



**Pre-school good practice guide to starting school:
Transition into Reception for children with
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

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Introduction

Transitions occur on a daily basis for all children between home, child-minders, settings and so on and are an important part of life for new experiences. They can be opportunities for development but can also cause anxiety and challenge and this may be especially true for children with additional needs and their families.

This guide sets out good practice for the transition process from Early Years settings to primary school for children with special educational needs and disabilities and suggests some practical approaches to support a smooth transition. This is clearly an exciting time for families but may be especially anxious for some. Periods of change can be made less daunting if parents' and carers' views are respected and they feel that they have made a suitable contribution to what will happen when their child moves to a new setting.

The January 2015 SENDS Code of Practice (COP) states:

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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework states that providers must work with families to provide the right support and discuss a child's progress if it is causing concern.

Locally the importance of SEN is reflected in the provider funding agreement with the LA which states:

The provider must have arrangements in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These arrangements should include a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND.

The children in your setting will be at different stages of SEN Support. Some may be at the beginning of the process where you are collecting information and understanding their needs, while others may have a fuller assessment through the assess, plan, do, review process, and a minority will have Education, Health and Care Plans. It is vital that records are passed to schools as part of the process of **supporting** children with SEND and ensures that the children can benefit from continued early intervention and build on the insights and work already done in pre-school settings.

Many pre-school settings have well established processes and good links with local school, but this guide gives an overview of what is needed and can be used to self-evaluate your practice in relation to transition from your setting to local schools.

Supporting parents to make a decision about choosing a school

Some things to consider

- Ensure families/carers are aware of the school application process and the deadline. Work with families/carers who may need support e.g. IT access and support to make applications. Direct them to the local children's centre who may be able to help.

[Bromley Primary School Admissions, finding a primary school and making a school application.](#)

- Families/carers will need to make application for school even if there has been made a request for a Needs Assessment. The only circumstance in which this is not the case is if the child has a final Education, Health and Care plan which has been completed and issued by the deadline date for school applications. If you need any further support, then contact your local Area SENCO/ Specialist Support Teacher. If you are unsure who this is email: EYSENadvisoryteam@bromley.gov.uk
- Find out about open days for local schools and share these with families.
- Discuss with the family as early as possible the importance of sharing information with schools and why it is helpful. If you are using an SEN Support plan or writing targets discuss that these can be shared with the school so the school can see the progress the child had made and what has helped them. The format for an SEN Support Plan and an example can be found on [Bromley Education Matters Website](#).

Listed below are useful sources of information for parents when they are looking at schools.

- All mainstream schools have a SEND Information report. This is required by the SEN Code of Practice for all schools including academies and maintained schools. These reports are checked by Bromley's Inclusion Support Advisory Team both for legal compliance and quality and should include a section about moving from pre-school to school as well as the name of the school SENCO. It is an excellent starting point for families.

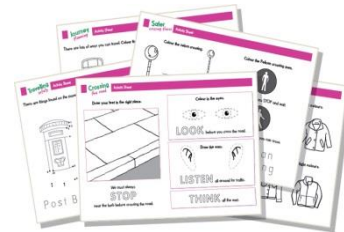
[The Bromley Infant, Junior and primary schools directory.](#)

- The [Bromley Local Offer](#) has useful information: [Transition through education – London Borough of Bromley](#)
- Ambitious About Autism has useful toolkit for families and includes a checklist for starting school.
- Bromley Information, Advice and Support Service have a useful booklet about Choosing a school. [IASS Leaflet06 ChoosingASchool \(bromleyiass.org.uk\)](#)

Preparing children for their move

There are lots of activities pre-schools can do to support children moving to school and this is far from an exhaustive list. How children access these will be dependent on their needs and small steps may be needed as part of the SEN support the setting are offering. If the child has an SEN Support Plan, then outcomes that will support the child to move to school will be really helpful.

- Add some school uniform to your role play/dressing up area. It doesn't have to be the right type for each school. Most children will need to wear a uniform for their new school. For some children wearing new/different clothes might be distressing. School uniform can often be stiff, and labels can be scratchy. Giving children the opportunity to feel, touch, try on (if they want to) will help with familiarity and support children's independence in getting dressed. Dressing toys teddies etc.
- Getting some book bags from local schools to encourage children to play 'going to school' and include road safety role play to encourage thinking about road safety in preparation for walking to school. It may be suitable to share with families the [TFL Walk About, Talk About](#).
- Make transition books or 'Going to School' books. Take photos of places and key people. E.g., the classroom entrance, the outdoor play area, the teacher and teaching assistant (their key person), the playground, the school hall, the toilets and where you wash your hands, the lunch hall/room, cloakroom. Make a book using these photos and add the child going to that school's name or photo. Children can take these books home over the summer holidays to share with their families and become familiar with the school environment and the people around it that will help. Some schools provide photos.



- Collect books about starting school and share these at story times with the children.
- Add lunch bags/lunch boxes/ school trays to the role play area. Encourage children to choose the food they want, and self-select at lunchtimes. Think and talk about what lunchtime will look like at school. Practice carrying a tray with a plate and cutlery.
- Have a real focus on supporting children's independence with self-help skills, encourage putting on own coat, using knife and fork to eat, manage toilet routine independently etc.



- Visit the school with the child/group of children going to the school. Take a camera and allow the children to choose what they want to photograph.

- Encourage the teacher/teaching assistant from school to visit the child at the setting.

- Make a memento book. Include their favourite things at nursery, key person, or people that they've become attached to. This book could go home with them when they leave the setting. They could share it with their new teacher/school or look at it whenever they are missing pre-school.



- Practitioners could 'collect' common questions children have about starting school and use the questions to 'interview' a visiting teacher or when you and the child visits school. E.g., where will I have my dinner? Who will collect me? Can I take bunny? Who will I play with if my friends go to another school? What happens if I hurt myself?
- Having a social story which describes starting school can be helpful. Individual children may need specific social stories.
- A display board with the different uniforms/ book bags from feeder schools



Reflecting on transitions

Schools want to work with pre-schools and many schools have links with local pre-schools, visiting pre-schools or inviting children to visit them.

- Continue to build on exiting relationships with schools and get to know the school SENCO or the Early Years Lead.
- Check your SEN/ Inclusion Policy and make sure it references moving to school and working with parents to share records at transition points including school. Ensure there is a good system for sharing records with schools for all children and children who have any additional needs.
- Look at activities you could do to support moving to school.
- Ask for feedback from local schools about the information you have provided.



Working with parents

Working in partnership with parent is integral to the work all pre-school practitioners do and at the heart of good practice. [The Foundation Years have a good practice guide.](#)

Pre-school staff may be the first professional to discuss that a child may have an additional need and or is delayed in one or more areas of their progress in the EYFS. If you have done, 'Two Year Old Progress Check' this may be a time to say that this will form part on an on-going assessment of the child's needs. It's important to encourage families to share their SCQ with you and that you share the 'Two Year Old Progress Check' with Health visitors. Bromley have documents for these. Starting school is such an important landmark in a child's education and working with each family will be very different and parental anxiety may be high. It is good practice to share with families as early as possible in the year before they go to school that sharing information is really important to support their child and give them the very best start in school. The information for parents on the Local offer makes clear that schools want to work in partnership with families.

Sharing Information

It's vital that you share the information about that child with the receiving school once you have discussed this with families.

- Bromley have a 'Transfer of Records' document, (which includes sections about SEN) for all children, but pre-schools may have their own version. The Bromley template is on Bromley Education Matters. [Early Years Team | Bromley Education Matters](#) titled LBB EYFS Transition Document.
- If the child has an SEN Support Plan then this will be a really useful document which will hold all the information you have about the child. [The SEN Support Plan](#) is designed to give a comprehensive overview of the graduated response and the assess, plan, do review cycle and include the views of parents avoiding the need for the family to retell their experience. If the child has an SEN Support Plan and reviews, much less information is needed in the 'Bromley EYFS Transfer Document' or your own version.
- Passing on medical report reports is very important; if a child has a health care plan it is vital that this is shared with the schools and any arrangements made for training, healthcare plans etc. if this is needed. If the child has a physical need there may need to be some adjustments made so these will need to be discussed and agreed.
- The Early Years SEN Advisory Team (EYSENAT) will send through any records they hold centrally to the receiving school and are there as a source of advice and support.

Timeline for transitions

Action	Time frame	Tick for completion
List all children who receive SEN Support (SEN Register) or have done so, have an EHCP or children where a request has been made for a Needs Assessment; this will include children who have received speech and language therapy and interventions in the past. (Appendix 1 may be useful)	March	
Attend the 'Pre-school Provider to Primary School Transition Day' and take your register as above. Use this as an opportunity to book visits to schools, agree dates for possible transition meetings.	May	
Organise visit(s) with local schools to your setting or vice versa especially if not able to do attend the transition event or if this was not possible.	Through summer term	
Complete the 'Bromley EYFS Transfer Document' or your own equivalent document to share with school. If the child has an SEN Support Plan review the child's targets.	April	
<p>Work with the family to discuss what records you will send to the school (Appendix 2 may be useful- letter format asking for parental permission to share records.) You and the family may agree that a transition meeting with the school is needed. (You may decide to invite other professionals). You may have made a provisional date at the transition event. If not, contact the school to arrange this. This would be for children who are a priority and include the following reasons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the child has a high level of need ○ the child is in the early stages of assessment ○ referrals have been made to health professionals ○ the family have requested a meeting ○ the family are working with you to understand their child's needs ○ the child has medical and or physical needs so risk assessments, training and healthcare plans may be needed <p>Face to face meetings may not be possible but there may be the option to do this virtually through Microsoft Teams or Zoom and sometimes a combination of face to face and virtual may be a third option.</p> <p>If the child is known to the Early Years Advisory Team, then staff may be able to attend and they may contact you about a meeting.</p>	March - May	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition meetings are partnership meetings between you, the school, and the parents/carers. At the meeting ensure notes are taken and distributed. You may need to make these and share them with all parties attending. You could use the SEN Review on the SEN Support Plan and make the transition meeting the review meeting. (Appendix 3 Agenda for transition meeting) • If the child has a CAF inviting the school to the CAF meeting and including transition planning is welcomed by schools. 	May/June	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the child in • If a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) the school will be named on the plan. This may be a mainstream school, an additional resourced provision attached to a mainstream school or a special school. The same process listed above would apply for transition. However, there may be some occasions where the school placement is being finalised and transition arrangements will be delayed. • If an EHCP plan has been finalised, then the transition meeting can also be an interim review of the plan and the EHCP portal is the place to do. * 	May/ June	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the child does not need a transition meeting, then use the opportunity to talk to the school when they visit or when you visit them. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure records for all children with SEN are either given or sent to the school Senco/ EYFS Lead. A list will be sent each year by the EY SENAT of names of school SENCOs. 	July	

*If you would like support about a review of an EHCP, please contact your Area SENCO.

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Appendix 1 R-1 Transition check list

Child's name	School and name of school contact	Transfer Document Completed	Letter to parents	Transition meeting needed Y/N/ date	Informal discussion with school	Name of person who received records in school

Appendix 2 Example Letter to Parent/Carer

Dear Parent/Carer

Moving to school is an exciting time for children but it can be a time when you are feeling anxious too. It's important for us to share the information we have about your child with their new school.

Research has shown that the support you offer your child has a direct impact on how well they do in school and that ensuring schools have all the information from us helps the school provide your child with the very best start in reception.

- It helps to understand what your child's skills and interests are, what they can do and what they are still working on.
- It helps the school prepare for times that might cause upset and anxiety e.g. when you drop them off at school.
- It helps the school to talk to you about transition and preparing for change so that they can be planned for appropriately.
- It helps the school to plan and put into place any strategies that will help them.

Every child is unique and requires personalised support to reach their full potential. By allowing your Early Years setting to share information with your child's new school you are providing the very best opportunity for them to grow and develop as they start this new and exciting phase in their life.

We are planning to share the following:

Transfer of records	
SEN Support Plan	
Transfer of records document/ Bromley or own document	
EYFS tracker	
Speech and Language reports	
ECAT	
Medical reports listed	
Behaviour Support Plan	
Health Care Plan	
Copies of referral made	
Other- list	

Delete as appropriate

We would like to meet with the schools to share the progress your child has made and support that helped them. **Insert date**

We will talk to your school when they visit us on **Insert date**

We will send paper records to the school SENCO/EYFS Lead/class teacher (delete as appropriate) on **Insert date**

If you would like to discuss this further do let us know.

Appendix 3 Example Agenda

Agenda for Transition Meeting with School.

- **Welcome and introductions-** Agree who will take notes or use SEN Support Plan review page for recording
- **Discuss child's strengths and needs/ what support has been in place through the assess plan, do review cycle and the involvement of other agencies and a** (it may be appropriate to invite colleagues from other professionals). This can include medical plans and any relevant adjustments /training needed / positive support plans support plans / risk assessment if appropriate. T
- **Discuss progress towards outcomes**
- **Agree steps needed to support transitions** (Some children with additional needs may require extra visits to their new school prior to the term before starting. These can be arranged during the transition meeting at the school as well as any additional support such as a new visual schedule or tailored admission plan to ensure a smooth transition. Training for staff if the child has medical needs would need to be discussed and arrangement organised.)
- **AOB**

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