

ACTIVITIES TO GATHER CHILDREN'S VOICE BEFORE TRANSITION.



These activities can be useful to help evaluate how children are feeling about upcoming transitions and to measure how successful current transition practices are.

Please remember these not all these activities need to be used with all children, use your knowledge of your cohort to decide which children will benefit from each activity. You may wish to adapt and create your own activities to listen to how your children are feeling about transition. Children should always feel valued and listened to, never pressured or tested. The experiences should be fun and you may not get the response you expected!

| | Consultation Topic | Purpose | Resources | Consultation Method/Activity | Extending into practice |
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| | What feelings do children have about leaving their setting and moving to school? | <p>To find out what children know about their new school or setting and how they are feeling about the upcoming move.</p> <p>To enable them to share any worries or excitement about the move.</p> | <p>Books about starting school, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Starting School' • 'Do I have to go to school?' • 'Charlie and Lola – I am too absolutely small for school' <p>Or write one yourself about children thinking about going to a new school.</p> | <p>In small groups, start the session by asking children who is moving to school soon. Do they know the name of the school they are going to?</p> <p>Then read the story about starting school; ask open ended questions or model your own worries such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I might worry about where I'm going to eat my lunch. • I wonder what children might worry about when they are going to a new place – children will often give you their answer in the third person. • I am feeling excited as my big sister goes to the school and I will get to see her everyday. • I am excited as I get to wear a school uniform and have a book bag. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a 'worry bear' who the children can talk to. • Model the language of feelings. • Accept all feelings and help the children to manage them. • Implement regular transition activities to support children to understand what is going to happen when they go to school. |

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| | Establishing how much children know about the school they are moving to and how they feel about this forthcoming move | To help familiarise children with information about their new school. | Photos of the new school. Use photos of inside and outside of the classroom, toilets, coat pegs etc. | <p>In small groups or one to one, start the session by reading a book about starting school or use a puppet/ toy who is going to start school soon.</p> <p>Then use the photos of the child's new school to talk about what is going to happen & the similarities and differences. Ask them what they see, what they like, what is different or the same to their current setting.</p> <p>Discuss when this change will happen and who will help them and be there to support them through the change.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a book or box where children can access the photos during child-initiated play to familiarise themselves with their new environment. • Share the starting school book/s. |
| | | To give children the opportunity to express their feelings through creativity. | Open ended creative resources | <p>Encourage children to create a picture about their new school.</p> <p>Ensure they have access to a range of openended art materials that they are familiar with and able to use confidently. Whilst they are engaged in the activity facilitate conversation about their creation to illicit their feelings about moving to school.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display the children's artwork where it is easily visible to promote talk. • Annotate all children's artwork with their comments. |

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| | Finding out about children's interests, likes and dislikes | To make sure activities support emotional wellbeing and build a sense of security during transition | Take photos of resources and activities and experiences within the child's current setting. | Lay the photos out. Ask the children to select the photo of the activities they particularly enjoy. Use this activity to have discussions with children about their current interests, likes and dislikes. Alternatively, children can be encouraged to use age appropriate technology/ devices to take photographs of areas they like to play or those that they don't. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the activities the children were drawn to are provided for in continuous provision. • Inform the new school of each child's current interests and favourite things to do. • Make any changes if children indicate that they do not like an activity or learning experience. |



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| | Supporting parents/carers to find about how their child is feeling about their forthcoming move to school | <p>To enable parents/carers to share information about how their child may be feeling about their upcoming transition to school.</p> <p>Children will often feel more comfortable talking about their feelings with their parents/carers who will know if their child is/has been behaving differently. It is important to involve parents/carers in gathering children's views at this point as well.</p> | <p>Prompt questions</p> <p>Emotion symbols/pictures</p> | <p>Provide some guidance with prompt questions for parents/carers. You may also find the feelings 'emoji' symbols useful.</p> <p>This will help parents/carers to gather an understanding of how children are feeling about this to share with you. It will also enable them to support their child through the transition of moving to school.</p> <p>N.B. Make it clear that they don't need to ask the children the questions directly, but use their observations of their child's behaviour and conversations they may have had to answer the questions provided</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to encourage parents/carers to ask their child for their views and ideas on any particular topics. |