



Transition from infant to junior school

A guide for parents and carers

This guidance was co-produced in collaboration with a number of organisations including:



Access Through Technology



Family Voice Norfolk

What is transition?

Our lives are full of change, during which we transition or move from one stage to another. A transition from one educational setting to another can be a very anxious time for both parent carers and for their children. This guide is to help parent carers of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who are preparing to move from an infant school (key stage 1) to a junior school (key stage 2). Pupils transfer from infant to junior school at the end of year 2, in the new academic year following their 7th birthday.

If your child is in a primary school, there is no need to read any further. Your child will stay in the same setting and will move up to the next year group automatically - see guidance on 'Moving from class to class.'

How do we plan for success?

Effective transitions rely upon...

- ✓ Good planning
- ✓ Good communication

Good transition planning benefits all children and young people. However, for those with additional needs, including SEND, additional planning will be required to ensure that transition is successful.

When should I start to think about a school for year 3?

If your child does not have an education, health and care plan (EHCP)...

- ✓ Start to think about possible schools for year 3 by the Autumn of the year before your child is due to start (at the latest)
- ✓ Apply for a junior school placement in the usual way
- ✓ Important dates in the admissions process are available here:

www.admissionsonline.norfolk.gov.uk



If your child has an EHCP...

- ✓ You need to start thinking about the transition at least 18 months before it will happen
- ✓ You will be sent a parental preference form to complete in September of the year before your child is due to transfer
- ✓ The name of your EHCP coordinator will be on this letter
- ✓ Your child's EHCP will be reviewed and a school placement will be named on an updated EHCP, issued in February
- ✓ This will be sent to you by email. If you don't get the school of your choice, you have the right to appeal

Am I able to visit possible schools?

- ✓ Yes. As well as holding open days, many schools will welcome a further visit. Contact the school directly to make an appointment. Be mindful that some open days might happen after the date that you need to put in your preference.
- ✓ It is a good idea to ask to speak to the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) at the school.

- ✓ You may want to take someone with you, so you can discuss what you saw and how you felt about the school
- ✓ You may want to jot down some thoughts and feelings straight after your visit ('pros and cons'), particularly if you are looking around a number of different schools.
- ✓ If your child has an EHCP, you should take it with you to show the support that is written in the plan, but bear in mind that the school may not have time to look at it in full.

What should we discuss on the visit?

- ✓ Communicate any worries that you have and consider how they can be addressed
- ✓ Give a true reflection of your child's needs, remembering to be sensitive to when and where to discuss these
- ✓ There are some things that may not be appropriate to discuss in front of your child
- ✓ Consider how your child can be involved in the process
- ✓ Be prepared to consider other ideas that the new setting may have

You may want to ask the school about...

The structure of the school day

- What will my child's day look like?
- What are the timings of the day?
- Where do they put their bag, coat and money?
- What are the snack and lunch arrangements?
- How do toilet breaks for children work?
- Are there quiet areas?
- How are children supported at break or lunch times?
- Will my child have homework?

Teaching and learning

- What is the timetable like?
- What will they be learning?
- Will there be homework? How is homework set?
- Is there an app where I am told of homework?
- What happens if my child does not complete homework?
- What happens if they do not know how to do their homework? How can they get help?
- How does the pastoral support system work?
- What is the approach to behaviour? How is bullying dealt with?

How they support learners with SEND

- How does your school support children with SEND?
- How do you make adaptations for children with SEND?
- How are teaching assistants used?
- Will my child have access to a key worker?

How you can communicate with them

- Who would be my main contact in school if I have any concerns?
- How do we communicate and when?
- Is there a home/school diary or an app to support communication?
- How will you support me to support my child?
- English is not my first language. What support is available to help me access information?

Transport

- If my child arrives by bus/taxi, how will they be met?
- Can they cycle or scoot?

What your child will need

- What equipment do they need to bring?
- Do they need to bring a snack?
- How do they pay for lunch? What do they need to bring?
- Uniform - How affordable is uniform? Is there room for flexibility/adaptation, if required? Where can I purchase it?

Wider aspects of school life

- What clubs or activities outside of school are available?
- What sort of trips and visits does the school do?
- How will my child be included in these?
- What opportunities will there be for me to be involved in school life?

Transition arrangements

- How do you ensure a smooth transition between year 2 and year 3?
- Do you provide us with an induction pack?
- How will you know what support my child needs?
- What additional support can be provided to help my child transition successfully?

Does my child need an EHCP to access additional support or funding?

No. All mainstream schools in Norfolk apply for any additional funding and request support for children with SEND, regardless of whether they have an EHCP or not.

Schools can request support from and/or apply to the Local Authority for additional funding.

Once my child has been allocated a school place, what happens next?

Infant schools and junior schools need to work together with you and your child to ensure a positive transition. They should:

- ✓ Meet to discuss the transition arrangements for children with additional needs
- ✓ Ensure that information about your child's needs is shared with the new setting in good time
- ✓ Invite you and any professionals involved with your child to a transition meeting where a transition plan can be recorded, and actions agreed

What extra support might be available to help my child?

Additional support might include:

- ✓ Extra visits (before the main transition days for all children) to familiarise themselves with the new environment and new people
- ✓ Taking photos of the new setting
- ✓ Providing prompt cards or checklists as reminders of new people or new routines
- ✓ Creating 'social stories' to help prepare your child for change
- ✓ Providing a 'My new school' booklet or transition pack to provide information about the new setting, including new routines
- ✓ Providing clear maps of the site and/or timetables
- ✓ Identifying a 'go to' person for children and families
- ✓ Working with health professionals to adapt the learning environment and ensure accessibility
- ✓ Organising specialist training for staff
- ✓ Providing specialist equipment or resources to facilitate access to learning
- ✓ Creating individual support plans for your child
- ✓ Access to extra support from the pastoral team

- ✓ Creating a 'one-page profile' so that the new school knows all the important information about your child

An example one-page profile:

This is what you need to know about me

My name is: John Smith

I like people to call me: Jonny

My birthday is: 6th November 2004

People who are important to me: Grandma, Dad, Sam (brother), Sarah (step mum).

School staff: Nicky and Mike

I live with: Dad, Sam and Sarah

I stay with Grandma in the holidays.

Important things to know about me at home:

I can be very social and enjoy playing games. I love to 'chat'. I like to play with my laptop. I really want to be independent.

I have a muslin square called my 'ooz-ooz' - this is my comforter.

This is how to communicate with me: talk to me, use signs for key words, gesture or point, use facial expression. I understand most of what is said to me if short and simple sentences are used.

I will communicate with you using... gesture and points, facial expressions, I can say some words that sound like names, I can use PECs to make requests for my key motivators (ooz-ooz, computer)

PHOTO

Other people that work with me and know my needs:

Mike, Sophie, Nicky, Jane (EP)

People who are important to me at my setting:

Nicky

The person / people I can go to: Nicky or Mike

Important things for you to know about me at my setting:

I need clear routine and structure for my school day. I need to be around those who understand me with patience and tolerance. I can hit out; I need firm reminding of expectations. I can be demanding of staff attention.

People who live with me and look after me, want you to know:

Jonny will always need adult support.

He can demonstrate some challenging behaviour but this is improving.

Jonny is very loving.

My future – aspirations:

- To be as independent as I can
- To communicate effectively
- To build good relationships with those around me

in:

My SEN Support Plan **My EHCP** My Risk Management Plan My Care Plan My Boxall Profile **My PEP**

What can I do to help my child prepare?

- ✓ Encourage a positive mindset when talking to your child about the changes ahead
- ✓ Talk to your child about what is going to happen and look at pictures of the new setting together
- ✓ Find out which of their friends from infant school will move to the junior school
- ✓ Arrange for them to have a visit or visits before they start
- ✓ Do you already know any other parent carers with children at the school? Get friends' children to talk to your child
- ✓ Think about how best to explain things to your child and how your child can communicate their worries to you
- ✓ Practise things that they will need to do, like walking the route they might take to school, trying on the new uniform or packing their own school bag
- ✓ Use countdowns or calendars so that they know when the change is coming
- ✓ Keep talking to the new setting. The more they know you, the better you will work together to support your child

Key terms

EYFS: early years foundation stage. A framework for the learning, development and welfare of all children from birth to the age of five.

EHCP: education, health and care plan. A legal plan for children and young people aged 0–25 with more complex needs, requiring a multi-agency approach.

EHCP coordinator: the person employed by Norfolk County Council to oversee children with EHCPs in a given area. EHCP coordinators will usually be assigned to schools so that all children with an EHCP in a school will have the same EHCP coordinator. The EHCP coordinator may give advice to school and/or parent carers as required.

Infant school: a school for children in reception (also called early years foundation stage), year 1 and year 2. Some are called ‘academies’ but they are still infant schools if they have this age range.

Junior school: a school for children in years 3,4,5 and 6. Some are called ‘academies’ but they are still junior schools if they have this age range.

Key stage 1: age 5–7 (years 1 and 2).

Key stage 2: age 7–11 (years 3, 4, 5 and 6).

Primary school: a school for children from Reception (also called early years foundation stage) and years 1–6. Some are called ‘academies’ but they are still primary schools if they have this age range.

Reception: age 4–5. The first year of school and the last year of the EYFS.

SENDCo: special educational needs and disabilities coordinator. The teacher in a school who oversees the provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities. Some schools use the term ‘SENCO’ instead, but the role is the same.

For further advice and support...

Consider contacting Norfolk SEND Partnership Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

Telephone: 01603 704070

Website: www.norfolksendpartnershiass.org.uk

Other sources of help are available on the Norfolk SEND Local Offer

www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer



This leaflet is part of a series designed to support and enhance transitions in all Norfolk settings. The guidance has been co-produced with input from education and Norfolk County Council professionals including SENDIASS and representatives from family groups including Family Voice Norfolk and SEN Network.