



## **TRANSITIONING INTO AN EARLY YEARS PROVISION FOR CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

*This document is to be used to support children with additional needs transitioning in to an Early Years provision (Nursery, Pre-school, childminder). It can also be used to evaluate how successful the transition has been for the child and family.*

Being an Early Years provider that strives for inclusion of all children, brings a lot of benefits to the child as well as the Early years Provision. Benefits of being an inclusive setting include:

- extending and developing staff knowledge and skills
- upskilling staff through training
- the opportunity to learn about other organisations such as NPA, CDC etc.
- positive effect on reputation of the provider,
- opportunities to liaise with a specialist provision
- increase ethos of provider within the local community
- offering education to all children within their community

If the child is known to have additional needs prior to them starting at an Early Years provision, it is likely that the child has professionals involved. One of those professionals may be a Portage practitioner or an advisor from the Early Years SEND team. They will act as the 'Lead Professional' to support transition, by supporting that vital link between provision and home.

### **Key Government guidance/legislation**

***SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015)*** – The SEND CoP is a legal document that all providers must adhere to. Amongst many points, the SEND CoP discusses the need for all providers to promote equality and inclusion for children with disabilities or SEN, which includes removing all barriers that prevent children accessing early education and providing support for the child to reach their full potential. SEND support should also include planning and preparing for transition.

***The Equality Act (2010)*** – The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. This includes both children and families wanting to access your provision, with 'disability' and 'use of education' as specific points of the Act. This means you cannot limit access to your provision through direct or indirect discrimination. It also clearly states that all providers must make pre-emptive reasonable adjustments to ensure children are not at a disadvantage

### **Key points to consider ensuring a successful initial transition**

- Making a good first impression
  - Your provision's SEND Information Report, which is on Leicestershire's Local Offer, is often used as a way to form parents and carers initial impression. It is vitally important to ensure that the SEND report is up to date. Speak to your Area SENCO about updating your SEND Information Report if this is needed.
- Good communication
  - Listening and valuing parents' views is vital. They know their own children the best and can often provide a useful insight.
  - Ensure a system is set up for communicating with parents. This is a very anxious time for all parents/carers, but especially so for those with children with additional needs, as often they have not had regular opportunities away from their child.
- Working with other professionals
  - If there is a specialist advisor/practitioner involved, they can act as a lead professional and a link between provision and parent/carers
  - Seeking any professional opinions prior to the child starting will give you a clear picture
  - Holding a professional meeting prior to the child starting can often give you key information that might otherwise have been missed
  - Maintaining contact with professionals once the child is in setting is important. They can advise on good ways to support the child.
  - When the child has begun in the provision, if there are professionals not yet involved that you feel should be, then use the referral routes as detailed on our website.
- Enhanced, Flexible Transition
  - Have a flexible approach in what is offered in terms of your 'usual' transition. For example, a child may need a more enhanced transition with more visits and more opportunities to talk to parent/carers.
  - It is advised to start transition early. The earlier you start it, the more successful it will be, as both the child and the family will have more time to adapt
  - It is also advised to organise your visits at different points of the day/session, so the child experiences different aspects of your provisions.
  - It is vitally important to start from the viewpoint of what the child can do and not what they can't. Building relationships with both the child and family is key and can be achieved through a successful transition.
- Adaptations
  - It is important to consider any environmental adaptations, or any additional equipment needs prior to the child starting.
  - Do the family receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA)? If so Disability Access Fund (DAF) can be applied for when the child turns three. This is often used to support adaptations or new equipment in provisions.



- Funding and Training
  - SENCOs and Managers need to consider any training that staff may need or want prior to the child starting. Training can often be used to build confidence within key worker staff. It is important to consider training needs early, as often courses fill up or only run certain times of the year.
  - It is highly unlikely that funding will be allocated to children prior to them starting at the provision. The only possible exception to this is some children with complex medical needs who need 1:1 support to administer medication throughout the day. In all other cases, we would expect to see evidence of the Graduated Approach of support prior to awarding funding.
  
- Children with Medical needs
  - See section on our [website](#) for more information.



*APPENDIX 1 - EXAMPLE INFORMATION DOCUMENT*

**INITIAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT FOR CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

*(PRIOR TO THE CHILD STARTING AT THE PROVISION, TO GO ALONGSIDE THE INFORMATION COLLATED FOR ALL)*

Child's Name:

Date of Birth:

Things I love:

How I communicate:

Things I find hard:

How I let you know I am angry or sad:

Any medical needs?

Any equipment needs?

Professionals involved:

Attended any previous provisions?

Worries or concerns of parents/carers?

Any specific information we need to know around eating and drinking?