

# EYFS UNIQUE TRANSITIONS GUIDANCE 2020

COVID-19 RECOVERY PHASE

THIS DOCUMENT PROVIDES GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT  
THE RETURN OR START OF OUR YOUNGEST CHILDREN  
INTO EARLY YEARS SETTINGS AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS

3 JUNE 2020



**Bristol Early Years**  
Teaching School Alliance



## EYFS Unique Transitions Guidance 2020

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## Introduction

It has probably never been more important to consider 'unique transitions' as we start to return to our Early Years Settings and Schools and welcome more young children back through the doors into the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The experience of a global pandemic, subsequent lockdown and social isolation is unprecedented, it is uncharted territory and has affected us all. None of us will be returning back to what we were used to.

Because of this, the next few weeks and months of 'early years' experience for our children must focus on 'reconnection or re-transition', in some instances 'recovery'. We need to be mindful that there is no quick fix for this, and potentially this process of re-engagement could be a very long process.

Central to all we provide has to be values that include care, compassion and common humanity, with a focus on developing a 'sense of belonging' and sense of achievement within our early years learning communities. It is important that as professionals we don't make assumptions about the experiences that young children will have had during the Covid-19 lockdown.

What we know is common to them all, is that it has been different; so all the more important that we 'look for the child', and really attune to what they are telling us not only with their words, but their interaction, behaviour, interests, learning and play as they return to nursery or school.

It has also been 'different' for the families and our own staff teams, who like the children, will each have their own unique response to the changes in their world. Some of these responses may be traumatic; for example, with feelings of loss, grief, powerlessness, guilt and uncertainty. We may see children who are hyper-vigilant, anxious or numb, who will need protective, compensatory and grounding experiences to repair and feel safe again.

The response will be unique, just as the transition back into settings and schools, and the experiences that you each provide will need to be unique and tailored to what you are observing in your children.

This guidance has been developed to support early years' leaders, teachers and practitioners through this process.

It includes practical examples of great practice, things to consider and extensive further links.

**It goes without saying that it should be taken and adapted to your own 'Return to School/Setting' Risk Assessment and procedures.**

It is important to stress too that this guidance is in itself a work in progress; as we all learn from each other in this new context, and research informed practice develops, there will be many more great examples to share.

This is a new landscape and we are in it together, let us ensure that we work in partnership with our families, communities and other schools and providers to support our youngest learners to be resilient and have very best foundations on which to build, whatever the future holds.

The key guidance to support you with managing transitions in the Early Years Foundation Stage can be found on the [DFE website](#).

Further Covid-19 updates, CPD and specialist information can also be found on the [Bristol Early Years website](#).

Lucy Driver

National Leader of Education

Head of Bristol Teaching School Early Years Alliance and St Paul's Nursery School and Children's Centre

## Leadership

### Key Principles and priorities:

- Strong and compassionate leadership supports effective pedagogy and appropriate provision for under 5's is implemented within [new government guidelines](#).
- A principled, values driven approach encourages collective responsibility and a collaborative approach.
- Careful and realistic workload management so as to prioritise what needs to happen first and manage new demands of team roles.
- Support, supervision and CPD is prioritised for staff teams to develop confidence in new ways of working.
- EYFS themes are at the heart of good practice for YN, YR and into Y1.
- 'Parents as partners' approach is central to provision and curriculum design. Open and clear communication lines and respect for different decisions.

Ideas of Best Practice:	What this might look like: <i>All provision must be fully risk assessed.</i>
<p>Look after and be kind to yourself. Being a leader at this time is challenging. Take care of your team and children/families by prioritising your own well-being too.</p> <p>Allow time and space for recovery and rebuilding. Avoid the temptation to rush - relationships and transitions will need support that is responsive to individual needs and circumstances. This will take time.</p> <p>Adopt a compassionate and calm approach - model this, lead by example. Re-visit your setting's values with confidence and frame them in the context of what is happening now. Promote a sense of hope.</p> <p>Prioritise staff supervision - supporting emotional resilience and well-being for the</p>	<p>Plan in time for your own self-care to support your own well - being. <a href="#">5 ways to wellbeing</a> is a useful resource.</p> <p>Make a plan for what you might do and when. Share this with others- try not to do everything at once and prioritise what needs to come first. <a href="#">Return to nursery guidance for practitioners</a> <a href="#">Guidance to support planning for returning to school</a></p> <p>At the beginning of a staff meeting remind yourself and your team what your underpinning values have always been as an organisation to reaffirm how we work together and why.</p> <p>Make time for 1:1 <a href="#">supervision</a> for all staff. Assign experienced team members to</p>



<p>team and yourself. Make time to discuss anxieties, difficult feelings such as grief and guilt that may arise as a result of individual experiences. Celebrate things that have gone well that day however small.</p> <p>Create a sense of safety with robust risk assessments. Have clear protocols in place and enable everyone to deliver these as part of everyday provision.</p> <p>Communicate clearly and with confidence – develop a clear structure and expectations for everyone that are informed by your risk assessments. Be explicit about physical safety. Check that everyone understands and are given an opportunity to discuss.</p> <p>Build on already established parent/carer partnerships and develop effective communications and trust with those new to the setting. Support team members to make this central to their everyday practice. Find ways to re-connect and make setting easily “reachable”.</p> <p>Spend more time than usual learning about your families and their unique story during this time. Use what you know to plan for children when they are with you and to help support their transition.</p> <p>Identify and pull on team strengths - who is responsible for what and what extra skills can be drawn on to add capacity and creativity.</p>	<p>supervise some of the team if necessary. Support the whole team to use supervision effectively (<a href="#">access CPD</a> if necessary).</p> <p>Use government guidelines and whole school/setting policy to support decisions made about managing risks as part of everyday practice. Make decisions based on the unique needs and challenges in your setting and in relation to individual children where necessary.</p> <p>Be decisive as well as listening to your team. Drive practice with clarity. Maintain narrative about priorities of safety and well-being. This article is helpful: <a href="#">How to be a better leader under lockdown</a></p> <p>Use online learning diaries, phone calls, website and Facebook page to communicate information in a clear and timely way. Make contact with new parents directly by phone if possible. Give virtual or socially distanced real tours of your school/setting to support transition. Key people may need support to do this confidently.</p> <p>Carry out virtual home visits by secure video link (or phone calls) to have conversations with families about what is important to them. Identify strategies together that will support children’s transitions. Enable lots of time for handover discussions EYFS-Y1.</p> <p>Find out who in your team has particular talents/skills (can play an instrument, creative with art/words, enjoys organising resources, skilled with conflict resolution) and use them to their maximum potential including modelling to others.</p>
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<p>Generate a shared language that is positive to encourage an atmosphere of feeling safe e.g. explicit rules within the centre phrased in a “do” rather than a “do not” way. Create a culture that promotes belonging and togetherness by using language that is welcoming e.g. “our school”, “our day”, “our song”, “our group”</p> <p>Prioritise and promote well-being and self-esteem for everyone and encourage children to have a voice that is listened to.</p> <p>Build stronger partnerships with colleagues across your setting (and outside agencies) to support each other, share information and collective intelligence around areas of specialism. Make time for this to support new professional development needs.</p> <p>Team planning and reflective evaluation - take time to notice what children are doing so that you can plan responsively and tune in to individual needs as much as possible. Make time to discuss as a team what is working well and what needs developing.</p> <p>Champion developmentally appropriate provision relevant to children’s experience based on meaningful assessment.</p> <p>Ensure that parents are clear about expectations of EYFS and how they might support learning at home. Ensure that parents feel confident in your leadership.</p>	<p>Develop as a team carefully thought out ways of working that empower children and adults to manage the environment and interactions without fear. e.g. A shared script- “we’re all washing our hands before snack” “we put the bricks away at the end of the day” Use this language across the day consistently as a team to reinforce a sense of community.</p> <p>Make time for children and adults to talk and connect; use individual communication tools or specialist interventions if needed. Use <a href="#">emotion coaching</a>, <a href="#">social stories</a> or favourite books to calm and reassure. Listen with all the senses.</p> <p>Work with the key person from nursery to learn about a child’s needs. YR and Y1 team teach together for familiarity, modelling and sharing. Link with English lead to support curriculum gaps particularly for disadvantaged children. Share CPD e.g. how <a href="#">trauma informed</a> practice can be used to support a 2 year old.</p> <p>Create time each day to check in with your staff team and encourage reflective discussion about what has happened that day and what might work better tomorrow. Talk about particular children that are of concern and plan next steps.</p> <p>Share your EYFS specialism with others and make explicit reference to the 4 EYFS themes as part of everyday practice. Plan in time to notice children’s starting points and use the <a href="#">Characteristics of Effective Teaching &amp; Learning</a> as a basis for planning.</p> <p>Film “master classes” to share with parents/carers to explain what and how children will be learning. See <a href="#">home learning page of Bristol Early Years website</a></p>
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## Relationships and emotional wellbeing

### Key Principles and priorities:

- Attachment and re-attachment to key people is a priority to ensure feelings of safety and connectedness. Professional intimacy is still encouraged for children under 5 within a defined social bubble.
- Prioritising strong positive relationships with parents/carers, children and staff to reassure and build trust in new routines and environments.
- Everybody needs to feel safe and listened to, to know that their thoughts and feelings matter.
- Understanding how to support self-regulation in order to provide opportunities for children to reset and self-soothe thus preparing them to be receptive to learning and interacting with others.
- Regulation and reconnection are the precursor to any teaching and learning so if we can start with the essential building blocks, confident learners can be nurtured.
- Create enabling environments that support children to develop emotional literacy, focus on positive self-esteem and self-worth, whilst experiencing success and achievement.

**Read this guidance in conjunction with keeping safe and safeguarding procedures and policies.**

Ideas of Best Practice:	What this might look like: <i>All provision must be fully risk assessed.</i>
<p>Build and strengthen relationships with parents and children to ensure each family feels confident and trusting in returning to the setting.</p> <p>Use what we know about <a href="#">attachment theory</a> to consider how best to adapt your setting to reduce separation anxiety for all. Ensure that each child and family know who the child's keyperson/teacher is especially if this has changed.</p>	<p>Send the family a postcard (perhaps a photo of the room they can expect to see upon return) telling them how excited you are to welcome them back and committed to the upkeep of a safe environment.</p> <p>Teachers/practitioners/TAs film themselves reading favourite stories so that children start to get to know adults that they will be with.</p> <p>Send personalised video messages from key person/teacher to child to welcome them back and explain any changes. This can be done in various ways e.g. Online learning diary, email, text, website etc.</p> <p><a href="#">A story about going back to school</a></p>



<p>Normalise worries and anxieties in order that open and honest communication can prevail between staff teams and with children and families. This will encourage connectedness and ease feelings of anxiety.</p> <p>Consider developing more <a href="#">trauma informed practice</a>. See film clip – <a href="#">Reopening with trauma informed practice</a>.</p> <p>Support children and families by gathering information to understand their family story and how best to meet their needs. Ensure anything planned for/offered to/expected of the child is in accordance with what they can cope with emotionally and developmentally.</p> <p>Make time for children to celebrate their experiences at home and share what has been enjoyable, new learning and things that they are proud of.</p> <p>Develop a clear routine and clear expectations to help settle children as they get use to the new way of life.</p> <p>Promote emotional safety (we all need to know that we matter and are being thought about). When we don't feel safe, our body triggers stress responses which affect many other aspects of emotional and physical health as</p>	<p>Ensure that open lines of communication are always available and encourage families to continue to ask questions, discuss challenges and share thoughts and feelings on the transition and new ways of working. Check-in when child is not attending – keep this up. <a href="#">Parent/carer guidance about returning to nursery</a> <a href="#">Coronavirus from the perspective of a baby or young child</a></p> <p>Prioritise communication with families to get a picture of how lockdown has been. Did the child take part in any activities, did they have a daily routine and how have they felt? What are their current interests and are there any areas in need of additional support? The team could contact families by phone or ask them to fill in something to send back. Respond to family bereavements and support family wellbeing with various <a href="#">information here</a>. British Psychological Society - <a href="#">Bereavement support</a>.</p> <p>Encourage children to share what they did during lockdown and special moments that are important to them. Avoid making assumptions about what we think it may have been like for them.</p> <p>Predictability can be crucial for children to be able to adapt. Provide a clear and easy to follow routine so that everyone feels more at ease and less anxious about the unknown. Ensure all children and families have ongoing access to timetables/routines (include picture versions).</p> <p>Consider using soothing and calming fragrances and music. Explore ways to use all 5 senses when planning activities. Encourage self-talk, mindfulness and breathing. Create safe and inviting spaces to encourage these</p>
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<p>well as our ability to learn, communicate, build relationships and thrive.</p> <p>Children may pick up on our feelings, so it is important that we feel safe, grounded and calm, if we are to help children to feel this way too.</p> <p>Revisit, reassure and reminisce – use learning diaries/documentation. Encourage parents/carers to do this too by linking up experiences more so than we did previously.</p> <p>Be aware of <a href="#">fight, flight and freeze</a> responses. They may present different behaviours which may in turn prompt different reactions in us, as the adult. How we react to those behaviours is important – with compassion, reassurance and where appropriate, a solution focussed approach.</p> <p>Give children regular opportunities for self-reflection and naming emotions and feelings.</p> <p>Promote and support resilience building and coping mechanisms within not only our children, but within ourselves too. Feelings of connectedness and belonging are the foundations of resilience and confidence building.</p>	<p>things to happen naturally and as part of the daily routine.</p> <p>Prioritise the voice of the child as we (as adults) try to navigate the challenging times of finding new processes. Consider ways of regularly checking in with children to find out about how they feel about certain changes and whether there is anything they miss or would like to see happening. Use strategies based on play therapy principles <a href="#">Appendix 4</a>.</p> <p>Familiarise ourselves with the possible behaviours exhibited though these responses and ways in which we can help the child emotionally regulate and manage their feelings and behaviour. <a href="#">This video shows how to provide comfort and regulation during social distancing.</a></p> <p>Fear can leave us feeling immobile. Plan in plenty of action/movement/music, repetition and rhythmic activity.</p> <p>Use images, stories and props in smaller groups to encourage each child to talk and listen to others. <a href="#">Emotion Coaching</a> is a useful approach to support children to talk about how they feel. Use <a href="#">Attunement principles</a> to support your practice.</p> <p>Encourage slow and quiet times for children to work on emotional or self-regulation. Stretching and breathing sessions, being still and quiet with relaxing music, walks in the outdoor environment and other soothing experiences could all be useful.</p> <p>Consider ways of children being able to be part of a ‘team’ to promote a sense of togetherness and belonging. Joint activities encourage collaboration and nurture a sense of collective success.</p>
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## Provision and curriculum

### Key principles and priorities:

- Understanding of child development, characteristics of effective learning and prime areas are prioritised at the heart of practice for YN, YR and into Y1.
- Support for well-being and emotional resilience is central to team approach in all areas.
- Take account of the Unique Child and family in all curriculum and pedagogy decisions.
- Environments reflect children's interests, diversity of communities and lived experiences. Routines are adjusted to meet children's emotional needs with time and space for recalibration as learners.
- Parents are supported as partners in well-being and learning and are central to provision and curriculum design.

### Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning (EYFS)

The Bristol C of EL Guidance has 4 strands that will support provision and curriculum. The additional 4<sup>th</sup> strand Emotional well-being that has been added as part of the Bristol guidance is particularly useful in the current context. The document includes practice ideas, reflective questions to support planning and a useful assessment tool.

It can be found here: [Bristol Characteristics of Effective Learning Guidance](#)

If this part of the statutory EYFS is prioritised to drive provision and curriculum it will support children to be:

- ✓ Engaged
- ✓ Motivated
- ✓ Thinking
- ✓ Connected

Parents may be worried about their child falling behind. A one page guidance to support parents/carers with understanding these characteristics as the foundation for learning is here: [Parent/carers guide to C of EL](#)

Ideas of Best Practice:	What this might look like: <i>All provision must be fully risk assessed.</i>
<p>Play is prioritised as an opportunity for children to think, creatively and flexibly, solve problems and link ideas.</p> <p>Recognise that continuous provision will be limited and the environment will be different. Create enabling conditions for rich play: space, time, flexible resources, choice, control, warm and supportive relationships.</p> <p>A curriculum is designed that reflects the COELs, the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development as interconnected elements across all areas and subjects in Year 1.</p> <p>An enquiry based curriculum could support children’s learning from their unique starting points and home based learning.</p> <p>The emotional well-being of the child, which is the foundation for playing, exploring and learning is prioritised. (<a href="#">Strand 4 Bristol C of EL Guidance</a>)</p>	<p>The environment and routines are consistent and predictable to help children to develop trust and security.</p> <p>Learning environments and activities (inside and out) reflect children’s unique interests and experiences. This will encourage joining in, well-being and attention. For Year 1 consider as minimum requirements: role play, construction, small world play, book area, loose part play, sensory and malleable play. <a href="#">See Year 1 in Action</a> (Anna Ephgrave)</p> <p>Children going into Year 1 access provision that is similar to their last experience of school. EYFS team and Y1 team working together to share ideas about how this might look and what would work well with particular children in mind. <a href="#">Supporting transition to Yr 1</a></p> <p>Play based learning that slowly phases from EYFS into National Curriculum as appropriate. The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning carry on as the central support for children’s learning journey.</p> <p>Children are given time to express and explore their feelings. This does not need a set time, adults are ready to respond as and when children need to be listened to. They are encouraged to talk about their experiences at home.</p> <p>Examples of children’s home learning is displayed in their new learning spaces to celebrate and show a sense of continuity.</p> <p>Adults listen to, value and respect the views and ideas of all children so that they feel safe and secure. Year 1 teachers may need to be more flexible with routines and teaching so that they are responsive in the moment.</p>

<p>All adults notice and respond to children’s levels of involvement and attention in activities across the day.</p> <p>Adults interact with children to encourage them to explore and join in. An intuitive approach supports children who may be struggling.</p> <p>Develop/sustain strong home school partnerships in order to forge trusting and authentic relationships and an understanding of how children learn at home as well as in a setting or school.</p>	<p>Teaching assistants prioritise wellbeing support rather than curriculum support if necessary.</p> <p>Characteristics of Effective Learning assessment tool is used to identify and support all children across the 4 strands. The Emotional well -being strand may be particularly useful. The <a href="#">Leuven Scales</a> could be used to monitor specific children where the COELs are low.</p> <p>Adults sensitively validate children’s feelings and support them with their emotional struggles. “I can see how hard it is for you / You’re very upset and I am here to help you.” Adults comment on how a child is learning, rather than what. “I can see you’re trying really hard/ I like the way you managed to do that differently”.</p> <p>Children are supported when they experience some struggle in their activities, even for simple things like reaching for things, feeding themselves, finding an element of learning difficult.</p> <p>There is uninterrupted time for children to play and follow their own interests. Adults give extra support to encourage children to plan, review and adapt their learning in a variety of contexts to develop autonomy and confidence.</p> <p>Trusting and secure attachments are developed which enable the key person to learn about the home culture, identity and every child’s unique interests and needs.</p> <p>Information about the COELs is shared with families in accessible ways. Communicate with families about the reasons behind decisions.</p>
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## Prime Areas

The Statutory Framework describes the Prime areas as “crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive”. The Prime Areas along with the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning should be prioritised for all children.

For children who have been away from nursery or school for a long time, or for those just starting, what has been experienced may vary hugely and children will be at different starting points than we may have previously expected. There will be huge variation both in children’s experiences of lockdown and in their anxieties about returning/starting school or nursery. Learning through play will be critical in supporting children’s social and emotional well-being whilst building their capacity for all other areas of learning.

## Personal Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Children will need support to make relationships, develop self-confidence, self-awareness, managing feelings and behaviour. This area of learning will need even more priority than usual for all children. We should expect and understand unusual behaviour from children and consider unmet needs in this context.

Ideas of best practice:	What might this look like: <i>All provision must be fully risk assessed.</i>
<p>Prioritise and plan for hellos and goodbyes to support separation anxiety. This may mean staggering start times to minimise contact between groups in line with risk assessments.</p>	<p>Plan carefully and thoughtfully to consider the needs of all children and adults as they drop off/pick up. Work together with families to find ways to welcome, greet and say goodbye.</p>
<p>Consider how children are invited into the setting as soon as they reach the gates/door. Offer something interesting, inspiring to entice them in as they leave their parent/carer to support separation anxiety.</p>	<p>Plan something interesting as a greeting e.g. a bubble machine, an invitation to join in with something e.g. a picture of someone in their group to find as they go through the door.</p>
<p>Help children to talk about their feelings and lived experiences, including what they might know about the coronavirus pandemic.</p>	<p>Support children with <a href="#">social stories</a> and books and by talking openly with simple language. There is a great picture book that explores how we all might be worrying about coronavirus <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
<p>Make routines feel consistent and safe so that children can develop a sense of confidence and control. Develop routines that are calm and unrushed.</p>	<p>Use a visual timetable to support understanding and avoid too many transitions throughout the day. Use a now and next board to simplify this further.</p>

<p>Communicate the rules and routines clearly in a positive way so that children and families have clear expectations of every session.</p> <p>Allow children to become deeply involved in self chosen play and support language for thinking alongside. Encourage autonomy and independence by involving children in planning.</p> <p>Plan time for children to be with their key person/teacher so that they feel a sense of security and have time to be listened to.</p> <p>Allow time for children to reconnect with friends and support new friendships to develop. Consider ways that children can show love and care to others without physical contact.</p> <p>Support all adults to be familiar and confident with <a href="#">conflict resolution</a> and emotion coaching techniques to support positive behaviour.</p>	<p>Use clear and friendly messages on whiteboards outside for parents/carers. Make a video/<a href="#">story</a> for parents/carers to share with their children to explain simply what routines will be and how they can help.</p> <p>Make time during the day that is unrushed for play and be available to support it. Value and encourage ideas for their own lines of enquiry.</p> <p>Have small group times regularly to check in with children and 1:1 times if necessary for those that you might be concerned about.</p> <p>Have additional time for play that allows children to just be together. Support those that might need help to connect with others and develop friendships. (See <a href="#">Love pedagogy article</a>).</p> <p>Be a very careful listener and validate children’s feelings. Support problem solving within clear boundaries to support sense of security and emotional resilience when things go wrong. (<a href="#">Access CPD</a> with a focus on emotion coaching and conflict resolution may be necessary for staff teams.)</p>
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### Communication and Language (CL)

Children will need to be supported to listen, focus their attention, understand language and express themselves to share their thinking. This may be difficult as children have been isolated from their usual social groups and some will not have experienced a language rich environment at home during this time. Of course some may have had increased opportunities of quality interactions and stories etc. It will be important to notice and tune in to individual needs.

Ideas of best practice:	What might this look like: <i>All provision must be fully risk assessed.</i>
Provide an effective communication partner for every child who is able to tune in to their individual language needs.	Link with parents and carers to find out how children best communicate and make themselves understood at home so that this can be supported in the setting.



<p>Ensure that all adults are responsive to individual children and use high quality interactions to support communication and talk.</p> <p>Support language development and tuning into sounds by playing with language and making it fun. This will support phonological awareness as the foundations for early literacy and phonic knowledge.</p> <p>Allow children time to talk about what they know and support associated vocabulary to enable them to process their ideas and feelings.</p> <p>Children may find listening more tricky than usual. Ensure that support for the development of listening and attention skills is prioritised and planned for.</p>	<p>Plan routines and self-chosen play opportunities that offer unrushed time for conversation, connection and time to make sense of their experiences.</p> <p>Stories, songs and rhymes will support a sense of coming together, relaxation and fun whilst being an important tool for language development.</p> <p>Use stories as a prompt to talk about feelings and learn new words that help children to express their emotions. Some suggested books are <a href="#">here</a>. This might include talking about their experiences during lockdown and clarifying understanding of what they might be hearing from adults around them. Use props to support understanding. <a href="#">Story scribing/helicopter stories/story squares</a> could be used to value children’s own individual stories (adapting to be in line with social distancing/risk assessment).</p> <p>Plan in games and activities to support listening and attention skills 1:1 and as part of a group e.g. what’s in the bag, sharing a story, listening walk, small group times with key person to take turns talking and listening to others.</p>
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### Physical Development (PD)

Children will need support to develop gross and fine motor skills, use tools independently, manage their personal care needs and be confident to access challenging physical play. Children’s experiences during lockdown will differ and some may have had more physical activity opportunities than others. As health and self-care will need to be prioritised to ensure safety, all children will need to be taught explicitly the skills they need.

Ideas of best practice:	What might this look like: <i>All provision must be fully risk assessed.</i>
Being outside is a protective factor for us all during this time. Outside space will be the best resource for children’s learning, health and wellbeing and to encourage physical activity.	Try to use outdoor space as much as possible for all activities. Spaces could be separated for smaller groups to use safely. Each group could use different outdoor areas/resources for a



<p>Robust routines and procedures should involve children learning about hygiene and self-care including snack and mealtimes, handwashing, toileting and using resources.</p> <p>Support children to play together with others within constraints of social distancing/bubbles. This may be something that children have not done for some time. Free play may be anxiety inducing for some children and adults will need to observe carefully and tune in to individual needs.</p>	<p>day and then clean and swap. Alternatively equipment can be cleaned if groups change over during the day.</p> <p>Involve children in tidying up so that health and safety is prioritised e.g. Clearing away surfaces at the end of the day ready for cleaning. Sing handwashing songs to make this fun.</p> <p>Encourage and support children to play in a small group or with just one other child. Model challenging and enthusiastic physical play to encourage children who may have had less experience or limited access to outdoors and the challenges it offers. Look out for those children who may be reluctant movers and find ways to engage them in fun active games.</p> <p><a href="#">These are ideas for non-contact games that promote activity and gross motor skills with reduced physical contact</a></p>
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## Enabling Environment

During the Covid-19 response settings may be concerned about use of resources and infection control. It is important to risk-assess and follow government guidance for all planning and procedures. An agreed decision about how resources and materials are used should be made at individual setting/school level in line with [Planning guide for early years and childcare settings](#) Although there are many important and necessary hygiene and cleaning criteria which may limit usual practice and provision, by thinking creatively, safe ways of high quality provision can be risk assessed. It may be useful to consider:

- How to de-clutter as much as possible and operate routines of frequent and consistent cleaning.
- How the quantity of parts may be reduced or adapted to ensure safe delivery/use.
- Using resources that can be organised into sets for each 'group/bubble' to enable easy daily cleaning or rotation rather than removing particular experiences/resources. Many resources can be washed or wiped in warm water and detergent, put in a dishwasher or washing machine. Consider how any soft furnishings that are still in use might be laundered.
- How to involve children in tidying to ensure clear access to all surfaces for cleaning at the end of the day/session by adults.

- Using materials for sensory experiences that clean as they are played with e.g. Water play with soapy water that is changed or discarded every few hours, bubble play. Children could also make their own playdough daily, and keep it in a named bag to use that day and discard/take home. Malleable resources should not be shared.
- How resources such as pens, crayons, scissors, paper, paint brushes or even favourite small world items, can be organised into sets for each 'group/bubble' or named for individual use in line with the setting/school's risk assessment. This will support children to share items as little as possible.

### Outdoor Provision:

Plan how outdoor space, where available, can be used as much as possible. A high quality outdoor environment offers a rich, multi-sensory experience that is meaningful, stimulating and motivating. It offers children opportunities to move more freely, experience challenge and take risks; be physically active, develop strength and coordination and experience nature and the weather.

Ideas of Best Practice:	What this might look like: <i>All provision must be fully risk assessed.</i>
<p>Create an environment that prioritises children's emotional well-being. Offer a homely feel that reflects the children's interests and cultures at home to put them at ease.</p> <p>Provide a range of activities which serve different purposes: inspire imagination and role play, exploration of personal relationships and feelings, problem solving, quiet time and reflection.</p> <p>Create a calm, nurturing and uncluttered environment, using neutral colours where possible. Enable access to calm spaces to retreat to and observe from. Offer soothing and sensory resources to support self-regulation.</p>	<p>Photographs of children and their families at child height or that children can hold and carry e.g. on jam jar lids or key fobs that can be cleaned. Consistent use of visual timetables to support feelings of safety and belonging.</p> <p>Where it is determined that 'soft' resources are required to meet children's emotional or learning needs, clean them daily following the <a href="#">government's cleaning guidance</a></p> <p>Sets of small world resources, for each 'group/bubble', that can be washed. These enable the development of relationships and the expression of experiences and feelings.</p> <p>Provide a domestic role play area (in line with risk assessment) and resources that reflect children's home-life experiences for them to relate to and feel relaxed in.</p> <p>Use sensory and or mindfulness resources to support emotions and calming practices.</p>

<p>Reflect on the Five to Thrive themes in the environment: Talk, Play, Respond, Relax, and Cuddle. (Whilst the fifth theme 'Cuddle' cannot be explicitly encouraged at this time, there are <a href="#">safe ways</a> to help children feel emotionally close to staff and provide emotional in a socially distanced way.)</p> <p>Reading stories to children could be key to their re-engagement into setting/school life. Support children's interest by providing high quality books, some new and some old favourites. Encourage children to select books for reading aloud by adults.</p> <p>Provide a strong sense of belonging for each 'group/bubble' with their 'areas' clearly defined, both inside and out.</p> <p>Provide open-ended resources and loose parts (cleanable/disposable) to encourage children to become absorbed in play.</p>	<p>Provide high quality, age-appropriate <a href="#">books</a> that support children's anxieties and worries, including grief and loss.</p> <p>Gentle and rhythmic music and simple percussion instruments from a wide range of cultures including what might be familiar at home.</p> <p>Alternative sensory materials that can be cleaned or disposed of easily after play: leaves/ flowers of different shapes, size, and scent, pebbles, soil, mud etc.</p> <p>Use songs, book props and pictures, for high quality story-telling and re-telling experiences. Select quality pictures with texts for narrative and rhythm and rhyme experiences to read aloud to small groups throughout the day. Respond when children ask for stories that they love to hear over and over.</p> <p>If physical barriers are required to separate 'groups/bubbles' make these as unthreatening as possible and use a consistent design so that children always know where they can go. (<a href="#">Example book for children on bubbles</a>).</p> <p>Playdough (made daily) or clay (single use) that is not shared with a variety of different (washable/ disposable i.e. natural) resources.</p> <p>Soapy water for water play and exploration with a variety of different (washable/ disposable i.e. natural) resources.</p> <p>Large (cleanable/disposable/recyclable) loose parts for building, stacking, creating, role play etc.</p>
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<p>Provide resources for children to playfully explore and embed the concepts and knowledge that are taught in group times/lessons (YR &amp; Y1).</p> <p>Plan the environment to support children’s learning about safe hygiene practices.</p>	<p>Make environment inspiring to prompt investigation, interaction and to-and-fro communication between and with children.</p> <p>Talk about and develop child-safe hand washing routines so that children can engage in cleaning practices and develop good protective habits. Sing songs to reinforce the message and make it fun. Make this really easy for children to master and keep monitoring how systems are working.</p> <p>Provide a named individual bag or box for each child’s personal resources for care, hygiene, sleep, soothing and settling, feeding /water bottles etc.</p>
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## Observation, Assessment, Planning and Monitoring

### Key Principles and priorities:

- There will be a huge range of learning experiences for children during the outbreak. We will need to respond to what children have learnt, not what we expected them to have learnt, and what they may have forgotten. Although not required to report on, we *will* need to know where children are in relation to national requirements and key points in learning and development.
- Initial assessments can to be carried out informally, through listening to parents and the child, observations, interactions, Watch, Wait, Wonder. Restarting pupil's schooling with formal testing will diminish any focus on re-building positive relationships and could exacerbate anxieties about restarting education and learning. Staff responses will be key in how children are able to reintegrate positively back into their setting.
- Start with the child. What have they been learning about and what would they like to learn about? What have they enjoyed? What have they missed? Can they talk, draw and write about their experiences?

The Bristol Early Years values that should underpin ethical assessment procedure are:

	We need to be in partnership with parents to discover how and
<b>Empowerment</b> – democratic, giving ownership, respect, meaning and is collaborative –	
<b>Positivity</b> – Celebratory, focusing on what a child can do	


Informal assessment happens all the time. We are continually observing, assessing, making sense in every moment. This will help build up a picture of the child and where they are in their learning. More formal assessment against the EYFS for example can happen over time as it usually does. What we choose to assess is the key. We assess what we value.

**What is the PURPOSE of assessment at this time?**

- To find out how a child is emotionally- emotional wellbeing
- To discover their current interests and motivations
- To inform planning – in the moment, daily, weekly
- To inform transitions to the next setting, year group or room
- Monitoring – of a child’s progress and to identify strengths, gaps in their learning

**What are the priorities to assess?**

**Child development** – interactions, attachments, well-being, physical development, personal, social and emotional development, communication and language development.

**How can we assess?**

Sensitively, professionally, through observation, listening, seeking out child, family perspective. By creating a safe, welcoming and engaging environment based on trust and kindness.

**Settings ‘receiving’ children  
Ideas of Best Practice:**

**What this might look like:  
*All provision must be fully risk assessed.***

Initial assessments need to be purposeful and provide an accurate holistic picture of each child’s learning, their current needs and inform planning.

Parental Partnership	
<p><b>Seek information from parents</b> about their child’s learning experiences at home.</p> <p>Parents are the experts at this time (and always are). They know how their children have been, what they have learnt, and the opportunities they may or may not have had. We need to learn from the parents and start from there. This needs to be a credit model. We need to come from the perspective that parents know their child best.</p>	<p>Strengthen relationships with families through video/phone calls to discuss the child and their family’s unique story.</p> <p>Bruce Perry reminds us that <i>‘relationships matter and every contact with someone who has experienced adversity and trauma can be an opportunity for healing and growth’</i>.</p> <p>This is relevant in terms of assessments too. Interactions with children should contribute to nurturing emotional well-being as well as supporting our understanding of each child’s learning and development.</p>
Transition conversations	
<p><b>Organise transition meetings</b> for practitioners to discuss each child. Plan time virtually or in person with parents to share perspectives about their child’s well-being and learning. Use information to inform planning.</p>	<p>Via video call, email, photographs/videos or online. Greater emphasis to be placed on <a href="#">Bristol Characteristics of Effective Learning</a> – particularly the wellbeing strand. Share knowledge of the child, their current interests, learning styles, observations, learning diaries and personal stories with families, teacher, key person.</p>
Listening to the unique child	
<p><b>Attachment needs</b> and any trauma that may have occurred must be considered when assessing children’s learning and development. (See Relationships and Emotional Wellbeing section)</p> <p><b>Being sensitive</b> to the children’s differing experiences and range of learning during the lockdown period. Some children may have experienced loss, grief, hardship, domestic abuse and other traumatic experiences.</p> <p>Teachers need to <b>carefully observe</b> their children in order to identify their unique needs and learning requirements.</p>	<p><b>Seek out the perspective of the child.</b> Allow them time and space to process their thinking with you. With ease – a thinking time not a grilling time. ‘Sustained shared thinking’. We need to be attuned – listen actively not interfering or interrupting.</p> <p><b>Work closely with the safeguarding lead</b> to assess when interventions are necessary to keep children and families safe.</p> <p>Where possible plan small group times or 1:1 interaction to ensure that you are hearing the voice and thoughts of ALL children and that they feel heard and valued.</p> <p>Be alongside children in their play as an observer or companion if invited in. Follow their lead.</p>

<b>Assessment</b>	
<p>Usual assessment procedures may need to be modified. Assessments are manageable and carried out thoughtfully with the child's individual needs at the centre. Judgements are based on what a child can do consistently, independently, in a range of situations and over time.</p>	
<p>Use the <b>Bristol Characteristics of Effective Learning</b> to inform your judgements about a child's: Emotional well-being and resilience, Engagement, Motivation, and Creativity and critical thinking. <a href="#">Bristol Characteristics of Effective Learning</a></p> <p>Continue to use the <b>EYFS development matters</b> or the <b>NC</b> to inform your judgements. Ensure a holistic view of each child's learning and development not a narrow focus. Remembering that all strands are interlinked and children learn holistically. <i>Use your professional judgement about what is important to assess and when.</i> Please note: <i>'Settings will not be required to undertake the <b>Progress Check at age 2</b> during the Coronavirus outbreak'</i></p> <p><b>Transfer Record</b> (Appendix) Nursery to Reception transition information used by Reception Teacher to inform planning and initial assessments.</p>	<p>Teachers/practitioners need time allocated to discuss the varied experiences of children during their time at home including possible learning gaps. (EYFS, National Curriculum, Programmes of Study and the Teacher Assessment Framework for KS1).</p> <p>Ensure early/prompt hand over of learning diaries, children's books, data linked to development matters and other ongoing assessments including (key words, maths targets, reading levels), knowledge of children and families and any safeguarding concerns so that teachers feel confident with starting points.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Recovery Curriculum</a> document.</p> <p><b>Complete the transfer record</b> and share with the teacher from the next setting.</p> <p><b><i>Ensure your judgements are an accurate reflection of what a child can do; consistently, independently, in a range of situations, over time. This will enable to next teacher to pitch learning accurately and teach meaningful learning experiences for each unique child and meet their learning needs.</i></b></p>
<b>Planning</b>	
<p><b>Delivery of Learning and Development requirements to be adapted.</b></p> <p><b>Planning an engaging curriculum</b> based on assessments and observations.</p>	<p>Priority needs to be given to settling the children, re-establishing relationships and adapting practice with a trauma-informed approach. The Government guidance states <i>'following the amendments to the EYFS from 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020, EY settings only need to use reasonable endeavours to deliver the Learning and Development requirements set</i></p>



<p>Do children need opportunities to talk and share experiences? Do they need familiar within the unfamiliar?</p> <p>Setting clear routines and boundaries to enable children to feel safe. Getting back to 'normal'?</p> <p>Read for pleasure. Read and share books with every child to assess their current stage of development with reading.</p> <p>Despite the pressure of the phonics screening test in Year 1 resist the temptation to assess phonics until children are settled back in.</p>	<p><i>out in the EYFS. We understand that these are exceptional circumstances and the priority at this time is keeping the children safe and well cared for'</i></p> <p>For children going back into YR/Y1, use the last book level they were on as a starting point to identify gaps and progress made.</p> <p>Read during the day to support children feeling comfortable, happy and settled. Tune into children's levels of confidence to support their independent reading skills. Seek out and share a child's reading experiences with their family in a positive and encouraging way.</p> <p>Be playful. Revisit Phase 1 Letters and Sounds activities to play with sounds and tune into phonological awareness, blending and segmenting.</p> <p>Look out for phonics and reading CPD on the <a href="#">Bristol Early Years website</a> which will be updated soon.</p>
<p>Monitoring children's strengths and areas for development</p>	
<p><b>Monitor children's current strengths and areas for development.</b> Set realistic and meaningful learning priorities for now and for the next setting. These will need to include the Bristol Characteristics of Effective Learning as well as specific curriculum areas.</p> <p><b>Identify gaps and plan for these.</b> What are the learning priorities for each child? What will make the greatest difference to their learning and development at this time?</p>	<p><b>Use data generated;</b> observations, assessments, and build up a picture of every child's starting points and progress made over time.</p> <p>Use format from Bristol Characteristics of Effective Learning: <b>Analysis:</b> What do you notice? <b>Interventions:</b> What are you going to do about it? <b>Evaluation:</b> Did it make a difference? What was the impact? Create a simple group action plan that will support your planning for each 'bubble'/group.</p>
<p><b>Settings 'sending' children Ideas of Best Practice:</b></p>	<p><b>What this might look like:</b> <i>All provision must be fully risk assessed.</i></p>
<p><b>Transfer Record</b> (Appendix) Nursery to Reception transition information to be completed by pre-school setting.</p>	<p><b>Deadline 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020</b></p> <p>End of year/ phase assessments will report on a child's attainment across the Prime and Specific areas of learning as well as the Bristol Characteristics of</p>

<p>Ensure that current assessment and reporting arrangements are clearly understood in YR and Y1.</p> <p>End of year progress information for parents/carers supports all children's unique transitions.</p>	<p>Effective Learning. It is important for the next teacher to know what a child can do and what their learning priorities are. Children will have learnt at home. Learning does not stop when a child is not in school. Children learn from their parents too. It is a partnership.</p>
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**N.B. at time of writing, no decision has been made by DfE to postpone the Reception Baseline Assessment for this academic year and until we have official notification to indicate otherwise, we have to assume that it will go ahead as planned.**

## SEND

### Key principles and priorities:

- Emotional and physical health and wellbeing of children and others during the COVID pandemic are prioritised
- Importance of collaborative working and information sharing between settings, families and agencies to enable the best outcomes for children
- High quality inclusive provision and removal of barriers to meet the needs of children with SEND
- ‘The Unique Child’ and family is recognised and support is individualised accordingly; seeking advice where needed.

The guidance in the strands above relates to all children, including those with SEND. The ideas of best practice below outline strategies and processes that are ‘additional to or different from’ those provided for all children with a focus on transition from one setting to another.

Settings ‘Sending’ Children (This could be for a transition at any point within the EYFS)	
Ideas of best practice:	What this might look like: <i>All provision must be fully risk assessed.</i>
<p>Sending settings understand and value the importance of working in partnership with parents/carers.</p> <p>Key information is updated in partnership and shared.</p>	<p>SENCoS/Key People liaise with families in order to gain an up to date picture of the child’s strengths, interests and needs.</p> <p>Secure video meetings may be facilitated involving EY SENCo, School SENCo and family.</p> <p>Teams may need to prepare for a possible increase in interest in <a href="#">delayed and deferred entry</a>.</p> <p>Families are provided with up to date information about how to access community health services. <a href="#">Appendix 3</a></p> <p>Individual risk assessments and individual provision plans are updated or created in consultation with parents/carers wherever possible, in order to reflect provision that meets government guidelines.</p>

<p>Specific strategies and resources are used to Prepare Children with SEND for Transition.</p>	<p>Where a Bristol SEND Support Plan is in place, EY Settings review and update in collaboration with parents/carers and receiving setting. New outcomes and provision are agreed for the receiving setting, liaising with other agencies where possible. This is done following social distancing guidelines and using secure communication (<a href="#">See appendix 1</a>).</p> <p>‘EY Transfer Pack for children who have SEND’ (slightly amended for this year (<a href="#">appendix 2</a>, <a href="#">appendix 2a</a>, <a href="#">appendix 2b</a>)) is completed in collaboration with parents/ carers and receiving setting. This is done following social distancing guidelines and using secure communication (<a href="#">appendix 1</a>).</p> <p>Information is transferred in the appropriate format for children that either have an Education, Health and Care Plan or have an assessment in progress. This may vary depending on the stage of the assessment.</p> <p>EY settings have awareness of any individual SEN funding that will transfer to the receiving setting/school.</p> <p>Completed paperwork is shared with receiving settings. This is done following social distancing guidelines and using secure communication (<a href="#">appendix 1</a>).</p> <p>Videos of interventions and achievements are shared with receiving settings with consent of parents/carers and following secure communication.</p> <p>Appropriate CPD in relevant specialist interventions is signposted to receiving settings/schools. EYs settings plan how to ensure they have the staffing needed to safely support children with SEND, that there is a member of staff designated as SENCo or interim SENCo and how this can best be accommodated in the planning of groups of children.</p> <p>EY settings implement new routines and key-person roles as consistently as possible in order to re-introduce structure and security for children with SEND with a focus on building relationships. Settings understand that readjustment to the routines in a setting may prove more challenging for some children with SEND. Reference</p>
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<p>Equipment and Services are transferred to the receiving setting.</p> <p>Settings understand the support available and how to access it.</p>	<p>should be made to a child's Individual Provision Plan where appropriate.</p> <p><u>Visual aids</u> are used to support children attending the setting to prepare for transition. This will support independence and familiarity on transfer to a new environment and could include visual time tables; now and next boards; and photo books of specific school environments/staff. Liaison between settings will support consistency of format and style.</p> <p>Differentiated opportunities are provided for children to explore and communicate their emotions around change, e.g. <u>social stories</u>, story books or role play.</p> <p>Children are supported to develop their independence in relation to hygiene and self-care through modelling, visuals and repetition.</p> <p>Practitioners support children to continue to develop their communication skills using their preferred mode e.g. PECs, Makaton, objects of reference.</p> <p><u>Strategies and personalised resources are provided for parents</u> to use at home to help prepare their child for transition. This will be particularly important for those children not currently attending the setting. E.g. walking past new school/setting; looking at photos on school website of EY environment; personal social story; count down calendar. To be provided in agreement with the sending setting.</p> <p>EY SENCOs arrange for transfer of individual resources and communication aids to new setting.</p> <p>Where appropriate, EY settings liaise with community health about transfer of support to school age services.</p> <p>EY SENCOs liaise with therapists in the first instance and then Rachael Clelland for collection and delivery of any specialist equipment.</p> <p>EY settings seek advice of the EY Portage and Inclusion Team if needed, using usual communication channels.</p>
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Settings 'Receiving Children' (This could be for a transition at any point within the EYFS)	
Ideas of best practice:	What this might look like:
<p>Receiving settings understand and value the importance of working in partnership with parents/carers</p> <p>Key Information is updated in partnership and used to inform planning</p> <p>Specific strategies and resources are used to prepare for transition of children with SEND</p>	<p><i>All provision must be fully risk assessed.</i></p> <p>SENCOs/Key People liaise with families in order to gain an up to date picture of the child's strengths, interests and needs.</p> <p>Secure video meetings may be facilitated involving EY SENCo, School SENCo and family.</p> <p>Teams may need to prepare for a possible increase in interest in delayed entry. See link below.</p> <p>Parents are provided with up to date information about how to access community health services. <a href="#">Appendix 3</a></p> <p>Where a Bristol SEND Support Plan is in place, new outcomes and provision are agreed in collaboration with parents/carers and sending setting, liaising with other agencies where possible. This is done following social distancing guidelines and using secure communication (<a href="#">appendix 1</a>).</p> <p>'EY Transfer Action Plan' (slightly amended for this year <a href="#">appendix 2</a>, <a href="#">appendix 2a</a>, <a href="#">appendix 2b</a>) is completed in collaboration with parents/carers and sending setting. This is done following social distancing guidelines &amp; using secure communication (<a href="#">appendix 1</a>).</p> <p>Completed paperwork is received from sending settings. This is done following social distancing guidelines and using secure communication (<a href="#">appendix 1</a>).</p> <p>Information from Universal Bristol EYFS Transfer Records, Transfer Packs for Children with SEND and Bristol SEND Support plans, as well as conversations with previous settings and families, is considered when planning staffing, groupings, environments and resources for Sept 2020.</p> <p>Schools who have identified that they have a Sept 2020 cohort with a particularly high level of need consider requesting additional support from an Inclusion Specialist</p>

	<p>Leader of Education (SLE). They contact their Foundation Years Consultant or Lead Teacher for further information.</p> <p>Receiving setting access relevant on-line CPD (if face to face CPD is not possible) to build knowledge, confidence and understanding to enable the team to better meet the needs of new children with SEND. CPD opportunities from the EY Portage and Inclusion Team and other agencies will be shared as soon as possible.</p> <p>Schools ensure that photos of environments and staff teams are shared on school websites to enable families and EY settings to access them and use them to support discussions with all children but particularly those with SEND.</p> <p>Settings/schools make sure that their whole team know how to meet the needs of the children with SEND and their preferred mode of communication. E.g. symbols, Makaton signing, PECS</p> <p>Settings/schools implement routines and key-person roles as consistently as possible in order to provide structure and security for children with SEND with a focus on building relationships. Settings understand that adjustment to new routines in a setting may prove more challenging for some children with SEND. Reference should be made to a child's Individual Provision Plan where appropriate.</p> <p><u><a href="#">Visual aids</a></u> are used to support children attending the setting to prepare for and manage the transition. This will support independence, familiarity and a sense of belonging on transfer to a new environment. Examples include visual time tables; now and next boards; photo books of specific school environments/staff. Liaison with the sending setting will support consistency.</p> <p>Differentiated opportunities are provided for children to explore and communicate their emotions around change, e.g. <u><a href="#">social stories</a></u>, story books puppets or role play.</p> <p>Children are supported to develop their independence in relation to hygiene and self-care through modelling,</p>
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<p>Equipment is received and liaison takes place with other services</p>	<p>visuals and repetition. Useful <a href="#">visuals</a> to support new routine/environment.</p> <p>Practitioners support children to continue to develop their communication skills using their preferred mode e.g. PECs, Makaton, objects of reference.</p> <p>Strategies and personalised resources are provided for parents to use at home to help prepare their child for transition. This will be particularly important for those children not currently attending a setting. E.g. walking past new school/setting; looking at photos on school website of EY environment; personal social story; count down calendar. To be provided in agreement with the sending setting.</p> <p>Personalised settling in plans are agreed with the family if needed.</p> <p>Settings/schools receive any additional personalised resources, communication aids or specialist equipment and ensure that provision is planned to incorporate these.</p> <p>Where appropriate, settings/schools liaise with community health about transfer of support to school age services.</p> <p>Settings/schools receive any delivery of any specialist equipment and arrange for appropriate storage and training in its use.</p>
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## Supporting Families through Unique Transitions

**Our Bristol's Children's Centres have** remained open and are working hard, in new creative ways, to support all families with children under 5yrs. They are open to everyone, and have a critical role to play in getting us through this very challenging time.

Free support is available for families right across the city; it is delivered through area based Children's Centre Hubs and their dedicated teams of family support workers. Bristol's network of Children Centre services can offer family support in many different ways for example:

- 1:1 phone support
- Virtual groups and support networks
- Signposting to other helpful services
- Information, advice and guidance
- Food clubs and emergency supplies
- Family wellbeing and learning
- Next steps in learning

They are here to help your families, whatever is going on in their life, for example becoming a new parent, or those who might be finding it hard to manage at the moment. You may identify parents who are feeling worried, anxious or feel unsafe in some way.

The teams are highly skilled and well informed, and can offer support and advice on most things e.g. routines and behaviour at home, language development, learning and play, health, housing, finance, relationships and wellbeing.

There are 4 area based Children's Centre Hubs:

- North Bristol Children's Centre
- East Bristol Children's Centre
- Central Bristol Children's Centre
- South Bristol Children's Centre

All are linked to some of Bristol's Good or Outstanding Nursery Schools.

**Please check out the Children's Centres Facebook pages to see what is on offer. You can contact them directly,** refer your families to them or support them access things for themselves or to self-refer. They are all offering virtual timetables of support and plenty of information on family well-being during this uncertain time.

The Bristol Children's Centres can often be a complete lifeline to parents, who may have been living in isolation or worrying in silence. They all support the sense of community and connection in their areas. Bristol City Council has committed to developing this service for our families.

**Please make best use of this valuable resource.**

## Find out more

The following links have been gathered to support this guidance further but this is not an exhaustive list. New information is being written all the time and updates will be added to the Bristol Early Years website.

### Provision and Curriculum

#### [How to get everyone on board](#)

Blog from Family.co

#### [Coming back to school in a bubble](#)

Example of how one school has communicated with families to explain what school will be like. (Ensure your materials are in line with latest government guidelines and risk assessments.)

#### **Social Stories**

##### [Carol Gray - What is it](#)

##### [Coronavirus Social Story](#) (TES)

Contact your lead teacher for more support with this

#### [Recovery Curriculum](#)

A Recovery Curriculum: Loss and life for our children and schools post pandemic  
(Barry Carpenter, Professor of Mental Health in Education, Oxford Brookes University)

#### [Leuven Emotional, Wellbeing and Involvement Scales](#)

Information from Family.co about how to use the Leuven Scales. Contact your lead teacher if you would like more support/information.

#### [Characteristics of effective learning](#)

Blog by Nancy Stewart

#### [Characteristics of Effective Learning for parents/carers](#)

A guide for parents/carers

#### [Transition to Year 1 and curriculum/provision](#)

Blog by Julie Fisher

#### [Year 1 in Action - Guide to taking early years pedagogy into KS1](#)

Anna Ephgrave

#### [Importance of play](#)

Sussex University

#### [Introduction to emotion coaching](#)

Blog by The Gottman Institute

### [Strengthening child's emotional intelligence](#)

Practicing the 5 steps of Emotion Coaching – The Gottman Institute

## Relationships & emotional wellbeing

Trauma informed practice

[Trauma informed strategies](#) - An online learning course.

[Trauma informed schools UK](#) - Resources to support teachers and parents/carers

### [Sign and symptoms of mental health challenges](#)

Article offering insight into the signs and symptoms of mental health challenges in children/young people and tips for adults on how to support them.

### [Mentally healthy schools](#)

A toolkit of strategies to help combat anxiety.

### [Save the Children](#) – for families

This page gives parents and families some ideas for families on how to relax at home.

### [How to look after your mental health and wellbeing](#)

Government guidance

### [Supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.](#)

Government guidance

### [Advice for professionals](#)

Anna Freud, National Centre for Children and Families

### [Managing unexpected endings & transitions](#)

Anna Freud, National Centre for Children and Families

### [Anna Freud National centre for Children and Families](#)

Coronavirus from the perspective of a baby or young child

### [What Survival Looks Like At Home](#)

Fight, flight, freeze

### [Ways to support children when school re open](#)

Article by Mary Meredith.

### [Mental health and transitions](#)

A wide range of resources from Beacon House (Specialist Therapeutic Services and Trauma Team)

[The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma](#)

YouTube talk by Bessel Van Der Kolk.

[The PACE \(playful, accepting, curious, empathic\) approach](#)

Information on the PACE approach.

[Bereavement support](#) – British Psychological Society

## Assessment

[Bristol EY website](#)

Assessment and transition information

[Development Matters](#)

[BCC EYFS Transfer Record 2020](#) - Bristol Transfer Record

[Bristol Early Years Assessment for Learning Guidance](#) – Go down to the useful resources section

[Differentiated Early Years Outcome document](#)

[Bristol Key Considerations for Curriculum](#)

Primary curriculum considerations (Bristol Learning City)

[NC Programmes of study KS1](#)

[Teacher Assessment framework KS1](#)

[Listening to children to support their experiences of change/transitions](#)

Free Open University course

[Current changes \(relating to Covid-19\) to the EYFS and the expectations of curriculum delivery and assessment](#)

Government guidance

## SEND

[Delayed and Deferred Entry](#)

[Bristol Local Offer](#)

[Early Years Portage and Inclusion Team](#)

[Differentiated Early Years Outcomes](#)

## With thanks to...

Lucy Driver - Head Bristol Early Years Teaching School/NLE

Ali Carrington - Assistant Head Bristol Early Years Teaching School/CLL SLE

Smi Pearce - Foundation Stage Consultant (Assessment and Transition)

Beth Osborne - Foundation Stage Consultant (Birth- 3)

Kate Hubble - Foundation Consultant (Inclusion)

Sarah Swann – Senior Early Years Portage and Inclusion Specialist

Portage and Inclusion Team

Kate Irvine - Network Lead Teacher/CLL SLE

Cate Peel - Assessment/Transition SLE

Rosie McCallum-Faraday - Birth to 3 SLE

Melissa Arrowsmith - Assessment/Transition SLE

Lucy Rae - Equalities SLE

Fran Undy – Year R SLE

Sarah Birch - Year R SLE

Anna Dunford - Year R SLE

Zoe Breen - Early Years Lead Teacher

Cerys Stevens - Primary Teaching and Learning Consultant

Lottie Paul - Year 1 Teacher, St Peters C of E Primary

Clare Sutherland - Head Teacher, Southville Primary

Ellen Cook - Educational Psychologist

CAMHS Team

Lisa D'Orso - PTUK Certified Play and Creative Arts Therapist

Ann Mortimore - HOPE virtual school for children in care

## Appendices

## Unique Transition SEND Appendix 1 - Secure Communication

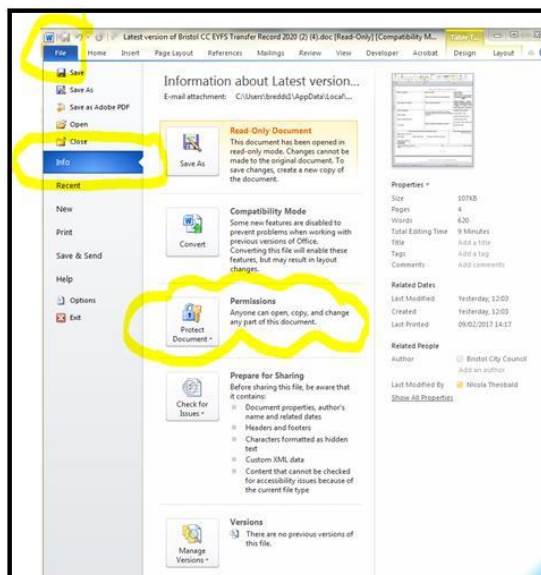
### Password Protecting your Transfer Records for Emailing

When sending your transfer records to the receiving setting they will need to be emailed securely. This requires you to add a password to each of your documents before emailing. You will then need to phone the recipient to advise them of the password. **DO NOT EMAIL THE PASSWORD.**

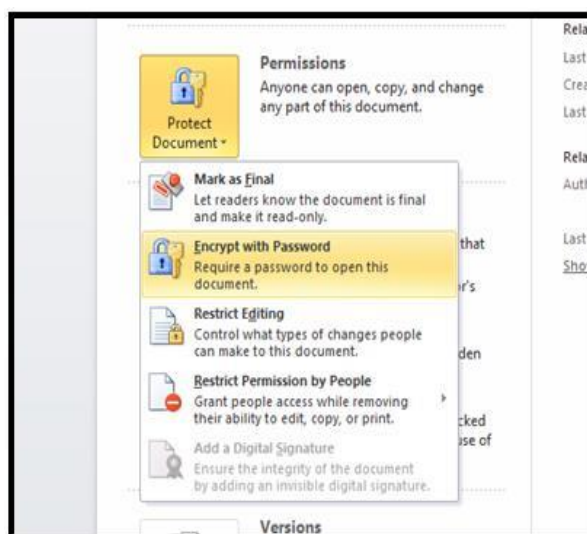
You will need to password protect each document individually, however you could use the same password for all the records and attachment them all to the same email.

#### Protecting and Sending the Documents

1. Complete and save each document.
2. Click on FILE, info, then click the Permissions button (the one with the padlock and key icon)



3. From the drop down list, select 'Encrypt with Password'



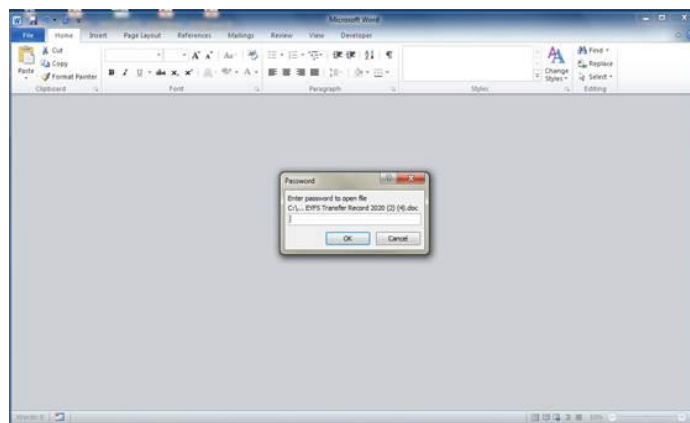
4. Type in a password – remember this is case sensitive and that you will need to be able to spell this out via phone to the provider.



5. Repeat / Confirm the same password



6. Click Save again - your document is now password protected. No one can open it without the password you set. If you want to 'test' that it worked, just close the document and re-open it and you will see the request for the password...



7. Send your documents via your usual email system (e.g. outlook or Hotmail etc.) and then follow up the email with a phone call to disclose the password.



**Unique Transition SEND Appendix 2 - Early Years Transfer Pack for Children with SEND:  
Document 1**

## Cover Sheet

<b>Child's Name:</b>		<b>Date of Birth:</b>
<b>Setting:</b>		
<b>Receiving School / Setting:</b>		
<b>Please tick below as appropriate:</b>		
SEN Support	SEND Support Plan	Education Health and Care Plan
<b>Early Years SEN Panel Funding BAND (if applicable):</b>		
<b>Main areas for development</b> e.g: Communication and Interaction / Physical		
<b>Summary of useful strategies and important things to know</b> eg: equipment / adaptations / staff training		
<b>Agencies / Services involved:</b>		
<b>List of documents attached:</b>		
<b>Completed by:</b>		<b>Discussed and agreed with Parent / Carer.</b>
Name:		Name:
Signature:		

## Unique Transition SEND Appendix 2a - Early Years Transfer Pack for Children with SEND

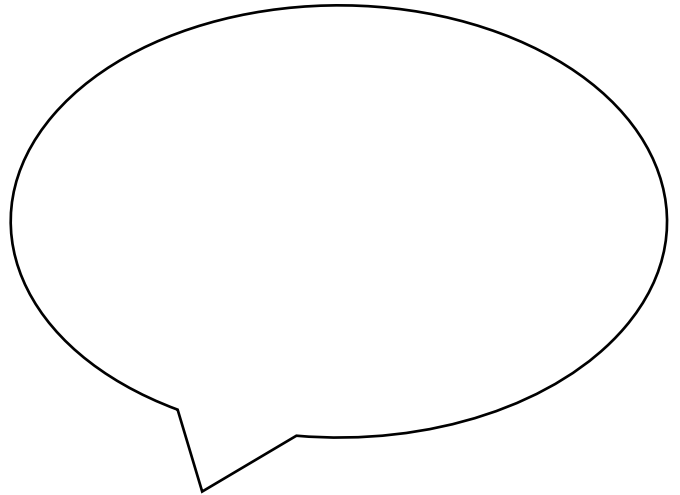
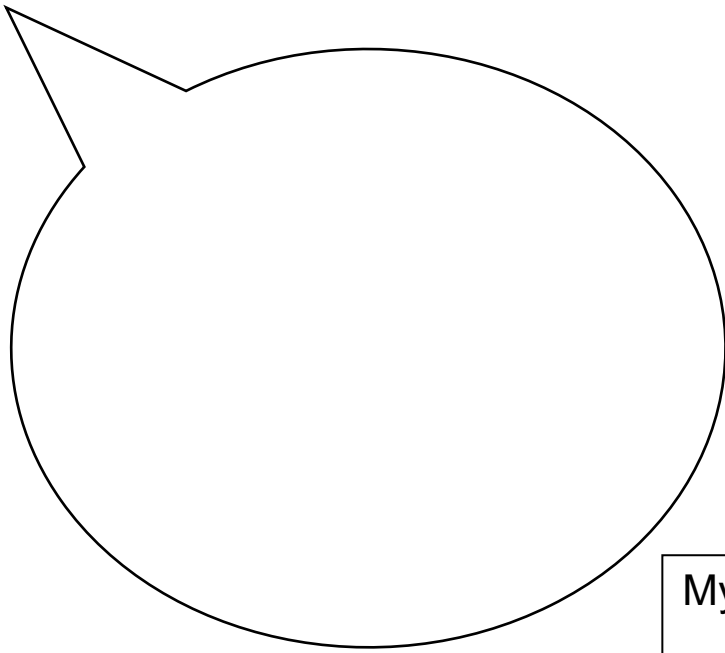
# All About Me Profile

## Guidelines

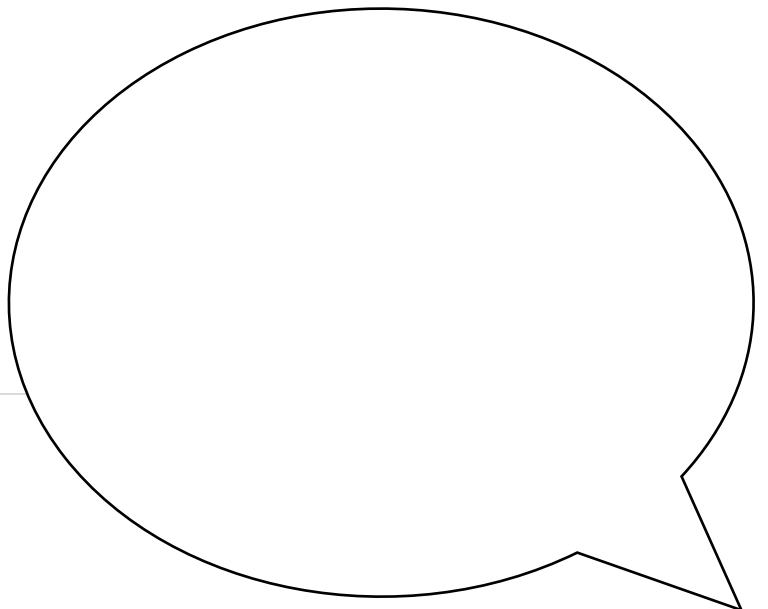
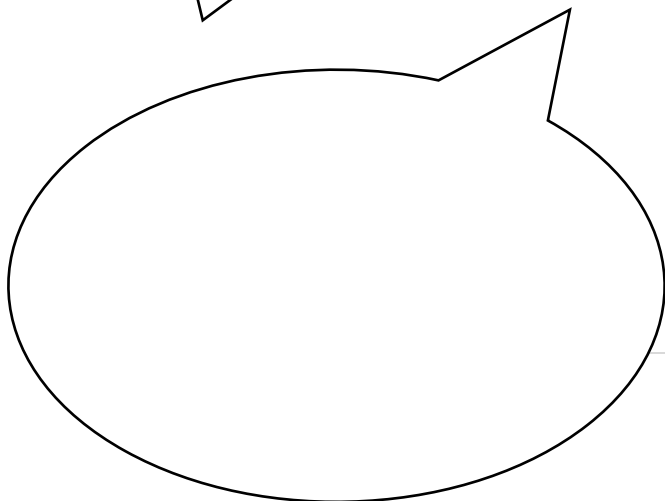
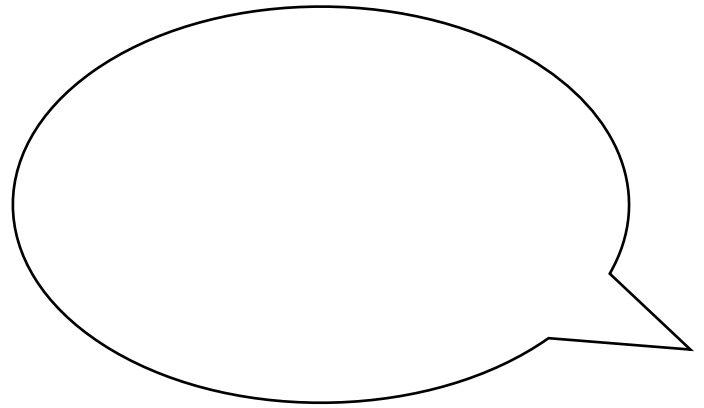
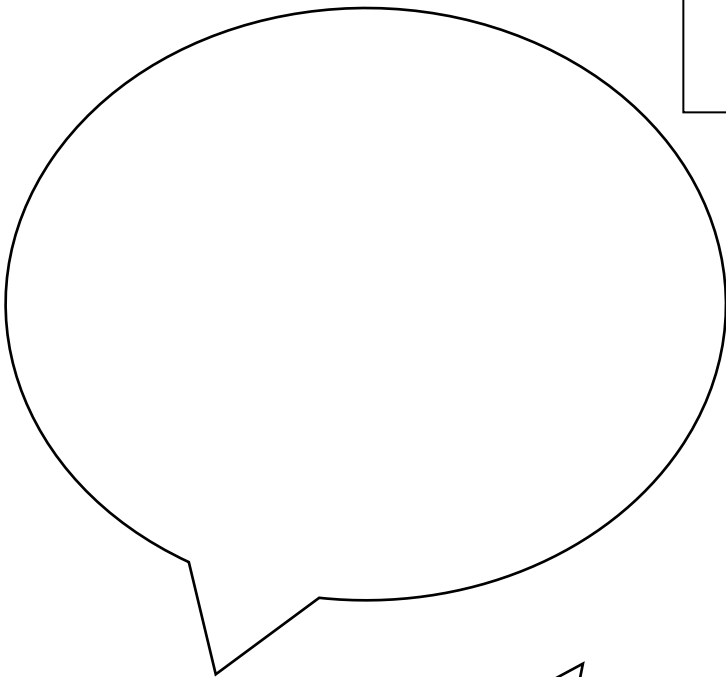
- When a child has special educational needs or disabilities and is unable to tell us easily what they need, an 'All About Me' profile is very useful. This is of particular importance this year when it may not be possible for schools to visit children in their preschool setting, or to have a face to face meeting with their key person and SENCo.
- There is an example template on the next page which you can complete using statements specific to the individual child. You could insert the child's photograph in the middle of the profile.
- An 'All About Me' profile should be completed in partnership with parent carers and will need to reflect any new interests, strengths or difficulties that have emerged since they have either been unable to attend the setting or have continued to attend but the environment/support has been very different.

## Possible Statements:

- Let me tell you about mealtimes – the food I like, dislike, texture, I eat and drink using...
- My favourite activities are...
- Here are some things I really do not like...
- How I respond when being touched (I may startle or be very sensitive when touched)
- I sometimes wear, e.g. (special boots/splints)...
- This is how I go to the toilet...
- There are certain positions that are better for me...
- I communicate and express my feelings and needs by



My name is:



## Unique Transition SEND Appendix 2b - Early Years Transfer Pack for Children with SEND

### Transfer Action Plan

<b>Child's Name</b>		<b>Current Setting</b>	
<b>Date of Birth</b>		<b>Receiving Setting</b>	

*Refer to the Unique Transition Guidance and All About Me information in order to identify key actions that will support the child's transition into school.*

<b>Action Needed</b>	<b>Steps to Accomplish</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
<p><b>Example:</b> Calendar for one week countdown to first visit to school and timetable of first few weeks</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a template calendar using familiar boardmaker symbols and email/post to family.</li> <li>2. Confirm September timetable (that has been planned to provide a consistent routine with key adult) and email/post to family.</li> <li>3. Look at calendar every morning with X</li> </ol>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> July</p> <p>10<sup>th</sup> July</p> <p>w/c 31<sup>st</sup> August</p>	<p>EY SENCo</p> <p>School SENCo</p> <p>Parent</p>

## Unique Transition SEND Appendix 3 - Strategies to use at Home to Support Transition

### Supporting Children with SEND

Your child starting school is always a big step for parents and carers; and during the current COVID pandemic any worries are likely to be even greater. If your child also has special educational needs or disabilities, you may have additional concerns about how your child will manage.

Your child's key person and the SENCo at your child's setting will be helping your child to prepare and will be liaising with the new school to make sure that they have everything they need. This guide provides advice about how you can also support your child to get ready for this next step in their life and your SENCo will be able to provide guidance about how it relates to your own child's individual strengths, needs and interests.

Many families are worried about how their child will manage new morning routines, eating, toileting and dressing.

- Build up in small steps so that the child gradually completes more of the task without help.
- Use visual prompts to support understanding and help the child to remember the sequence.
- Model as much as possible whilst thinking aloud to reinforce what you are doing.
- Keep the activity as distraction free as possible and have a consistent routine.

**HAND WASHING** should be encouraged regularly and properly, especially:



- Before food/eating.
- Any time you are leaving or returning to your house.
- After using the toilet and flushing
- When you come in from the garden
- Blowing or wiping their nose

If you can sing a 'washing hands' song with your child this can help make it fun and a routine. For example:

*"Wash, wash, wash your hands  
Wash them very clean  
Wash, wash, wash, your hands  
Get them very clean."* (Tune row your boat).

Using visuals alongside will also help remind your child of the process and will help develop their independence.



**DRESSING AND UNDRRESSING** themselves will help your child develop their confidence, independence and motor skills.



- Can your child recognise their own coat and shoes?
- Can they put their coat on, but may need with zips or fastenings?
- Can they push their foot into their shoe, but may need help with fastening?
- Can they hang up their coat on a coat peg?

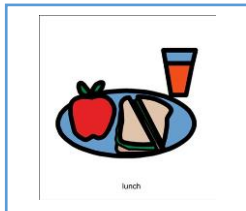
These are skills that can be practiced at home before going to school. Build up in small steps, with consistent simple prompts.

**POTTY TRAINING** children with additional needs can be done in much the same way as teaching a child without additional needs. The ERIC guidance advises:



- Children with additional needs can't always communicate so you can't rely on their signals to tell you when they're ready to potty train. Knowing how often your child goes for a wee or poo will really help. You can then create a potty or toilet routine based on the information in the chart.
- It's important that your child feels relaxed, comfortable and secure about using a toilet or potty. If you start with the toilet you should use a footstool to help your child feel confident and safe.
- Drink plenty: Make sure your child is having 6-8 drinks of water-based fluid a day to help keep their bowel and bladder healthy.
- Check for constipation: Your child should poo at least four times a week and the poo should be soft and easy to pass.
- Use easy clothing: Clothes that are easy to pull up and down are the best. Choose clothes that are easy to wash and dry.
- Get into a routine: Don't ask your child if they need a wee or a poo as they might not know what this is to begin with. Call it 'potty time' or 'toilet time' and go every couple of hours.
- Keep it short: Don't let them sit for too long on the potty or toilet, two or three minutes is fine. Keep some toys handy to occupy them while they sit.
- Encourage boys to sit down to wee: They might also need a poo and sitting down will help them to go. They may empty their bladder better sitting down too.
- Give lots of praise: For each little step like sitting on the potty, washing hands and getting dressed. Rewards are a good incentive – make them small and instant, like a sticker.
- Be patient: It may take some time to learn, so don't be surprised if there are lots of accidents to start with. You might decide your child isn't ready, in which case stop and have another go in a few weeks.

Using visuals alongside will also help remind your child of the process and will help develop their independence.



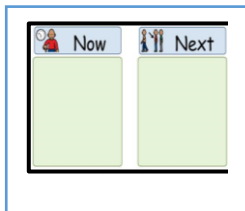
**EATING** a hot meal or a packed lunch is an important skill for school. Encourage your child to use at least a spoon for hot meals and then move on to a child size knife and fork. Aim to sit and eat your meal with them at the same time so that you can support the social interaction and model using the cutlery.

Packed lunches can be encouraged by having picnics in the garden or front room, encouraging your child to eat savoury items before fruit or yoghurt

Encouraging these skills will support children develop independence, help to teach them how to have awareness of their bodies and how to be healthy. They are also working on fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination as they eat. Fine motor skills are important for later holding pencils or tools.

Sources of support available to help you to help your child:

- **Toileting:** <https://www.eric.org.uk/early-years-and-education-professionals/contact.org.uk/parent-guide-toilet-training>
- **Sleep:** <https://cerebra.org.uk/download/sleep-a-guide-for-parents/contact.org.uk/parent-guide-sleep>
- **Feeding and eating:** [contact.org.uk/parent-guide-feeding](https://contact.org.uk/parent-guide-feeding)

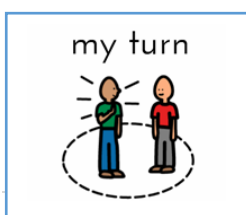


**ROUTINE** is very important to help children feel secure and to support their understanding. Having a consistent routine at home that is supported by a visual timeline will help children. The reception class is also likely to use a visual timeline, so by introducing your child to the same pictures, they will be more independent and reassured when they start.

As you get closer to the date that you are due to start at your new setting, you begin to adjust to the new routine.

- Introduce new uniform, bags, shoes etc.
- Walk past the new building as part of your daily routine.
- Introduce a countdown calendar for 2 weeks before the start date, you can add all the 'exciting' things which will happen and let your child cross off the days.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Aug 17	Aug 18	Aug 19	Aug 20	Aug 21	Aug 22	Aug 23
Aug 24	Aug 25	Aug 26	Aug 27	Aug 28	Aug 29	Aug 30
Aug 31	Sept 1	Sept 2	Sept 3	Sept 4	Sept 5	Sept 6

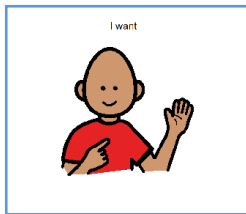


**PLAYING TOGETHER AND SHARING** are really good skills to practice with your child before they go to school, particularly if they find interactions difficult or have spent a long time away from other children.

If the new school has photos on its website, or if you have been given a photobook, you can look at the pictures with your child – the rooms, the activities and the toys. Communicate with your child using these visuals so help them anticipate playing with new friends with these new activities.

A few ways to practice turn taking:

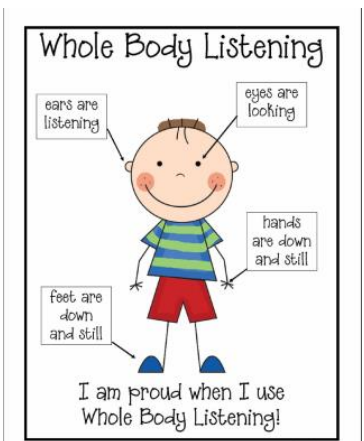
- Rolling a ball between each other stating “Mummy’s turn and as you roll it Henry’s turn”
- Blowing bubbles “Molly’s turn to pop.” Blow some more saying “Daddy’s turn to pop”.
- Put all the pieces of a favourite jigsaw into a bag and ‘take turns’ with your child to pull one out saying “Henry’s turn” then “Mummy’s turn” until the puzzle is complete. Use a 6/8 piece puzzle so the child doesn’t have to wait too long for their turn.
- When playing cars, play alongside your child with a different car. After a few minutes ask “Molly can Daddy share your car. You have this one and I will have that one”.



**COMMUNICATION SKILLS** are important whatever stage your child is at and whatever their preferred mode of communication. Being able to express their worries or frustrations, being able to follow instructions, keeping safe and showing what they want or like will all help them to settle successfully. Ensuring that the receiving setting knows the best way to understand your child and to help them understand is essential. Continue to develop their skills before they start by:

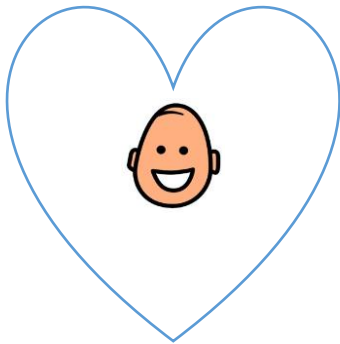
- Using visuals for transitions, to encourage choice making and to support activities will help with this.
- Being consistent with language that you model will help children learn new words, Makaton signs or PECS symbols.
- Join the child in what they are choosing to play with and follow their lead. Watching, copying and responding will help develop key interaction skills.
- Provide reasons to communicate whenever you can. Leave gaps for them to fill and provide choices for them to communicate. ‘Ready, steady.....’ games are great for this, and holding out and labelling a choice of two snacks or toys is a good way to encourage communication.
- Support good listening skills, for example:
  - Being outside and stopping to label what you can hear.
  - Clapping syllables of names and words.

Encourage whole body listening, providing sensory support such as fiddle toys if needed.



**RELATIONSHIPS AND WELLBEING** are at the centre of any successful transition. Many children and their families will be feeling anxious about what to expect and the more





that we can provide security and reassurance, the better our emotional wellbeing.

Building trusting relationships with new adults and children, who understand our needs, value our strengths and show interest in our favourite things will give children a sense of belonging and security. By showing them what to expect and how to enjoy it, they will be able to develop trust and enjoy the next stage of their learning.

Support this by:

- Helping your child to develop the communication skills they need to be able to label and express their emotions. The adults in their new setting will be learning how to understand them.
- Helping your child to prepare for their new school day by putting in place regular routines with visual supports. The new setting will be adjusting their routines and environment to welcome them.
- Helping your child to play, share and take-turns so that they can look forward to making new friends. The new setting will be put in place support to help them with this if they find it difficult.
- Helping your child to know what to expect by looking at simple [social stories](#) with them. These will show them what their classroom will be like, what things will be the same, what things will be different and what they need to try and do. Most importantly it will reassure them that it will be fun and that they will be going home at the end of the day.

<b>Ideas to support children on return to their school or setting:</b>	<b>What this might look like in practice:</b> <i>All provision must be fully risk-assessed.</i>
<p><b>Non-verbal communication; allowing silence; tuning in:</b> Some children may seem quieter than before lockdown. It is important that we tune it to their individual needs, allowing silence, but staying aware of any concerning behaviour or signs of withdrawal. It is ok to be quiet. If a child is deeply absorbed in their play, it is important to allow time before we speak, so that their creative process has space to continue and reach a natural pause; this way we are on their level and attuned.</p>	<p>If we are on a child's level, we may notice their non-verbal communication. We need to be aware of speaking for, or over the child, and using more words than necessary. If we can be comfortable with silence, the child will learn to be as well. We can model calm, open body language, and use our facial expression as well as our words to show that we are listening and noticing.</p>
<p><b>Mirroring:</b> When feelings are too difficult to put in to words, adults can provide a safe space for a child to express themselves non-verbally. By mirroring a child's actions, sounds, or movements, they may feel seen, valued and understood.</p>	<p>Mirroring can be done with most mediums, e.g. puppets, small world, malleable materials, sensory play, musical instruments, and movement. Be on child's physical level where possible, repeating their sounds, actions or movements, and pausing before continuing. Notice what the child (or puppet, etc.) does next.</p>
<p><b>Noticing and reflecting:</b> When we notice and reflect back exactly what we have seen, the child is more able to understand for themselves how they are feeling, and what they are trying to say.</p>	<p>If a child draws, makes marks, builds or paints, for instance, it can help to comment on exactly what we see, rather than ask, or make assumptions about what it is, e.g., 'I see a yellow blob, and you went round and round, and I notice lots of splashes at the top...could you tell me more?' This way we might find a story emerges.</p>
<p><b>Same resources, presented differently:</b> Children have missed many weeks of school or nursery, and many will be excited to be back. It will be important to have most areas the same, to help children feel secure and not to confuse them. However, when the same toys and resources are presented differently, there can be fresh ideas and new stories can emerge.</p>	<p>Resources such as small world play could be presented differently, e.g. in individual trays, or in quiet, sectioned off spaces. Here, a child might create their 'world', perhaps unconsciously, and a story might unfold. In this safe space, a child has a chance to explore their life experiences symbolically, at a distance from reality, making it easier to see, feel and understand.</p>
<p><b>The power of stories:</b> Stories, symbolic and imaginative play allow a child the opportunity to explore their life experience safely, at a 'dramatic' distance.</p>	<p>Adults joining in the child's play, and staying within the 'story', convey that what they are seeing is valued. As problems are solved through story, there may be a sense of hope and resolve that transfers to real life.</p>
<p><b>The power of sensory play and malleable materials:</b> When we use the sense of touch, through sensory materials, we connect with a 'felt sense'; we may connect with embodied memories, and our emotions. These can be buried deep within our unconscious, and may surprise us when they surface. A child might simply find they can release energy through these materials, without the need to talk. Another time, a story might emerge as they form the materials. Being witnessed, or mirrored, by a trusted, attuned adult during this creative process, a child might find themselves connecting to feelings and remembering experiences that they may or may not want to share.</p>	<p>Sensory materials, and opportunities for open-ended, 'messy' play, can provide children with a way of connecting with deep feelings that go beyond words. As we allow them to explore, particularly with their sense of touch, perhaps with clay, paint, shaving foam, slime, etc., they may be re-creating the 'mess' that they have experienced or witnessed in their home life. Using the approaches above, such as mirroring, open ended comments rather than questions, and allowing silence, will all support the child to use the materials as they need. If a child begins to make figures and shapes, and it feels appropriate, adults might comment on what they see first, and then ask 'I wonder what's happening there? It sounds like a story...what happens next?' Alternatively, clay figures, for instance, can be used as 'puppets', allowing a conversation to take place.</p>