carers felt that sometimes badges/labels/roles can be used ‘as if’ a pupil was able to do something/take on a role which they weren’t yet able to do. They suggested instead identifying the ‘missing’ skills and providing tasks or scaffolding to support their development.

5. Further development

Please send any examples of positive transition practice to sarah.lindfield@brighton-hove.gov.uk so that this resource can be updated. Please also make contact if you would like to take part in a working group to continue to identify and promote the key ingredients of practice supporting positive transitions.

We would also like to add more views of children and young people about what helps, so please get in touch if you can assist with this. We also hope to add Post 16 transition ideas in any future version and may look to structure this document by suggestions relating to any age group and by phase/key stage groupings.

Lastly, don’t forget the resources by Beacon House and PAC UK that you have been sent with this document and are also at Appendix 5 Resources to Download:

For further Information and Advice on supporting children in care and previously in care, including change and transitions, please contact us at the Virtual School:

virtualschool@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Appendix 1

Example Primary School Enhanced Transition

- Parent/carer attends ‘Starting School’ Workshop funded by Virtual School and delivered by TouchBase

- Nursery and School communicate about needs of the child with parent/carer agreement using existing processes and Early Years PEP form

- Parent/carer invited to PEP meeting at school with Nursery Manager and meets Key Adult, Class Teacher and SENCO

- Parent/carer shows photos of key staff, classroom and premises when feels most suitable for the child

- Before end of the Summer Term child has 1 hour in classroom just with Class Teacher and photos are taken as reminders as well as a session with a small group of other children in classroom

- School provides usual transition booklet as for every child

- School PTA holds ‘teddy bears’ picnic in school grounds during summer holidays for all children

- Child receives a post card from school – we’re getting the classroom ready and looking forward to seeing you

- Home visit before term with ‘treasure box’ – child chooses something from box (transition object) and puts something in to the box to be collected when starts school and each day. Explored with child - what will help chosen object settle at school?

- First week of term – visit with Class Teacher and Head teacher (no other children)

- Meet and greet and early start – ‘quiet’ lunchtime arranged

- At day 4 full review takes place – PEP updated – adjustments to plan made
Appendix 2

Example Secondary Enhanced Transition

Dear
I thought I would write so that everybody is clear about the transition arrangements for [Young Person] over the next few weeks:

**Tuesday 26 June – Meeting at [Secondary School], at 10.00am** For Parent/Carers & Schools
Transition planning meeting using Children Previously in Care Personal Education Plan format/Child in care PEP and involving: Parent/Carers, Primary SENCO and Secondary SENCO, Social Worker if there is one involved (Pods/Friends and Family/Adoption team), other professional ie Family Coach and Primary Teaching Assistant. Please meet at Secondary School Reception at 9.55am

**Thursday 28 June – [Young Person] visit to [Secondary School], 9 – 11am** For Young Person
Introduction and Familiarisation visit. YP to have a tour of the school and meet key adults
Parent/Carers to bring YP to [Secondary School] for 8.55. Meet Primary SENCO and Secondary TA at Reception. YP to come home by bus with Primary SENCO and Mr X (please send bus fare).

**Monday 2 July – Support Department Meeting Secondary School, 4-5pm** For Parent/Carers
Meeting with the Support Staff at the school to find out how the support works, what is available, how it is planned etc – including lunchtimes and breaks. Young Person’s Pupil Passport to be shared.

**Thursday 5 July – Secondary School Transition Day** For Young Person
For details please see letter from Secondary School sent home directly. YP will need to be taken and collected by Parent/Carers, or to travel independently. We will discuss with Secondary SENCO on the 26th June whether Mr X should attend as well

**Monday 16th July – Meet the Form Tutor** For Parent/Carers
Details to be sent by Secondary School

**W/B 16th July – Extra visit for YP to Secondary School** to be agreed If required
Please do contact me with any questions. Looking forward to working with you all to support [Young Person]’s move to Secondary School.

Best wishes,

**Note: As part of the enhanced transition process will you:**

- Agree date for follow up PEP to review support plan and how the young person has settled?
- Establish who will be the main point of ongoing contact in school for the parent/carer (and alternatives if they are not available) including preferred contact method and time? Will it be the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked after Children (CIC and PiC)/SENCO/Head of Year/Key Adult/School Base, for example?
- Put parents/carers in touch with others eg invite to parent/carer group?
Appendix 3

Transition
(Year 6 – Year 7)

The guidance below has been developed with colleagues in May 2017 to help co-ordinate and support transition for children identified as vulnerable in Year 6. It is hoped that by identifying pupils who are vulnerable that we are able to offer support that helps their transition and experience of Secondary school to be positive and successful.

Guidance to Schools and Professionals

1. Secondary School to analyse and use the Vulnerability Index (VI) to generate a list of vulnerable young people

2. Schools to organise a meeting to discuss transition at the Secondary School including representation from school and professionals around the school e.g. BHISS colleagues. Educational Psychology to lead with school on co-ordinating this meeting

3. Discuss and prioritise need and involvement of professionals based on information received e.g. additional support for transition for vulnerable young people from:
   - SEN Practitioner (SEMH)
   - Educational Psychologist
   - Primary Mental Health Worker
   - Other relevant professionals

4. Discussion with Primary Schools to include discussion and thanks for the information provided on the VI and additional checks e.g.
   - Any pupil who is not able to access the classroom on a full-time basis
   - Any pupil whose attendance is concerning
   - New pupils to the school or who have had many changes of school
   - Any pupil who has experienced exclusion from school

5. Additional support for vulnerable groups or young people which could include an additional day to visit the school. This should aim to decrease their anxieties and help build a sense of belonging for the pupil to the new school. Activities could involve cooking, uniform mannequins and photos, picnic, treasure hunt, key ring or badge making, video blogs, dance therapy and worry box. At the end of the day parents/carers are invited to join the day. Also, AMAZE are invited.

6. Primary Mental Health Workers and other BHISS colleagues can support with running groups for parents/carers who are anxious about their young people transferring to Secondary School. This could be offered to Primary Schools or as part of the offer from Secondary School?
## Suggested activities to support transition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Suggested Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pupils/Groups</strong></td>
<td>• Mindfulness activities/Group/class work for Year 6 pupils&lt;br&gt;• Forest School&lt;br&gt;• Identify a key worker for most vulnerable who can visit the pupil at&lt;br&gt;their Primary School and help support transition&lt;br&gt;• Circle of friends for identified vulnerable young people&lt;br&gt;• One page profile of needs, strengths and best way to support young person completed in consultation&lt;br&gt;• Encourage young person to develop new skills and abilities both personally and socially (e.g. Around friendship, self-esteem and confidence)&lt;br&gt;• Buddying systems involving older pupils at the Secondary School to help settle in&lt;br&gt;• Help pupil feel prepared by: familiarising route/ layout of school; equipment / uniform etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent/Carer</strong></td>
<td>• Mindfulness for parents/carers&lt;br&gt;• List of acronyms to share with parents/carers&lt;br&gt;• Invite AMAZE to welcome parent evening&lt;br&gt;• Parent support groups&lt;br&gt;• Practice travel route with your child</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Whole School</strong></td>
<td>• Invite key professionals from Secondary to multi-agency meeting to discuss vulnerable pupils&lt;br&gt;• Normalise and create a sense of excitement about going to Secondary School&lt;br&gt;• Involve older siblings/ cousins with experience of the school to offer support and advice. Alternatively an older pupil at the Secondary School could assume this role.&lt;br&gt;• Where possible ensure pupil form group members are known before end of term; promote opportunities to socialise with these peers over the summer&lt;br&gt;• Transition programme could involve additional visits/ meeting key staff/ buddy system&lt;br&gt;• Building positive relationships with teachers in school is of paramount importance to young people who are identified as vulnerable and this will help to reduce anxieties. Establishing and maintaining quality relationships with staff should be a priority.&lt;br&gt;• Key member of staff allocated to support child to help diffuse/ problem-solve any anxieties over pupil-teacher relationships that may arise.&lt;br&gt;• Motivational Interviewing and Solution Focused discussions in school with a focus on building self-awareness and self-regulation skills</td>
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Appendix 4

Prompt Sheet - Potential Issues For Children in Care When Transferring To Secondary School: Considerations For Support

Note: The Concerns and Considerations listed below can also be applied to children previously in care as well as other children who could benefit from an enhanced transition process and an ongoing focus on their coping strategies and levels of anxiety and stress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>Considerations</th>
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| Going to a larger school               | • Normalise and create a sense of excitement about going to Secondary School (SS)  
• Help young person (YP) feel prepared by: familiarising route/ layout of school; equipment / uniform etc  
• Involve older siblings/ cousins with experience of the school to offer support and advice. Alternatively an older pupil at the SS could assume this role.  
• Where possible ensure Children in Care (CiC) form group members are known before end of term; promote opportunities to socialise with these peers over the summer  
• Does CiC have a peer to travel to school with?  
• Transition programme could involve additional visits/meeting key staff/ buddy system |
| Fitting in and making friends (belonging) | • How can we help CiC feel important and accepted in school?  
• Build social and personal efficacy: identity work with carers to help prepare cover story (with a focus on strengths and resilience) to give CiC a basis for daring to enter into new social groupings.  
• Encourage to develop new skills and abilities both personally and socially (eg. Around friendship, self-esteem and confidence)  
• Buddying systems involving older pupils at the SS to help settle in |
| Relationships/ getting into trouble    | • Building positive relationships with teachers in school is of paramount importance to young people who have experienced trauma and loss in their early years and will help to reduce anxieties. Establishing and maintaining quality relationships with staff should be a priority.  
• Key member of staff allocated to support child to help diffuse/ problem-solve any anxieties over pupil-teacher relationships that may arise.  
• Training offered to school staff on attachment issues and their impact upon the whole child within education  
• Supervision/ support groups offered to staff working closely with the young people |
| Bullying | • Build social resilience and self-esteem (especially relevant to those who have experienced bullying at PS – whether as victim or perpetrator) |
| Truancy and exclusion | • Young people with attachment difficulties may be highly anxious about being able to cope and regulate their behaviour within the school environment |
| | • Key member of staff at SS to establish relationship and check in with CiC to help monitor behaviour |
| | • Motivational Interviewing/Solution Focused discussions in school with a focus on building self-awareness and self-regulation skills |
| Academic work (School and homework) | • Offer support/ encouragement and assistance with homework |
| | • Staff to encourage collaborative work in class |
| | • Curriculum continuity is linked to positive transition experience. |
| Social skills and maintaining friendships | • Identify strengths/ talents/ interests to promote involvement in clubs and groups |
| | • Staff to engineer more activities where children can get to know each other in first few weeks of new school term. |
| Continuity of staff | • Consider continuity of key staff (eg Form Tutor) when creating groups |
| | • Key member of staff to form relationship and check-in with CiC on regular basis (the fewer adults involved in supporting the better). |
| | • Does the Key adult have the skills to relate to the CiC with attentiveness, attunement and responsiveness? |
| Communication (between Primary and Secondary Schools/ between home and school) | • Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting in Y6 to be attended by key staff from Primary School (PS) and SS to information about effective strategies |
| | • Virtual School support |
| | • Key member of staff from SS to ensure agreed actions/ interventions from PEP are put in place |
| | • Key adult to be point of contact to ensure good and regular communication between home and school. |
| Endings & Goodbyes | • How is child managing ending of primary school? What can adults do to consider reducing anxiety levels? e.g. maintain routines where possible; if not possible, offer structured / mechanical work when routine is disrupted |
| | • How will ‘goodbyes’ be managed? |
| | • What visual images and / or concrete objects can child take with them e.g. photos (of whole class and/ or key adult); memory book; box of keepsakes |

## Appendix 5

### Resources to Download

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td><strong>Example Transition Plan and Strategies</strong></td>
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<td>PAC UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.pac-uk.org/our-services/education/education-resources/example-transition-plan-and-strategies-v1-0/">Example Transition Plan and Strategies</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Supporting Transitions</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beacon House</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Goodbyes and transitions</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>PAC UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reducing trip trauma</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>PAC UK</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.pac-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Reducing-Trip-Trauma-V1.0.pdf">Reducing trip trauma</a></td>
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