

Emotional well being



Familiar faces help transition

Change can be a stressful time for parents and carers as well as children. They're thinking about juggling routines, meeting new staff, as well as remembering new kit!

Try to keep lines of communication as open and welcoming as possible during times of transition. Simple things can make a huge difference.

How do parents feel?

Have you ever asked parents how they feel? Do you really listen to their response?

It's really important that parents feel heard and that they have a range of opportunities for communicating with you. What works for one may not work for another.

Getting to know parents will help you to build a relationship based on trust and respect. Make time for a proper induction meeting, and make it as relaxed as possible. Try to invite some current parents who may be able to support new parents.

Consider a **buddy system** for parents who may feel anxious and isolated.

Develop a **settling in plan** – particularly for very young, or children with Special Educational Needs. This might include some background on the child, such as activities that their child enjoys, and small step targets to help the child settle. Ideally, this will be reviewed regularly with the parents and built upon as the child becomes more confident.

Allow ample **one to one** time – offer your parents and carers an appointment to see you to talk without others being around. This may be at home or in the setting. Parents may offer more sensitive information about the child at this time and they will feel reassured by spending some time with you.

In practice

“We have a worry box in our preschool to collect parent’s concerns about their child starting school. We address these worries at our information evenings.

We always try and encourage parents to get to know each other, so that they can share concerns. We make time for information evenings for parents to network.

We have a key person – this works well for parents as well as the child. Parents need to talk, listen and learning from their key person.”

“He thinks that school is extra to pre-school. I don't think he knows that he won't come anymore...”

Parent