

Transition Project 2019-21

'Supporting Smooth Transitions'



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Introduction

Supporting smooth transitions

“Transition” is the word given to explain the movement of children from one phase of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) to the next. This could be within the same setting, or from one setting to another. Transition has a definite effect on a child’s development and is always about how they adapt to change. Transition has been described as a journey rather than a destination. Therefore, practitioners must consider what this will entail for children joining their setting and why it is important that these transitions are successful.

The vast majority of children look forward to moving on in learning and in life but, for some children, transitions can be challenging. We all know that when transitions work well, children are assisted in developing confidence and acquiring skills to manage future changes in their lives. Support from parents/ carers and staff at school can help transitions to be more successful. Some children may need particular help, including from other agencies, to ensure that their transitions are as smooth as possible.

Research suggests that transitions are central to young children’s development and emotional wellbeing. The way in which the first transitions are handled can have a significant impact on a child’s capacity to cope with change in the short and long term, and impact on the progress they make from their starting points.

The local authority peer review (March 2019) raised considerations for the requirement of “universal expectations of transition”. The review team suggested there should be a “shared understanding of school readiness and clear transition pathways”.

The project was developed following a small scale transition pilot that had been carried out with a selection of schools and PVI settings in a small geographical location (Hemel Hempstead). The learning from this pilot helped inform the supporting smooth transitions project proposal. As a result Herts County Council (HCC) commissioned the project. Approval was gained through the schools forum for the Herts for Learning (HfL) Early Years team to lead the project to improve transition across the early years sector and thereby improve attainment at the end of the EYFS.

The hypothesis for the supporting smooth transitions project is that the identification of children with potential barriers to a smooth transition will help practitioners adapt practice to meet the needs of children, particularly those at risk of not reaching expected levels of attainment at the earliest opportunity, thereby working as part of a broader plan to close the disadvantage and inequality gaps.

The purpose for the transition project is to:

- support transition from early years providers into nursery and reception classes in primary schools
- review and develop smooth transition processes for children aged between 3 and 5 years
- ensure information shared between providers better enables children to get off to the best possible start when they move into primary school.

Work on the project began in June 2019. The aim was to build on current good practice, identify the potential barriers to a smooth transition for some children; and provide professional development opportunities, including contact with specialist professionals who could offer advice with cohort needs when children move into school.

Hertfordshire Context

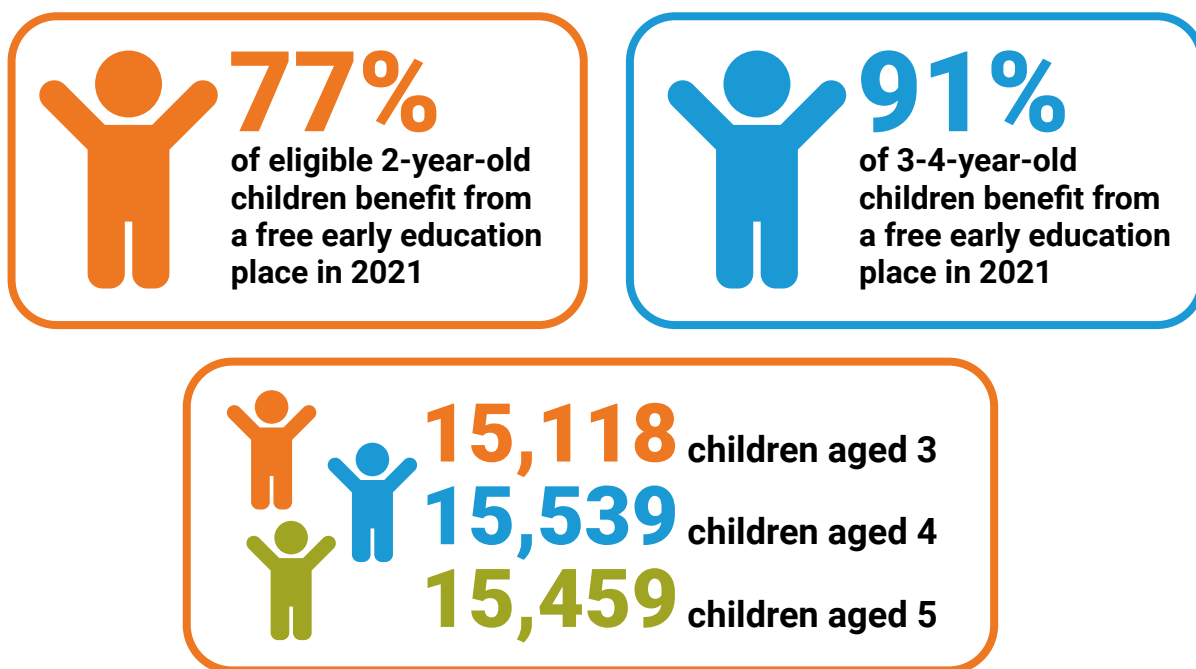
Hertfordshire is a large county in the East of England which is bordered by Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Buckinghamshire and Greater London. It has ten district councils within it and is a mix of densely populated urban areas such as Stevenage, Watford and Hemel Hempstead and sparsely populated rural areas such as East Herts. The total population of Hertfordshire is 1,195,700 (2020).

Within Hertfordshire in 2019, 10.8% of children under 16 years live in families with relative low income* and 8.5% in absolute low income*. The highest proportion of these families live in Stevenage, Watford, Broxbourne and Welwyn Hatfield districts. The numbers of children living in poverty in Hertfordshire continues to increase.

10.1% of children aged 0–4 live in households claiming out of work benefits (2017) the highest proportion being in Stevenage 15%, Broxbourne 14.3%, Welwyn Hatfield 11.8% and Dacorum 11.7%.**

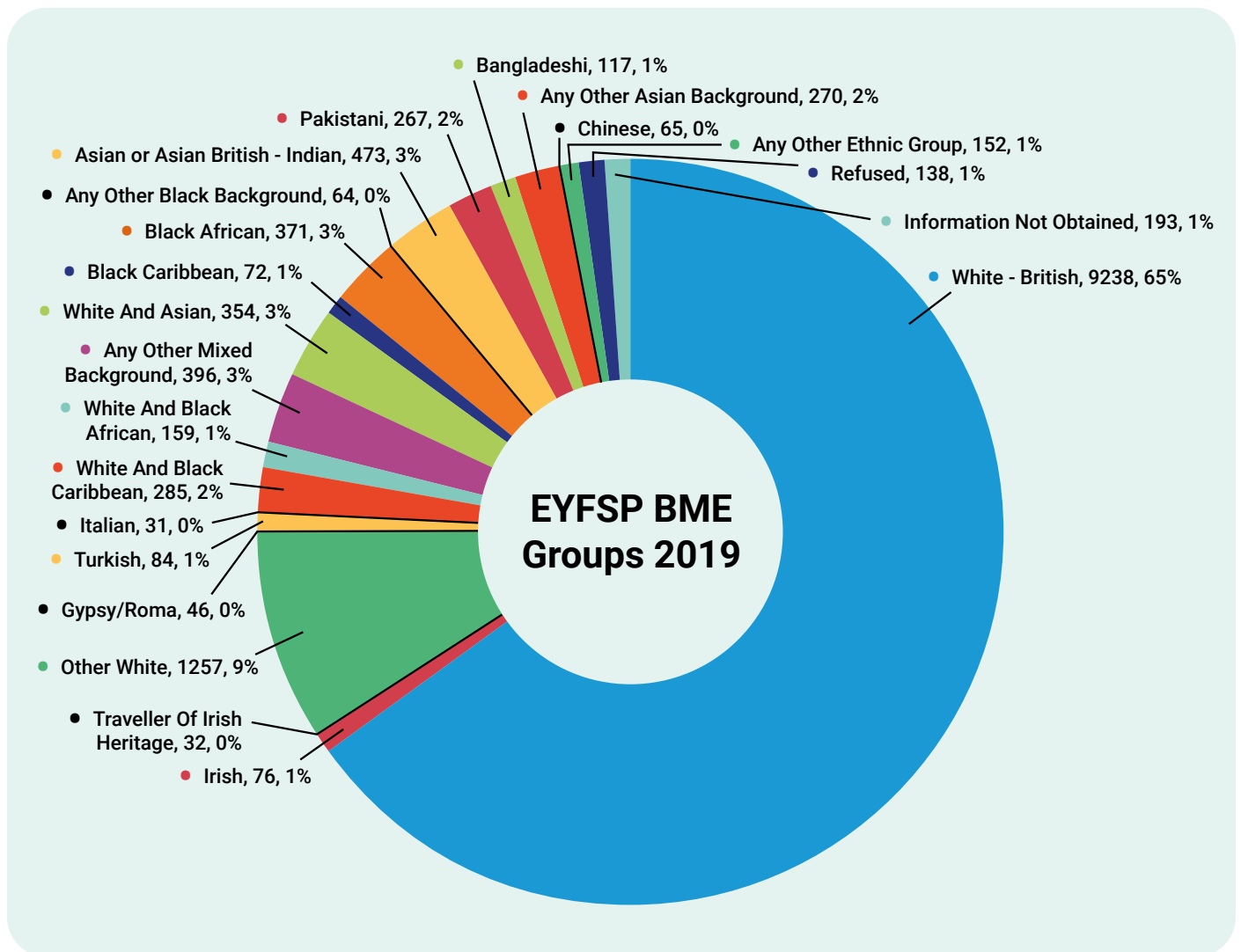
*A family must have claimed one or more of Universal Credit, Tax Credits or Housing Benefit at any point in the year to be classed as low income in these statistics. Relative low income measures families in low income in the reference year, whereas Absolute low income measures families in low income based on what low income looked like in 2010/11. Income is Before Housing Costs (BHC) and is equivalised to adjust for family size and composition.

** The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) produces official statistics on the numbers of children living in Great Britain households where at least one parent or guardian claimed one or more of the following out-of-work benefits: Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Allowance or Pension Credit at 31st May each year.



The children under five years old eligible for free school meals (FSM) has increased steadily, with 4.7% of children under five eligible in 2019-20 compared to 4.3% in 2017-18, with more children in Broxbourne 6.3%, Welwyn Hatfield 6.1%, Stevenage 5.9%, Hertsmere 5.7%, Dacorum 5%, than the Hertfordshire benchmark. Within each year group there are approximately 15,500 children and the large majority of children access their free early education place at three years old.

The diversity of the cohort of children completing the early years foundation stage profile (EYFSP) at the end of their reception year in 2019 is illustrated below, with 65% of the cohort identified as White British, with Other White at 9%. Black African, Asian or Asian British-Indian, White and Asian, Any Other Mixed Background each showing as 3% of the cohort.

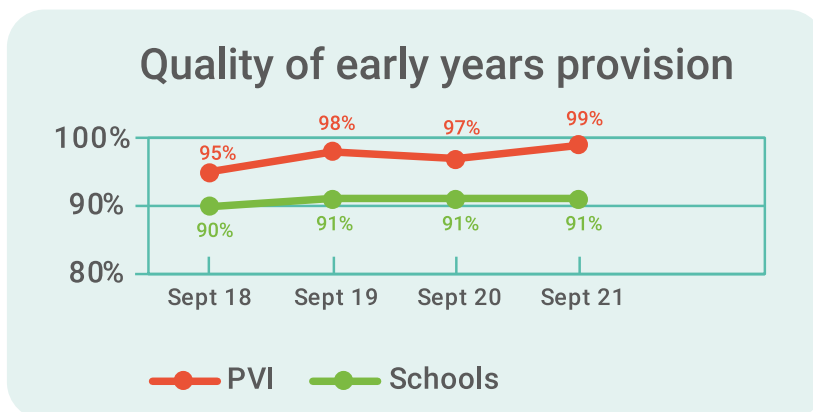


Early years provision

Hertfordshire has 365 primary schools, with 297 providing nursery class provision, and 14 maintained nursery schools. 91% graded to be good/outstanding by Ofsted (November 2021).

In the early years private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector there are 479 PVI settings, including 222 day nurseries, 250 preschools and 7 childcare on domestic premises. 98% graded to be good/outstanding by Ofsted (November 2021).

Hertfordshire currently has 1,106 Childminders, with 99% graded to be good/outstanding by Ofsted (November 2021).



In Hertfordshire children eligible for FSMs do less well than their peers. With only 51.1% attaining a good level of development compared to 75.6% (2019).

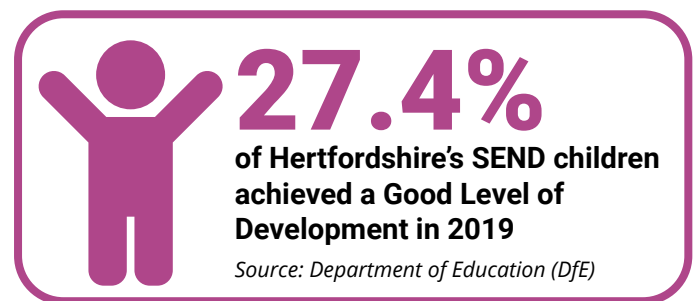
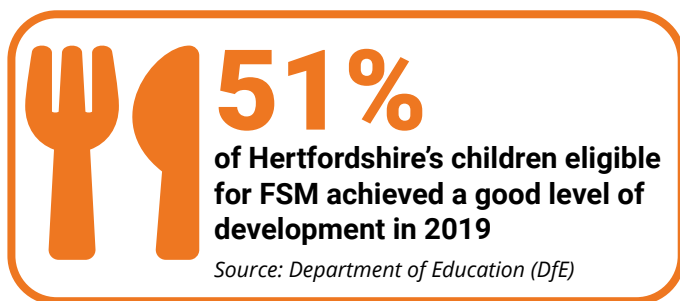


Background to children's attainment in Hertfordshire

At the end of EYFS in 2019, 73% of children reached a good level of development at the end of their reception year, which was higher than national (71.8%). Hertfordshire had a higher proportion of children (5.2%) than national (3%) achieving the maximum EYFSP score, but also a higher proportion achieving the minimum score (4.3%). 27.3% of children attained a median score of 34 points. This is a slight increase of 0.5 percentage points from 2018.

The inequality gap for early years, which is defined as “the difference between the mean EYFS score of the lowest attaining 20% of children and the median score of all children (expressed as a % of the median score),” is in line with the national score (31.4 for Hertfordshire, 32.4 for national in 2019), but is wider than statistical neighbours (28.2).

Only 51% of children eligible for FSM reached a good level of development compared to 76% of non-FSM eligible children (2019). This is fewer than national (56%). The attainment gap between the lowest 20% and the mean was 31.4%, a slight narrowing of 0.5 percentage points and was narrower than the national at 32.4%.



The gap is widest for children with SEND who may have characteristics that prevent them reaching the expected levels of attainment in ELGs that are required to attain a “good level of development”. It is also wider than national for children with English as an additional language and for those that are from financially disadvantaged families. 70% of children in the lowest attaining 20% do not have a special educational need, 27% have English as an additional language and 18% would be eligible for free school meals (2019).

In 2019, 68.7% of children eligible for FSM attained at least expected levels in communication and language compared to 85.7% of non-FSM eligible peers.

Overall standards and quality in Hertfordshire schools in 2019 indicated that:

- attainment of pupils measured at the end of EYFS starts out slightly above the national average but somewhat below statistical neighbours
- moving into KS1 and KS2, attainment starts to exceed both national averages and statistical neighbours, as children have spent progressively longer periods of time in the Hertfordshire education system
- at the end of KS4 and at KS5, attainment is well above national averages and statistical neighbours across the phases, however, the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils is less satisfactory

Consequently, closing the gap for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups from the earliest opportunity remains a priority for Hertfordshire.

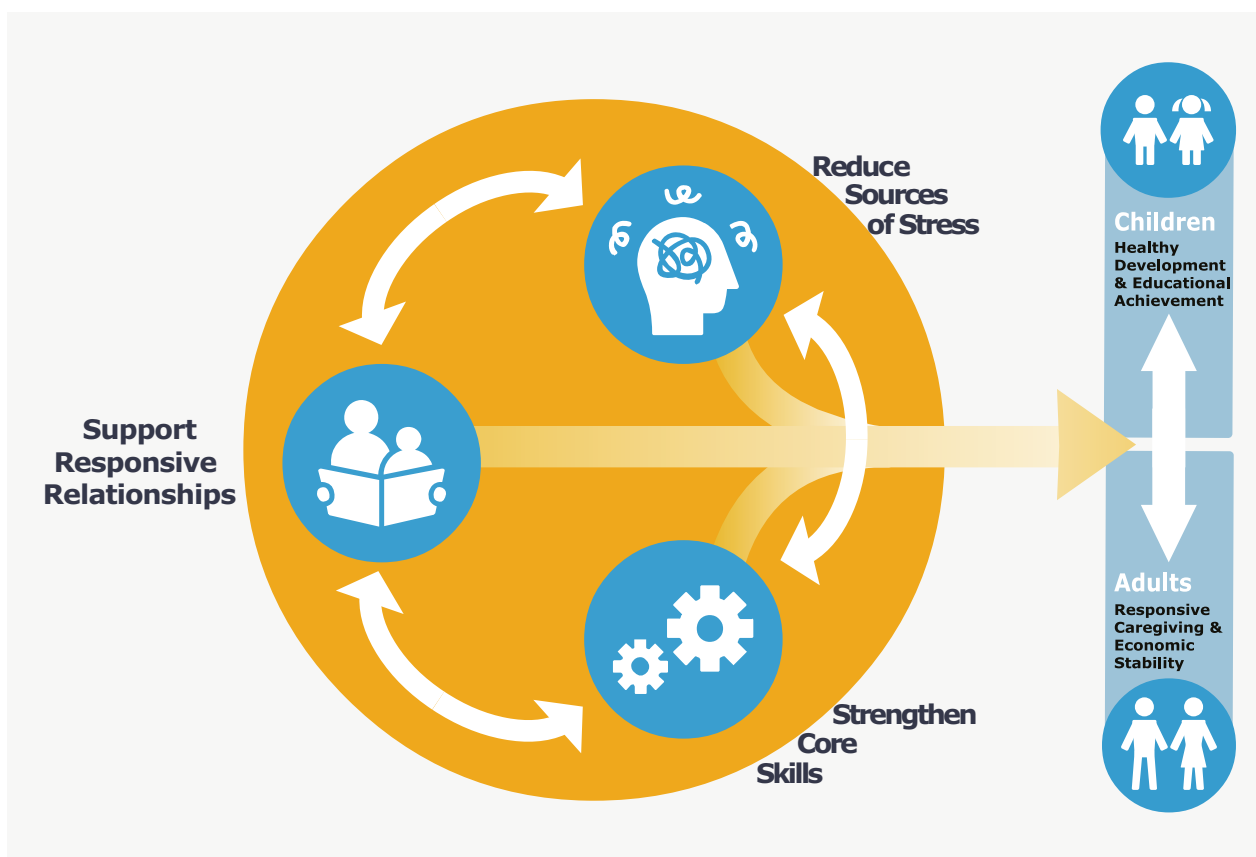
Key scientific concepts underpinning effective transition

One of the most important aspects of the project is ensuring that the kind of information that schools receive about children, prior to them joining their school, is useful in helping shape the way teachers think about effective plans to receive them into their classes. This is because the science is informing us that:

1. **responsive relationships and positive experiences build sturdy brain architecture.**
2. **toxic stress disrupts the development of brain architecture and other systems.**
3. **core capabilities for school, work and life are built over time.**

There are three core principles that lead to healthy child development, which it is helpful to understand, because they underpin some of the activities that are part of the project.

Reference: [Centre of The Developing Child, Harvard University](#)



Rationale

1. Responsive relationships and positive experiences build sturdy brain architecture

To be as effective as possible, teachers and practitioners need to fully understand and know each individual child by finding out about their life experiences to date. The way we interact is crucial to building warm and positive relationships, so that emotional support can be provided in the timeliest way to help children manage any anxiety or stress factors that transition may cause. For most this will be positive, but there is a significant proportion of children that has complex and challenging home circumstances, which can affect the way they attend to learning at the best of times.

2. Toxic stress disrupts the development of brain architecture and other systems

It is important that teachers and practitioners understand the impact of stress on individual children and how this can be exacerbated at the point of transition. Being equipped with information, which may indicate that some children have already experienced stressful circumstances prior to starting school, will enable them to plan and reduce any further stress factors for the child, or work to buffer any stress response.

3. Core capabilities for school, work and life are built over time

Developing a process that enables earlier sight of the needs of an incoming cohort by teachers and practitioners aims to help get children off to a better start. It is important to highlight those at risk of delay so that they can be supported promptly, to be ready to learn. Pertinent professional development opportunities will equip teachers and practitioners with the skills to build children's ability to focus, sustain attention, make decisions, solve problems, control impulses, follow rules and cope better with delayed gratification.

Vision of the supporting smooth transition project

Schools will be well prepared to receive every child at the point of entry through effective information sharing. As a result, all children – regardless of their background or circumstances – will have a successful transition into school so they can get off to the best start possible, to build the foundation for future learning.

“Cultural capital is the essential knowledge that children need to prepare them for their future success. It is about giving children the best possible start to their early education.”

Ref: 186, Cultural Capital, [Early years inspection handbook for Ofsted registered provision October 2021](#)

“Some children arrive at an early years setting with different experiences from others, in their learning and play. What a setting does, through its EYFS curriculum and interactions with practitioners, potentially makes all the difference for children.”

Ref: 187 Cultural Capital, [Early years inspection handbook for Ofsted registered provision October 2021](#)

“Leaders adopt or construct a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give children, particularly the most disadvantaged, the knowledge, self-belief and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.”

Ref: Grade Descriptors, [Early Years Education in schools, School Inspection Handbook October 2021](#)

Principles underpinning the project



The transition between phases of education – notably early years to primary, and primary to secondary – is a risk-point for vulnerable learners. Schools need to diagnose pupils' needs as soon as possible in order to put in place effective support to help those falling behind to catch up. ” – pg16

[The Attainment Gap report 2018 Education Endowment Foundation](#)



We know that nearly half of the children from disadvantaged backgrounds have not secured the essential knowledge, skills and understanding expected for their age by the time they finish Reception Year. Around a quarter are unable to communicate effectively, control their own feelings and impulses or make sense of the world around them to ensure that they are ready to learn. ” – pg3

[Unknown children, Destined for Disadvantage Ofsted 2016](#)

- The 20% inequalities gap is not narrowing quickly enough. It is possible that this is because children at risk of falling behind are not identified quickly enough at the point of transition into their nursery or reception class.
- To narrow the 20% inequalities gap, we need to reduce the number of children being assessed as 1 across all EYFSP ELGs at the end of their reception year, some of whom may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), but many may have other needs, such as behaviour, speech, language or communication issues.
- To further increase overall attainment, and that of disadvantaged children, action is needed across all phases. Success in early years is clearly evidenced as beneficial through each further phase of education.
- Hertfordshire's schools and PVI early years providers perform well as measured by Ofsted. The opportunity lies in improving the transition between providers/phases.
- Information sharing between early years sectors is variable and schools are at risk of receiving children with limited information to meet the needs of those swiftly enough with a range of complex personal, social, and emotional needs.
- It is vital practitioners receive accurate information, beyond attainment, at the point of transition to empower them with the knowledge, skills and, where relevant, support to help children get off to a good start in the timeliest way.
- Improving the effectiveness of transition for children at risk of falling behind due to behaviour and SEND issues that provide barriers to attaining expected levels of development.

Project Design

Hertfordshire supports UNICEF's description of "school readiness", which states that three elements working together will ensure a child's best start to their school life. (['School Readiness: A Conceptual Framework', UNICEF 2012](#))

- **Ready children:** Children's readiness for school impacts on their future learning and development.
- **Ready schools:** Early years settings and schools' readiness ensures the learning environment is child-friendly and reflects the diverse needs of young learners and their families.
- **Ready families:** Families' readiness for school promotes a positive and supportive approach to education, their children's learning and the transition from home to school.

School readiness in Hertfordshire

"In Hertfordshire, we believe that children who are school ready are happy, healthy, curious and ready to learn and will benefit the most from what schools have to offer. We recognise that all children develop at their own pace and will ensure children who need more support receive this so that they can reach their full potential." "School readiness" parents guide, HCC 2020.

This is in line with Ambitions 1 and 2 of the [Department for Education's social mobility plan "Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential"](#) ; to close the word gap in early years and to close the attainment gap in school while raising the attainment for all. Whilst being in step with the questions posed in ["Early Intervention Foundation document, Realising the Potential of Early Intervention released October 2018."](#)

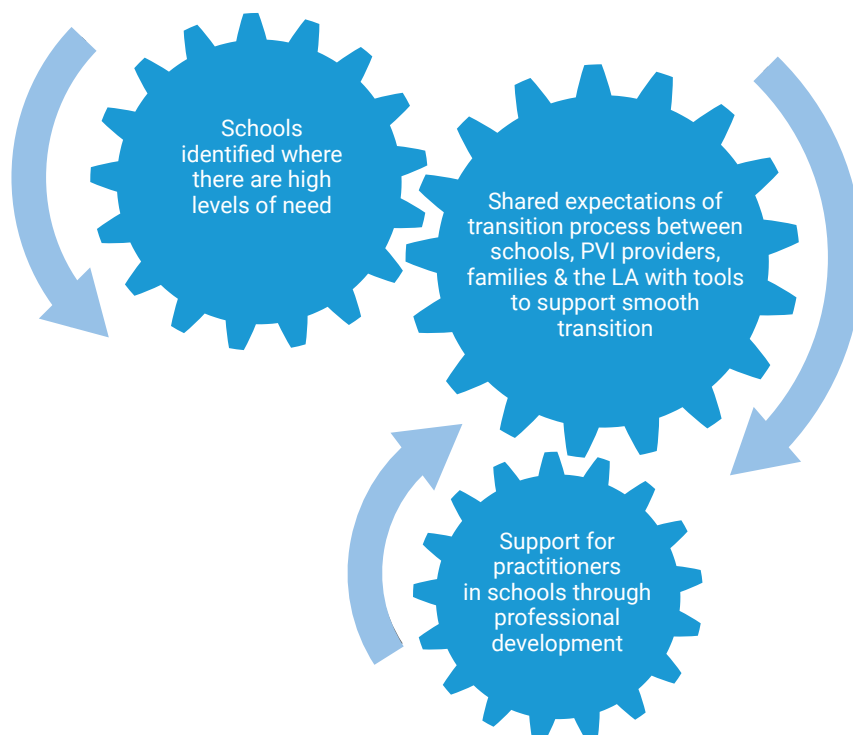
The project introduces three key features:

1. a universally understood set of tools to support prompt identification of children at risk of falling behind at the point of transition into their maintained nursery or reception class known to the Local Authority (LA).
2. a mechanism for school readiness risk stratification to inform support for schools with high levels of children at risk of falling behind.
3. workforce development opportunities.

The project aims:

- to develop a universally shared and understood approach to transition that enables nursery and reception class practitioners to identify individual children's level of need so that they can adapt provision to accelerate progress from the earliest opportunity.
- to identify schools in high-risk categories and provide them with support to equip practitioners with skills to best support children with the highest level of need.

Everyone working together



Consistent methodology and pertinent information sharing is necessary to enable schools to promptly identify children at risk of falling behind expected levels, so that they can receive swift and tailored support from the start to maximise their achievement. To do this, the project activities provide a clear process for information sharing and means by which schools and the LA can identify children at risk of not attaining expected levels by the end of their reception year. This includes clear criteria to support a shared understanding and method for information sharing between professionals in the PVI and schools' sector. By implementing this process and using these materials and tools, teachers in primary schools will be better equipped to receive children into their nursery or reception class because they will have holistic information about individual children which highlights their level of need. This is expected to be shared by feeder settings earlier than schools have received information before.

There are three key elements to the project:

- **Materials and Resources:**

The materials and resources support practitioner knowledge of best transition practice informed by research and stakeholder information. It is acknowledged that there was a lot of variation in the approaches used for transition across the county. The suite of materials enables schools to add to their current practice and select materials bespoke to their circumstance and situation. The materials provide sufficient information to develop consistent expectations of high-quality transition practice across the county for all families.

- **Workforce development:**

Relevant workforce development is essential to set high expectations for children with low starting points, with learning that supports understanding of effective intervention approaches. Professional development opportunities to understand best transition practice are planned for practitioners across the early years sector, from those working directly with children to relevant governing personnel and office staff who have a vested interest in developing efficient and effective transition practice. Events for practitioners, teachers and leaders were planned so that they are fully equipped to make best use of the tools and resources developed.

- **Needs assessment and support:**

The integrated process of information sharing between settings/schools and to HfL/HCC enables the needs of children and the professional development needs of practitioners to support cohorts with high levels of need to be assessed, and relevant professional support and advice sought and deployed. The development of criteria for use by PVI and schools enables identification of children’s potential risks to making a smooth transition.

The development of a process and mechanism for PVIs and schools to securely share pertinent information on individual children’s potential levels of need at the point of transition enables early intervention and planning of support. Schools submit to HfL/HCC an overview of the levels of cohort need within nursery and reception children. The levels of need within each school EYFS cohort are risk assessed alongside other contributing factors that could affect children’s smooth transitions and learning potential. This information informs deployment of HfL early years and SEND teams, as well as local authority (HCC) SEND specialist advice and support (SEND SAS) service, to support teachers in schools with high levels of cohort need to develop effective practice to meet the needs of children at risk of falling behind. Transition surgeries are co-ordinated to provide access and information sharing in response to the identified needs of the cohort starting school.



Engaging Stakeholders

Stakeholder engagement was recognised to be crucial at the start of the project to understand the transition issues faced by schools. This enabled materials and training to be developed in response to these to further improve and enhance the effectiveness of current systems in place. Following consultation with school's forum, it was agreed a working party would be established to support the co-creation of key transition tools and agree optimal timings for sharing information about children. Working party membership included representation from primary schools, nursery schools, preschools, day nurseries, HCC early years team, SEND SAS and HfL early years team.

The transition working party enabled views to be gathered regarding barriers commonly identified in Hertfordshire to making a smooth transition, from a range of different stakeholders working with children aged three to five. This information underpinned the development of materials and launch of the project.

Feedback and contributions from representatives beyond educational services was gathered through a "School readiness" working party and early years strategic group, including service leads from a range of health teams. Individual consultation with other service leads ensured their knowledge and expertise contributed to the development of materials. Information was particularly helpful from the HCC Access and Inclusion lead and the Principal Educational Psychologist.

Throughout the project, evaluations and feedback from schools and settings informed year on year adaptations and improvements to materials.

A range of different opportunities helped to raise the profile of the transition project and maximise engagement of schools and PVI settings. These included attending a wide range of stakeholder events as noted below:

- presentations at Family Centre networks to share information on the transition level of need criteria and barriers to learning
- meetings with day nurseries, preschool chains and the nursery school headteacher group
- attendance at HCC headteacher, governor and PVI briefings
- articles provided to HCC for Best Start E-newsletter
- social media campaign
- school governors and school business managers provided with information on the transition project through their networks and online newsletter
- HfL and HCC headteacher briefings/seminars

Materials and Resources

Transition toolkit

The toolkit supports practitioners, children and their families with the transition process, from preschool into the nursery/reception class. The toolkit provides advice and strategies to ensure best practice is established and is used alongside the “transition level of need pathway” to help early identification of all barriers to learning that children may have.

Resources are organised to support practitioners within three elements:



Ready School focusing on the practices of schools which foster and support a smooth transition for children into primary school with materials to support transition



Ready Families focusing on parental and carer attitudes and involvement in their children's early learning and development with materials for schools to share with families to support their understanding of how to support their child's development



Ready Child focusing on children's learning and development with materials to support learning at home



Launch of the transition toolkit in March 2020 included both digital and hard copy to maximise accessibility, providing schools with a hard copy of the materials outlining the transition level of need pathway, process for information sharing and relevant dates. In 2021, user feedback informed toolkit updates and addition of new materials. Schools have downloaded each section of the toolkit over 1000 times.

The toolkit is available for all Hertfordshire schools and settings to access online:

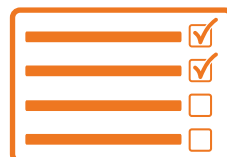
[Supporting Smooth Transitions toolkit.](#)

Schools consider the transition toolkit to be a welcome aide to review processes from the perspective of all stakeholders.

Over a third

of respondents specifically stated the tools had helped to change transition practice and/or been adapted to support the school's needs, including the induction presentation PowerPoint, transition activities and 'welcome to our school' booklets.

73%



of survey respondents stated that the resources were useful and informative.

83%



of survey respondents cited that they have used the transition toolkit resources to improve transition procedures.

“ Here at The Grove Infant and Nursery School we have been really impressed with the smooth transition resources. We have made up the booklets, sent our scores and we are already using the plans for the children coming up as intense or personalised. ”


The Grove Infant and Nursery school, Harpenden

Train the trainer session “Delivering induction sessions for parents/carers”


Introduced in 2021 to support school practitioners lead a parent/carer induction meeting that focused on how they can support their child to make a smooth transition into school. The materials can be personalised to individual schools so that consistent messages are shared with parents/carers across the county. The sessions promoted the HCC “Starting school” leaflet that all parents receive upon receiving confirmation of their child’s school place. Information provided included details of the EYFS, safeguarding information, health and welfare considerations.



In the first delivery of this suite of materials, 263 delegates representing 207 schools attended the “train the trainer” session “Delivering induction sessions for parents/carers.” Feedback indicated that 46 delegates had never led a parent/carer workshop before, and others stated they would make changes to what they had in place. Early career teachers and those new to EYFS found this session particularly beneficial. Following the session:



99%
of delegates stated it helped them feel more confident to deliver a parent/carer induction session.



96%
of delegates stated an increased awareness of the transition toolkit resources and their use.

“ Very informative and useful to have the overview of the induction despite being a teacher in EY for many years now. ”

**Kenilworth Primary School,
Borehamwood**

“ This has been a refresher and made me realise that we can say that parents have their part to play in helping children as they start school. ”

**Belwains Primary School,
Hemel Hempstead**

Home learning packs

Each year activity cards are produced and provided to every school with a reception class to distribute to every child starting school in September. These provide a guide for home learning activities that will help the development of skills in line with “school readiness”. In 2020, the packs provided information on activities to support prime areas of learning and development, for example a “finger strong” card with activities to promote fine motor skills, “independent me” with activities to promote children’s self-help skills. Each card provides guidance for parents/carers and space to make notes.

In 2021, the packs provided information on activities to be offered to support children’s development based on different environments in the home and local community. These included “Splish, splash, splosh” fun learning activities for the bathroom, “Good morning and night night” activities for the bedroom, and “If you go down to the woods today” activities for parks and woodland.

In 2020 and 2021, home learning packs were distributed to all schools for 15,000 reception pupils for inclusion with schools’ own induction procedures.

“ We really enjoyed doing the activities together. They helped my daughter to grow in confidence in lots of different areas, especially talking and listening. ”

Reception Parent

“ The cards in the home learning packs have been really enlightening for me. I’ve always tried to stay active with my child, but the cards have helped me to see the world through her eyes and shown how, by involving her better in day-to-day activities, I can really support her development and independence. ”

J Leigh, Parent, Simon Balle All Through School



Needs assessment and support

The sharing of information between preschool establishments and receiving teachers has been acknowledged by UNICEF as a critical point in a child's educational journey. "The way school environments and practices foster and support a smooth transition for children into primary school will promote the learning of all children into their later years." (UNICEF 2012) These practices should promote the learning of all children and those with potential barriers to getting off to a good start.

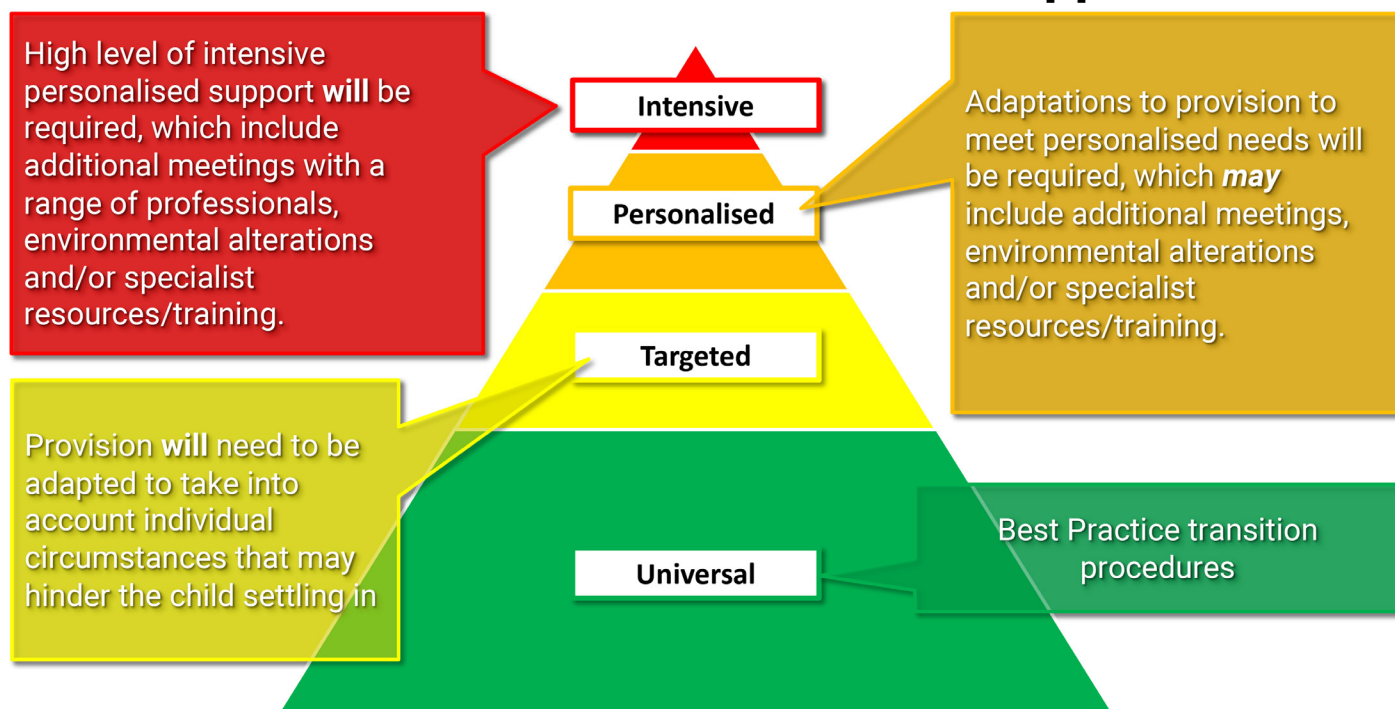
The unique child transition level of need criteria

The unique child transition level of need criteria looks at the levels of need children may have as they start school, related to potential barriers that could affect how easily they cope with settling into school and impact on their learning. The working party agreed the risk criteria used to identify children's level of need at the point of transition. This included representatives from PVI settings, schools, The Virtual School, and SEND SAS, Integrated Service for Learning (ISL) and HCC early years team.

Following the first year and subsequent disruption of COVID-19, it was agreed that the focus should be on holistic development and, therefore, the attainment data was removed to focus on health, wellbeing and family circumstance which are known barriers to achievement.

There are 36 transition level of need criteria that are scored according to the level of need the child may have at the point of transition for each of the criteria. Each criterion is weighted against the significance of the impact of the potential barrier on entry to school. Each child receives an overall level of need rating; intensive, personalised, targeted or universal. This indicates the level of support a child may require to enable a smooth transition.

Transition Level of Need and Support



The transition level of need criteria each focus on a child's potential needs at the point of transition and include safeguarding, health, wellbeing and family circumstance.

Each of the potential barriers to learning at the point of entry to school have been organised into a level of need rating system.

Where potential barriers have the greatest impact on affecting transition, they have been listed as requiring an intensive level of support and, as the level of need decreases, so will the level of support required to personalised, targeted and, finally, universal.

As exemplified below for attendance.

Attendance	Intensive I12 Attendance	Personalised P17 Attendance	Targeted T14 Attendance
	Attendance is less than 50% of their scheduled time in the setting	Attendance is below 75% of their scheduled time in the setting	Attendance is between 85%-75% of their scheduled time in the setting

This criterion example above ensures sharing of information between the feeder setting and school to prompt discussion regarding any issues with a child’s attendance, what strategies the feeder setting have used to increase the child’s attendance, provide information to parents/carers of the impact on the child’s learning and development, provide home learning opportunities.

Some criteria include all 3 levels of need, intensive, personalised and targeted, in recognition of the differing levels of support a child may need and the potential impact of the barrier to them experiencing a smooth transition. Each level indicates the potential barrier for the child and how this may impact on the child’s ability to cope at the point of transition. Within the transition toolkit there is a guide (section 14) to each of the criteria and the suggested support that could be put in place to help the child cope and experience a smoother transition process.

The criteria support the completion of the Transition Level of Need tool (TLoNt). Preschools, day nurseries, nursery schools and nursery classes complete the tool. This enables a consistent approach to the collation and sharing of information across the sectors to support children’s transition to school (nursery and reception).

“ The Transition Level of Need tool (TLoNt) enhanced the school’s strong transition procedures. It provided a focus for discussions with feeder settings and allowed me to prioritise the children highlighted as requiring intensive or personalised support on entry to school. ”

Nursery teacher, Flamstead End School, Cheshunt

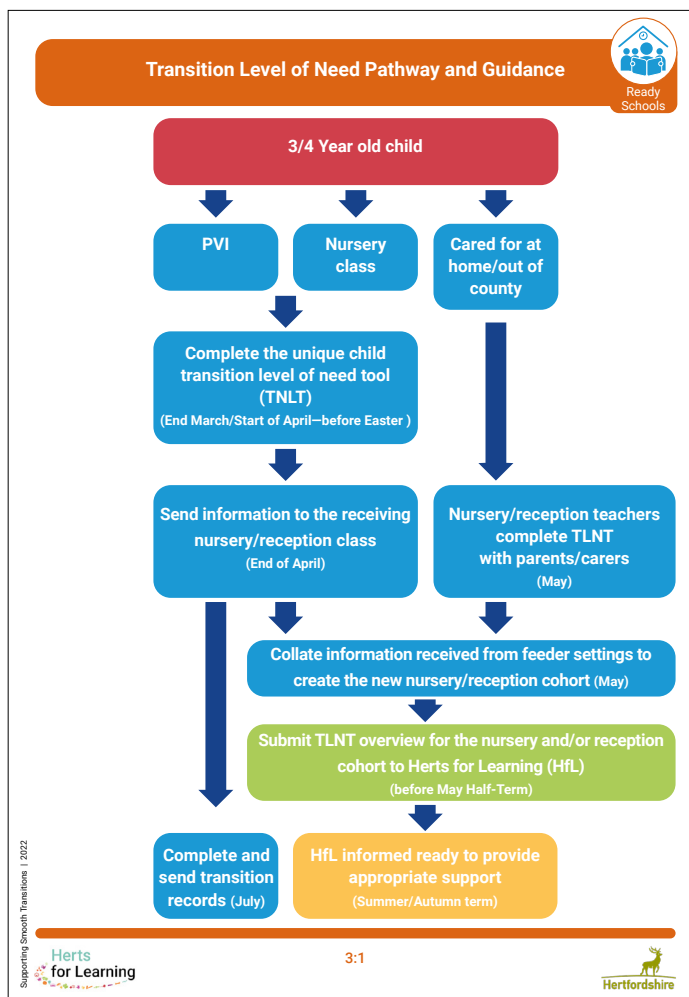
Transition Level of Need Pathway

Sharing of the transition level of need criteria information between PVI settings and schools enables practitioners to effectively plan, make adaptations to meet the needs of all children, including those disadvantaged and vulnerable, to maximise opportunity for closing gaps. The transition level of need pathway details the process for information sharing and relevant times in the academic year.

PVI settings, nursery schools and nursery classes prepare the information, record this on the TLoNt and pass this onto the receiving schools at the end of April when allocated school places are announced.

Nursery schools, nursery and reception classes receive the information from feeder settings between April and May.

This information is collated by schools and cohort overviews submitted to HfL in June/July using the TLoNt. This information is analysed, and support provided to schools with a high number of children with intensive and personalised levels of need.



Transition Level of Need Tool (TLoNt):

The TLoNt records children’s potential barriers to learning at the point of transition, using the unique child transition level of need criteria.

Preschools, day nurseries, nursery schools and nursery classes complete the tool. This enables collation and sharing of information with schools to support children’s transition to school (nursery and reception).

Example screen shot of a section of the Transition Level of Need tool.

	A	B	C	AQ	AR	AS	AT	AU	AV	AW	AX	BB	BC	BD
1														
2	(Nursery Schools only) School No:													
3	School/Setting Name:													
4	Year cohort are entering:													
5														
6														
7				0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
8	Destination School	Child First Name	Child Surname	T7) Shared parental responsibility	T8) A change in Home circumstance	T9) English as an additional language (EAL)	T10) Deferred entry	T11) Early years pupil premium grant funding (EYPP/G)	T12) Funded 2 year old	T13) Child born prematurely	T14) Attendance	Score	Overall rating	
9														
10														
11														
12														
13														
												Totals:		
												Intensive	0	(0 F and 0 M)
												Personalised	0	(0 F and 0 M)
												Targeted	0	(0 F and 0 M)
												Universal	0	(0 F and 0 M)

The table shows the returns of the TLoN tool overviews submitted to HfL from schools in 2020 and 2021.

	Reception – number of schools and % (total schools 365)	Reception – number of children	Nursery – number of schools and % (total 297)	Nursery – number of children
2020	281 (77%)	8,746	209 (70%)	4,282
2021	341 (93%)	10,723	225 (76.5%)	4,598

There has been a significant increase in engagement across the sector, resulting in a 16ppt increase in the reception class submissions and a 6.5ppt increase in nursery class submissions in 2021. Current feedback indicates that nursery class submissions are lower for several possible reasons; a higher proportion of children having been at home prior to early education entitlement, the criteria to inform transition discussions with parents/carers not being used and some parents/carers choosing not to inform the PVI provider where their child is moving onto. Guidance is available in the toolkit to support school practitioner/parent dialogue to gather this information for those that have not attended a preschool setting (Section 9).

The level of need tool gives a holistic overview of the child’s needs and particularly of significant events that have happened in their life, such as child protection, health needs and bereavements.

- In 2021, 63% (15,321) of children’s information was shared, which was an increase of 2,293 children compared to 2020
- Practitioners like the fact that the tool focuses on holistic development of the child and their immediate needs, because it informs strategies and interventions that support settling in
- Practitioners identified that even a small number of seemingly minor needs results in a child being more vulnerable at transition thus enabling them to adapt practice
- 70% of survey respondents cited they used the TLoNt information to plan specific transition procedures for individual children, with 50% stating this helped to contact families sooner to discuss their child’s needs
- Information from the TLoNt enables earlier planning to support families and children that require a personalised, targeted or intensive transition plan, as well as supporting the organisation of classes with more information than they had before the introduction of the TLoNt and the information sharing expectations as part of the project
- 62% of survey respondents stated that the TLoNt enabled tailored transition procedures supporting children to settle well
- Receiving the TLoNt has enabled schools to gain more information earlier on than previously for their new children. In some individual school instances, this is a 50% increase in pertinent information sharing compared to last year
- Of the transition visits in 2020 and 2021, 76% of schools found the TLoNt useful to prepare for the incoming cohort for children identified with potential barriers to learning. Several strategies had been implemented, such as adaptations to curriculum/environment/routines, contacting external services, accessing appropriate professional development, and enhancing transition to the meet children’s specific needs.

“ Once we knew the schools our children had been allocated, I set up the spreadsheets so that we had all the children listed. I then completed my key group children’s scores first, just to get more of a feel for the process. I spoke to each key person and we worked through the sheet together. It didn’t take too long, as the staff all know their children well. Already I have had three schools call to request more information and I have received five emails confirming receipt of the emails. The fact that schools have already contacted us has made it worthwhile. ”

Kingswood Nursery School, Watford

“ Following the completion of the TLoNt, the school has proactively accessed the support of external professionals. They are currently working closely with DESC, CAT and educational psychologists. This has resulted in lots of approaches to addressing the needs of the children under an intensive level of need. ”

Bedmond Academy, Abbots Langley, Watford



Risk Stratification

The design of the risk stratification gives the local authority a view of where there are schools that have cohorts with greater levels of need within the county. The risk stratification has three layers; child level, school level and district level. Each level considers the risk factors at the point of transition into the school learning environment that may hinder the child from getting off to a great start.

Child-level risk factors are associated with; safeguarding, health, wellbeing and family circumstance, as identified through the transition level of need criteria.

School-level risk factors consider the number of children with particular levels of need; intensive, personalised, targeted or universal, as informed by the TLoNt overviews submitted by schools to HfL.

District level risk factors consider; the proportion of children with socio-economic disadvantage according to funding eligibility, early years pupil premium (EYPP), and free early education at the age of two years old, attainment (EYFSP) and quality (Ofsted).

This informs prioritisation for individual school visits, provided by HfL SEND and HfL Early Years Advisers. HCC colleagues are notified which schools have cohorts with high levels of need so that they can provide further specialist support and advice as required. These visits aim to support practitioners by working alongside them to review approaches to working with specific cohort needs. Where appropriate, they will share information with specialist teams regarding a school's particular cohort need.

Analysis of the TLoNt information using the risk stratification informs autumn term visits to up to 60 schools in the top quintile with high proportions of children in identified risk categories. In the initial year (2019), a set of risks were considered that could potentially prevent school readiness for children that informed the initial identification of schools that would benefit from an advisory visit focused on existing transition practice. This information contributed to the range of materials developed for the transition toolkit and provided advice on best transition practice to build on what was already in place. The second year (2020) and third year (2021), included child level information from the TLoNt highlighting those schools with greater than 20% of the cohort with intensive and personalised needs. The table below shows information pertaining to the transition level of need for nursery and reception cohorts for 2020 and 2021.

Number of children (% of cohort)	Intensive	Personalised	Targeted	Universal
Reception 2020 8,746 (58%)	1,164 (13.3%)	2,187 (25%)	2,735 (31.3%)	2,660 (30.4%)
Reception 2021 10,723 (71%)	934 (8.7%)	1,423 (13.3%)	3,034 (28.3%)	5,328 (49.7%)
Nursery 2020 4,282 (47%)	586 (14%)	1,058 (25%)	1,217 (28%)	1,421 (33%)
Nursery 2021 4,598 (50%)	701 (15.2%)	449 (9.8%)	1,126 (24.5%)	2,322 (50.5%)

In 2020, TLoN cohort information highlighted that some criteria were affecting the overall categorisation of children with personalised and targeted needs. All criteria were reviewed and, following stakeholder discussions, it was agreed that attainment data criterion was removed because this information could be shared later in the summer term. Children who are summer born would be recorded, but not aggregated in the overall score.



97%

(354) of schools have engaged in the project having received information from their feeder settings. Information for over 15,321 (63%) children in the EYFS in schools has been shared to inform practitioner planning.

Half of the children starting school (nursery or reception) in September 2021 were identified to have no barrier to making a smooth transition.

Children starting nursery in 2021

24.5% required targeted support

- The highest levels of targeted support were required in Hertsmere with 36% (an increase from 28% in 2020) of school cohorts and Watford with 32%. In 2020, the highest numbers were in Three Rivers (33%).
- In 2021, 63.3% fewer children required support for Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH) than in 2020.



10% required personalised support

- The highest number of children requiring personalised levels of support were in Watford (13% of the cohorts), which is a decrease from 28% in 2020. In 2020, the highest number was in Stevenage (29%).
- There was a 50% increase of children with emerging Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) compared to 2020.
- 27.8% were identified with personalised medical needs compared to 20.5% in 2020.

15% required intensive support

- In 2021, the highest number of children requiring intensive levels of support were in Broxbourne (30% of the cohorts) and Welwyn Hatfield (24% of the cohorts). Both districts have seen a significant increase since 2020.
- 8.9% fewer children had Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) in place compared to 2020.
- 11.9% required an intensive level of Speech & Language Therapist (SALT) support.

Children starting reception in 2021

28% required targeted support

- In 2021, just under a third of children (28%/3,034) required targeted levels of support with the highest numbers of children being in Dacorum (400) and Watford (373).
- 72% (2,071) of children were identified to have socio-economic disadvantage.
- 11.1% fewer children required SEMH support compared to 2020.



13.3% required personalise support

- In 2021, the highest number of children requiring personalised levels of support were in Stevenage and Broxbourne (both 18% of the cohorts). This is a significant reduction compared to 2020 (Stevenage: 30%, Broxbourne 27%).
- 7% increase of children identified with emerging SEND compared to 2020.
- 111 children starting reception had experienced recent bereavement and were identified as requiring either personalised or intensive support in 2021 which is equal to 2020.

8.7% required intensive support

- In 2021, the highest numbers of children requiring intensive support were in the Welwyn Hatfield area at 14.1%, the same as in 2020 where it was 13.9%.
- There was an 8.3% increase of children with EHCP in place compared to 2020.
- 21.5% of children were recognised to have SALT needs at an intensive level.

Collaborative working with HCC colleagues – SEND SAS Team

HfL shared the transition level of need findings with the HCC SEND SAS team. This provided information regarding the level of SEND needs for those children transitioning into individual schools across the county, by district. 30 schools were identified with a higher number of children with SEND at the intensive and personalised levels. This information was used to inform the SEND SAS team's offer of a targeted programme of professional development and follow-up support visits to the identified schools. 15 schools have taken up the offer and are currently working through the programme. The programme includes access to a 6-part psychology and SALT team's review of the schools' provision and action planning.

Collaborative working resulting from the Transition Level of Need Tool information Primary School with high numbers of children with SEND

School case study

The school were identified as having a high level of need with the new reception cohort including 10 children with SEND and EHCPs in place, highlighted through the information shared via the TLoNt. Most of these children were unknown to the SEND SAS team.

With this information a meeting was arranged of all the relevant professionals, school SENco, school early years lead to discuss and plan to meet the needs of these children prior to the September start. (2020)

Support included guidance for school staff on adaptations to the physical environment and strategies to support individual children's needs through transition.

All professionals were allocated actions specific to their role and this early planning meeting ensured work was not duplicated.

School staff received training and support on emotional regulation, use of 'attention intervention', creating personalised curriculum for individual children, and autism training.

As a result of the 'multi-disciplinary approach which has been actioned quickly' the Headteacher reports that the cohort settled well into their new class.

October 2020

Deena Wallworth, Specialism Lead for Early Years (HCC)



200

schools have received relevant support from HfL and HCC SEND SAS teams because of increased knowledge shared through the TLoNt cohort data submissions.

Transition school visits

In response to the analysis and findings of the needs assessment, focused transition visits are planned to 60 schools each autumn term.

In the first year of the project (2019), a transition audit tool was used to provide a framework for professional dialogue about current processes. The audit tool (Section 20 of the SST) highlights the desirable practices for schools when planning transition and considers the most effective processes that will support the children, the families and the school. The schools also received a copy of the completed audit for future use to help them review and reflect upon effective transition processes and provide insight into the transition toolkit materials. 100% of schools found the transition audit tool useful and would use this again to evaluate their practice. A document has also been developed to support governors review transition procedures within their schools (Section 10 of the SST).

In the second year (2020) and third year (2021), the TLoNt cohort overviews have supported professional dialogue and advice for teachers to help the management and practice of the varying needs of the children in their cohort. This included specialist SEND advice from an HfL adviser and, where relevant, support from HCC SEND SAS service.

In autumn 2021, 57 schools were identified to have a significantly high number (20% or more) of the cohort requiring intensive support on entry to school (nursery, reception or both) and were provided with a consultancy visit. Seven schools with significantly high levels of SEND were offered a visit from an HfL SEND adviser.

47% of schools were identified to require support with engaging parents/carers, developing home/school relationships or reviewing home learning opportunities. External services, such as Family Centres, were signposted and a range of strategies to engage families were shared.

The prime areas of development have been the focus for all schools when settling the children into the provision. In autumn 2021, schools visited reported that "on entry" attainment data highlighted communication and language (42%) and personal, social and emotional development (39%) as the areas lowest on entry. Advice was provided around increasing high-quality interactions and making adaptations to the learning environment, daily routine or EYFS curriculum. It was recognised in many schools that parental engagement requires strengthening and that support for parents/carers to understand child development should be facilitated.

Feedback cites practitioners and leaders value the transition visit support and advice.

As a result of the consultancy visits, advice was provided on ways to enhance parental engagement, adapt the environment and provision, and signpost to relevant and cohort specific resources.

“ The school is very supportive of the TLoNt and Supporting Smooth Transitions (SST) toolkit. Following the completion of the TLoNt, the school has re-evaluated their transition procedures and used elements of the SST to enhance this such as using suggested activities (paper bag, first visit). This has resulted in all staff feeling that they have detailed information about every child and enabling them to facilitate an appropriate provision for the new cohort. The school have also adapted the TLoNt to support transition throughout the school which is overseen by the Inclusion leader. This ties into the school’s provision map and is used to facilitate pupil progress meetings throughout the year. ”

Swallow Dell Primary School, Welwyn Garden City

Some schools have received visits on three consecutive years which has enabled an overview of the changes made over time. Two examples are provided below.

Fairlands Primary School, Stevenage: The audit in 2019 highlighted the need to consider enhanced transition procedures for helping children know about their school before they start and building secure relationships with parents/carers. In 2020, the school addressed this through adapted procedures during COVID-19. However, parental engagement remained an area of development. In 2021, further adaptations to transition procedures have had a positive impact on building relationships with parents/carers. The school saw an increase in the information shared through use of the TLoNt from feeder settings, from 50% in 2020 to 95% in 2021. This has enabled the school to use this information to plan effectively to meet the needs of the cohort.

Holy Trinity school received a transition visit in 2020 and embedded the use of the TLoNt. This was recognised in their recent Ofsted report.

“ There is a thorough transition programme. This ensures that when pupils arrive in Reception, staff know their strengths and the areas where they need more help. Leaders quickly identify the difficulties some pupils have, such as with speech and language, and act quickly to help these pupils. ”

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary, Cheshunt – Ofsted 15.6.21

Transition Surgeries

The transition surgeries provide access to a range of multi professionals, including educational psychology team, speech and language therapists (Integrated Therapies team), SEND SAS service, Virtual School colleagues, Family Support team, Library Service, Private Fostering and Family Centre representatives. School practitioners can discuss concerns regarding disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils to receive guidance on how best to adapt provision to meet their needs and identify further pathways for support. Practitioners can access expertise to support their intervention practice, behaviour for learning and teaching strategies. Information from the TLoNt, including numbers of children with specific barriers to learning, informs the content of the transition surgeries.

The Virtual school reported that **“Teachers did not know who their designated teacher for CLA and Post CLA was. They were not aware that there was also a designated practitioner with a parallel role in PVI settings.”** The transition surgeries helped improve practitioner knowledge regarding this.

In 2019, 190 practitioners from 87 schools attended face-to-face transition surgeries held across the county. Many delegates spent time discussing support for children with speech and language delay with SALT; consequently, feedback indicates that they increased confidence to make a referral.



In 2020 and 2021, an average of 200 practitioners from 150 schools attended virtual transition surgeries each year, adapted from face-to-face due to COVID-19 restrictions. Practitioners were able to submit specific queries prior to the session for the professional to respond “live” during the webinar. The webinar included information on referral processes for each service and top tips to support children’s needs at the point of transition.

Following attendance at the surgeries, delegates stated that they would:

- share information with other staff members
- use ideas to support working with parents
- signpost to available support at Family Centres due to increased knowledge of what is available
- liaise more with the school SENCo

SEND Specialist Advice and Support (SEND SAS) service surgery

Information from the TLoNt for 2021 for the criteria pertinent to the SEND SAS service, recorded 813 children with SEND/emerging SEND needs (intensive and personalised) with potential barriers to a smooth transition as they start school, 653 children with speech and language needs and 66 children with sensory impairment needs. This information informed the content of the surgery presentation. Guidance was provided on enhancing the environment and resources to meet children's developmental age, with tips to help improve communication strategies, the importance of the role of the key person and use of the Herts Steps approach.

“ I will now access the EY support phone line. Consider the tips and tricks share at the session. Discuss Herts Steps with the team. ”

St Dominic Catholic Primary School, Harpenden

Educational Psychology team surgery

Information from the TLoNt for 2021 for the criteria pertinent to the educational psychology team, recorded 442 children with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs (intensive and personalised) with potential barriers to a smooth transition as they start school and 277 children with sensory needs. This information informed the surgery and guidance was provided on the role of an educational psychologist and how to access support, use of the “assess plan do review” cycle, quality first teaching strategies and transition support through routines and resources.

“ Assess, plan, do, review ask for help from Ed Psych for additional support for a child for home and school, I will assess the child in question and use the strategies suggested. ”

Ashtree Primary School, Stevenage

Children and young people's therapy service surgery (including SALT)

Information from the TLoNt for 2021 for the criteria pertinent to the integrated therapies team, recorded 625 children with SALT needs (intensive and personalised) with potential barriers to a smooth transition as they start school, 66 children with sensory impairment needs and 591 children with medical needs. This information informed the surgery and guidance was provided on the role and referral process for occupational therapy, speech and language therapists and physiotherapy. The presentation included guidance on support for children with communication needs, communication friendly environments, creating a communication friendly setting and signposting to further training and tools.



Thank you for the useful information. I will use the visual timetable and visual cues. Model and commenting on children's play to encourage speech.



**St Joseph's RC Primary School,
Waltham Cross**



Great to have a dedicated group webinar with the speech and language therapist.



**Kinsbourne Nursery,
Harpenden**

Multi Agency surgery

The multi-agency surgery included presentations from the Virtual School, Family Centres, Family Support team, Private Fostering and the Library Service.

Information from the TLoNt for 2021 for the criteria pertinent to the multi-agency surgery included in the table below.

Level of need on entry to reception and nursery 2021						
Overall number of children 15,321	SALT (no ECHP)	CLA/PLA	SGO	Parental engagement	Bereavement	Shared parental responsibility
Intensive	285 (2%)	20 (0.1%)	N/A	14 (0.1%)	46 (0.3%)	76 (0.5%)
Personalised	367 (2%)	49 (0.3%)	35 (0.2%)	252 (2%)	94 (1%)	184 (1%)
Targeted	628 (4%)	N/A	N/A	260 (2%)	N/A	325 (2%)
Total	1,280 (8%)	69 (0.4%)	35 (0.2%)	526 (4.1%)	140 (1.3%)	585 (3.5%)

This information informed the surgery and guidance was provided on referral routes and support available for families; role of the Virtual School with Children Looked After (CLA) and Previously Looked After children (PLA); role of Private Fostering team; Family Centre support for families; Family Support team role with families on family first assessments. The Library Service was able to provide access to resources to support transition and for those families and children experiencing bereavement.

“ At a recent Herts for Learning Transition surgery, I learnt that 140 nursery and reception age children are currently receiving additional support with their transition to school due to experiencing a bereavement in the family. Reading a story to a young child can help them to understand their feelings, and those of others, as well as giving the family a way in to talk about the subject together. ”

Margaret Street, Early Years Librarian, (a book list to support children with the topic of bereavement was sent to the delegates after the session)



Workforce development

Workforce development includes training to ensure that PVI providers and schools understand the “transition level of need pathway”, the transition level of need tool and information sharing protocols. Promotion of the project and gaining engagement of the sector was supported through social media. Social media promotes the project, shares information of the CPD opportunities and sends reminders of key dates. In spring 2020, Facebook reached 15,119 people and Twitter 4,912 people, with posts on the transition project.

Blogs provide further information to promote the project, “Supporting smooth transitions in the early years” (1,642 views), “Reflecting on transition procedures in the EYFS” (866 views), “Supporting transition for individual children in the EYFS” (1,263 views), “Supporting smooth transitions with social distancing in place” (1,395 views) within and beyond Hertfordshire.

A specific “Supporting smooth transitions” website landing page was created on the HfL website, which hosts the transition toolkit and resources. Since this was launched in April 2020 it has received 12,935 views from within and beyond Hertfordshire.


A dedicated email address eytransition@hertsforlearning.co.uk was set up for queries and mailouts, so that information about the project is directed to the right personnel in the timeliest way.

Transition briefings

In March 2020, 108 delegates from 70 schools attended face-to-face briefings across the county to introduce the transition project, toolkit and TLoNt.

Due to disruption caused by COVID-19, swift conversion to digital synchronous and asynchronous delivery was essential:

- An online pre-recorded “supporting smooth transitions” briefing was developed and made accessible to all settings and schools on the HfL website from April 2020. This received 3,823 views (including 192 schools and 175 PVI settings.)
- In 2020, 3 live webinars were developed and delivered to support completion of the Transition Level of Need tool (TLoNt). This was accessed by 451 people, representing 186 schools, 100 PVI settings and 30 childminders.
- In 2021, 528 delegates from 200 schools and 165 PVI settings attended the ‘completing the transition level of need tool’ webinar.



91%
of delegates said they were helpful to introduce the TLoNt and criteria.



68%
of delegates stated that they now felt confident that they were ready to submit the transition level of need information

Information sharing sessions

In 2020, arrangements to support information sharing between PVI practitioners and schools enabled 65 PVI settings and 162 schools to make contact. The impact of the pandemic resulted in planned face-to-face events being reorganised virtually. The disruption resulted in a reliance on proactive communication between settings and schools to contact each other and share information.

Feedback from PVI settings and schools indicates that the large majority (92%) stated that the information sharing session was a valuable and useful way of sharing information, practically when talking through the information in the TLoNt and using materials from the toolkit (section 34.1).

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the TLoNt became increasingly valuable in providing information for professional discussion around the child and, as the sharing of this information increases, there is no longer the need for HfL to organise dialogue between individual settings and schools.

“Are You Ready?” workshops

“Are you ready” workshops provide practitioners with the opportunity to attend sessions directly related to the needs of their cohort at the point of transition.

Five transition workshops were provided to all practitioners working in school EYFS provisions (nursery and reception). These were delivered through webinars by Early Years and SEND advisers in the summer terms in 2020 and 2021.

The aims of the workshops are to enhance practitioner knowledge and skills to support the transition of children with potential barriers to learning across the prime areas of development and to provide them with appropriate strategies that could be implemented during the transition and settling in process.

Additional workshops focusing on children with SEND and English as an additional language (EAL) were provided due to the increasing numbers of children identified in the county.

Opportunities to provide practitioners with updates to the Early Years Statutory Framework (EYFS) 2021 were utilised in the 2021 delivery, along with signposting to relevant local services. From the 2020 workshops, a suite of ‘top tips’ documents were created and included in the updated Supporting Smooth Transitions (SST) toolkit.

In each year (2020, 2021), an average of 490 practitioners representing over 150 schools accessed these to develop practitioner confidence and knowledge in knowing how to support children’s personal, social and emotional development (PSED) and communication and language (C&L) needs, support children and families with English as an additional language, as well as support those with SEND at the point of transition.

Personal, social and emotional development (PSED) workshop

The TLoNt overview from 2020 highlighted 1,562 children starting school were recognised to have a potential barrier to learning linked to social and emotion mental health (SEMH). The workshop addressed attachment needs and provided strategies for enhanced transition processes. The importance of establishing relationships between home and school were emphasised to enable children to have a successful transition into school.



98%

of delegates stated they could now recognise strategies that will effectively support children who communicate through behaviour that presents as challenging.



95%

of delegates felt more confident to support children's PSED

“Interesting session. Lots of good ideas and support.”

The Orchard Primary School, Watford

Communication and Language (C&L) workshop

The TLoNt overview from 2020 highlighted 1,354 children starting school had potential barriers to learning in communication and language. Strategies to support transition were shared, such as providing talk activities to parents/carers that can be completed at home, ensuring high-quality interactions take place in school and signposting practitioners to appropriate interventions/services (Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI), Children and Young People's Therapies, Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), ICan).



99%

of delegates stated they could now recognise potential barriers to communication and language development during the transition process and how these might be overcome



99%

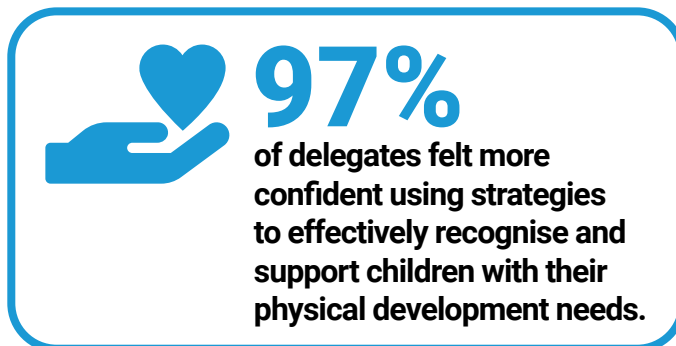
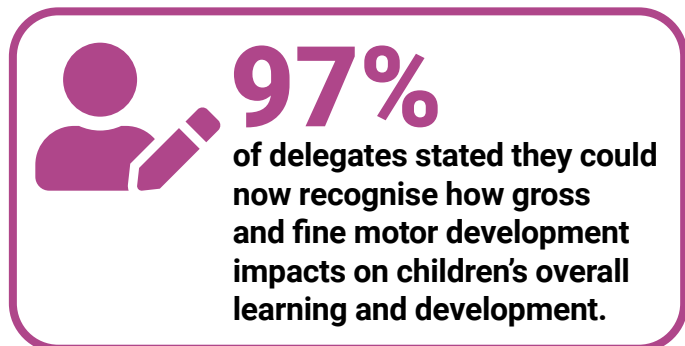
of delegates stated they could now understand ways to implement strategies to meet the needs of their new cohort

“This has been my first year in EYFS after teaching at Key Stage 2 and Post 16 SEND, so it has been a really valuable session filling in my knowledge gaps. Looking forward to the next one!”

Strathmore Infant and Nursery School, Hitchin

Physical Development (PD) workshop

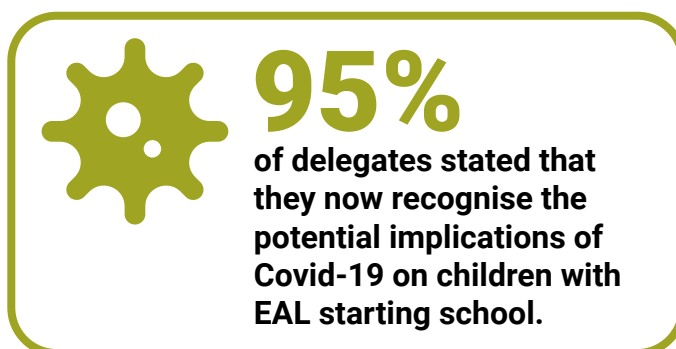
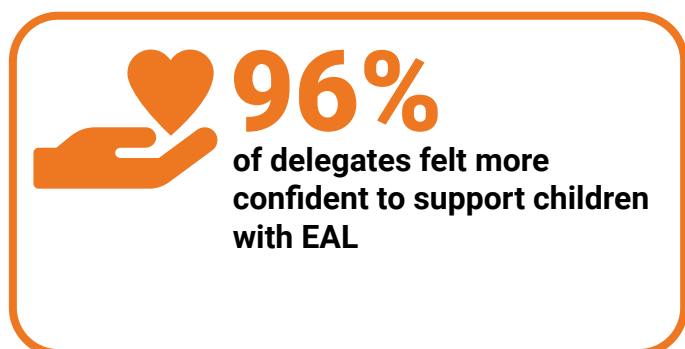
The TLoNt overview from 2020 highlighted that 1,294 children starting school had a level of medical need and a further 217 children with a sensory need. Although not specifically a physical development need, a number of these children are recognised to have a potential barrier to learning if appropriate provision is not implemented. Development stages of gross motor and fine motor skills were shared, along with appropriate adaptive resources and strategies to support physical development at home and in the learning environment.



“ Some useful tips to consider when designing our classroom environment. ” Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery, Bushey

English as an additional language (EAL) workshop

The TLoNt overview in 2020 highlighted 2,011 children starting school with English as an additional language (EAL). Language development processes were shared, along with descriptors for proficiency in English to support practitioners recognise the varying needs of their cohorts. Strategies were provided to support communicating with home, to ensure children can access the learning environment effectively and supporting children appropriately with English acquisition.



“ Thank you for the websites. This session has left me feeling really positive and strengthened my knowledge of good practice. ” Hammond Academy, Hemel Hempstead

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) workshop

The TLoNt overview in 2020 highlighted 475 children starting school with special educational needs or disability (SEND). The transition toolkit resources were referenced alongside the SEND Code of Practice along with the importance of enhanced transition procedures to enable children to settle into school. Processes for gathering evidence for education and health care plans (EHCP) and working with parents and carers was shared.



98%

of delegates stated they could now recognise strategies that effectively support children with SEND to transition into school smoothly.



94%

of delegates felt more confident to plan for children with SEND, ensuring communication between settings, families, and external services.

“ Brilliant webinar, very informative, lots of great, useful ideas shared, good pace. Thank you. ”

The Leys Primary and Nursery School, Stevenage



Transition Level of Need Findings

Schools submitted overview information from the transition level of need tool for 2020 and 2021. This information has informed the content of transition surgeries and “are you ready” workshops and has identified the 60 schools for focused transition visits.

The table below provides an example of of criteria and associated data.

Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) criteria

Speech and Language Therapist (SALT)	Intensive	Personalised	Targeted
	I5 Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) support (no EHCP in place)	P7 Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) support	T2 Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) support
	Child has received or is receiving a specialist level of SALT support	Child is receiving support or is on a waiting list for support from SALT	Child has been identified as requiring support from SALT but is not yet receiving it
Number of children in Reception 2020	Not recorded	439	498
Number of children in Reception 2021	201	287	450
Number of children in Nursery 2020	Not recorded	227	190
Number of children in Nursery 2021	84	80	178



I liked the part where you focused on using sounds with children. I have a child who has deferred reception class and will be trying that ASAP.



Arlesdene Nursery School, Cheshunt

In 2021, an additional criterion was added at the intensive level to enable schools to identify the higher level of SALT needs for children without EHCPs and to be able to plan to meet those needs.

For 2021, there are 201 children identified in reception and 84 children in nursery. As a result, the numbers of children recorded with personalised need is less than in 2020. In 2020, the number recorded at personalised included those with higher intensive levels of need.

At targeted levels, the numbers continue to be maintained. This is where support is being provided within the setting/school to meet the child’s needs currently whilst awaiting SALT support.

This information is shared with colleagues in the SALT team and used to inform the communication and language workshop and the transition surgery delivered by children’s integrated services.

From school visits in 2021, 18/57 (32%) of schools required support and advice on speech and language needs. 42% of schools visited identified communication and language development as the lowest attainment on entry to school. Specific schemes, strategies and resources were signposted by the HfL Early Years advisers.

Medical Needs criteria

Medical Needs	Intensive	Personalised	Targeted
	I6 Significant Medical Needs (non EHCP)	P8 Medical Needs	T4 Minor Medical Needs
	Child has a specific medical need or disability that requires a high level of risk assessment with an individual care plan in place and relevant staff training will be required	Child has medical needs that require regular medication and will need a risk assessment e.g. asthma, allergies or physical developmental needs	Child has experienced minor medical issues in the last 6 months
Number of children in Reception 2020	107	445	343
Number of children in Reception 2021	104	330	296
Number of children in Nursery 2020	55	217	127
Number of children in Nursery 2021	32	125	126

The information in these criteria highlight to schools the need to gather information from parents/carers regarding the details of the specific medical need, any medication requirements and to ensure risk assessments are in place prior to the child starting school. Every school will have at least one child in each class with a medical need and the practitioners must be prepared prior to the child starting.

Section 14 in the toolkit provides guidance on the information to prepare prior to the child starting school, including gathering information from parents and the previous setting, guidance on medication and treatment plans, developing a risk assessment and completing a health care plan.

The 'Induction for parents/carers' presentation and 'train the trainer' session highlighted the importance of gathering information early from parents/carers regarding children's medical needs.

Special education needs and disabilities SEND criteria

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)	Intensive	Personalised
	I3 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)	P4 Emerging Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
	Education health care plan (EHCP) is in place or will be by the time the child starts school	The child has been identified as having additional needs and is being supported at setting level
Number of children in Reception 2020	179	144
Number of children in Reception 2021	221	372
Number of children in Nursery 2020	89	63
Number of children in Nursery 2021	81	139

The TLoNt overview in 2020 highlighted 475 children starting school with special educational needs or disabilities.

In 2021, the total number starting school with SEND has risen to 813 children, an increase of 71%.

There is an increase for 2021 for reception children with intensive and personalised SEND needs.

From 2020 to 2021, the number of children with emerging SEND needs (personalised) being supported at setting level in both nursery and reception has increased from 207 children to 511 children. These are the children who do not have an EHCP in place and are being supported within the setting/school.

The SEND workshop delivered by the HfL SEND adviser provided guidance on the SEND Code of Practice and the importance of enhanced transition procedures to enable children to settle into school. The Hertfordshire Local Offer was promoted and strategies to gather children's voice during transition shared.

94% of delegates felt more confident to plan for children with SEND, ensuring communication between settings, families and external services.

The SEND SAS team worked collaboratively with HfL to deliver surgeries providing practitioners with information on referral routes and top tips to support children with SEND to make a smooth transition.

In 2020, 56% of the school visits included guidance on adapting the environment to meet the needs of SEND children and 65% included guidance on the use of Quality First Teaching (QFT) strategies.

In 2021 transition school visits, 10 schools were provided with a visit from an HfL SEND adviser, as they were identified as having a high number of children with SEND levels of need. 15 schools were provided with further guidance around supporting children with SEND.

“ The SEND training course really helped me to understand better what my classroom environment needs to provide not only for the SEN children but for all the children who are going to start their first year in Primary Education. This training also gave me some very useful tips of how the parents can help their children, in order all together to achieve a smooth transition for them. ”

Birchwood Avenue Primary School, Hatfield

“ Will use some of the practical tips around breaking up every part of the day into smaller chunks. ”

St John Fisher RC Primary School, St Albans

“ I now know where to go to get support for children who I am concerned about who are not making progress. ”

St Peters CofE Primary School, Rickmansworth



Sensory Need and Sensory Impairment criteria

Sensory	Intensive	Personalised	Targeted	Personalised	Targeted
	I7) Sensory need (no EHCP in place)	P9) Sensory need	T5) Sensory need	P6) Sensory impairment	T3) Sensory impairment
	Child has been identified as requiring significant support with a sensory need, such as tactile, auditory or oral	Child has been identified as requiring support to process sensory information, such as tactile, auditory or oral	Child has previously required support to process sensory information, such as tactile, auditory or oral	Child has a sensory impairment that requires a level of support, environment adaptations and relevant staff training and works with professional agencies, but does not meet EHCP criteria	Child has been identified by the setting/SENCO as requiring additional support to fully access the environment due to a sensory impairment
Number of children in Reception 2020	Not collected	142	Not collected	Not collected	Not collected
Number of children in Reception 2021	96	105	77	53	75
Number of children in Nursery 2020	Not collected	75	Not collected	Not collected	Not collected
Number of children in Nursery 2021	36	35	25	13	22

Following review of the TLoN criteria, additional criteria were added for 2021 to enable recording of the needs of those children with sensory needs and sensory impairment. This was to ensure school practitioners were aware of the specific needs of this group of children, where there was no EHCP in place.

In 2021, a total of 278 reception children were identified as having a tactile, auditory or oral need at the intensive, personalised or targeted level of need. This is compared to only 142 children identified at the personalised level of need in 2020. For 2021, this information provided greater detail for practitioners to plan and meet the needs of these children.

In 2021, 128 reception children were identified as having a sensory impairment at the personalised and targeted level of need. This information was not collected in 2020.

The Children and Young People's Therapies (CYP) surgery provided information of potential support for the needs of these children and some ideas for environment adaptations. Through school visits, 8 schools were provided with guidance on routine and curriculum adaptations.

Parental Involvement criteria

	Intensive	Personalised	Targeted	Intensive	Personalised	Targeted
Parental involvement	I10 Shared parental responsibility	P12 Shared parental responsibility	T7 Shared parental responsibility	I9 Parental advocacy	P11 Parental vulnerability	T6 Parental engagement
	Split custody arrangements not fully secure and no contact between parents/carers	Split custody arrangements in place but potential conflict between parents/carers	Split custody arrangement in place and working well	Parents/carers are unwilling to communicate the needs for their child or themselves in any way	Parents/carers have disclosed, or it has been recognised by setting/professionals that they require support to engage fully in their child's learning and development	Parents/carers contribute to their child's education, but communication is sporadic
Number of children in Reception 2020	Not collected	Not collected	Not collected	28	71	287
Number of children in Reception 2021	58	142	249	11	142	208
Number of children in Nursery 2020	Not collected	Not collected	Not collected	13	29	152

Shared parental responsibility criteria was added in 2021 to recognise the different family composition and the resulting support required where no child protection plan is in place. This is crucial for practitioners to understand the parental involvement and support for the child where there are split custody arrangements and where there is potential conflict between parents/carers. In 2021, there are 200 reception children identified where there are issues of conflict. There are, however, a total of 324 reception and nursery children where split custody arrangements are working well.

The parental engagement criteria highlight those families where there is limited or sporadic engagement with the school/setting (personalised and targeted). This knowledge enables practitioners to be informed and identify ways that may prove effective to engage these families.

In 2021, 47% of schools receiving transition visits were provided with advice on how to engage with parents/carers and to promote home learning.

Within the transition toolkit is the "Ready Families" section, with resources for schools to share with parents/carers to help inform and engage parents. These include the HCC "Ready for school" document and information from the library service on books to read with children about starting school. Other information includes a parents' guide to home visits and a range of activities to do at home to support transition. All children starting reception class received a pack of activity cards to support home learning.

Home learning packs: “They contain lots of good ideas and activities, lots of which we already do and lots to try. The cards have also helped me understand the context/importance of helping --- be ready for reception in September, so I think they are a good thing and are useful.” **Parent of a reception child.**

Social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) Criteria

Social, emotional, and mental health needs (SEMH)	Intensive I4 Social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH)	Personalised P5 Social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH)	Targeted T1 Social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH)
	Child has been identified as needing support with SEMH by displaying extremes of behaviour and is going through the process of gaining an EHCP	Child has specific self-regulation needs that require strategies to be put in place or demonstrates anxiety through behaviour	Child has previously required support with developing self-regulation or social and emotional needs
Number of children in Reception 2020	137	315	672
Number of children in Reception 2021	98	260	409
Number of children in Nursery 2020	57	111	270
Number of children in Nursery 2021	24	60	99

The focus on these criteria enables school practitioners to liaise with parents/carers and the previous setting to ensure any strategies that are in place to support the child are sustained through transition and embedded in the new setting to best support the child’s emotional needs.

In comparing the numbers of children in each level of need for 2020 and 2021, there are fewer children identified with SEMH needs in each category for both nursery and reception. Contributions from the Educational Psychology team at the transition surgery provided guidance on support for children presenting with challenging behaviour, shared strategies to use in the school including adaptations to routines and environment and promoted the use of the “Herts Steps” approach.

“ Good reminder and summary of Quality First Teaching and good practice of strategies to support transition, settling and establishing routines and relationships in EY setting ”

Oughton Primary and Nursery School, Hitchin

“ Looking at the Quality First Teaching ideas - incorporate some more of those for specific children, we do use lots of these already. Good to understand more about role of EP and when to access them. ”

Mary Exton School

Within the transition toolkit, information was provided on top tips to support children’s personal, social and emotional development, “Ready Steady Go - supporting children with PSED needs through their transition to starting school”. (Section 42)



Child protection, child in need and families first assessments criteria

CP/CIN/FFA	Intensive	Intensive	Personalised	Personalised	Personalised
	I1 Child looked after (CLA) in progress	I2 Child in need (CIN)/ child protection plan (CPP)	P1 Previously looked after child (PLA)	P2 Special guardianship order (SGO)	P3 Targeted interventions in place
	Child who is currently being looked after in foster care or is in the process of being adopted	Active child in need/child protection case	Child may have been in care previously, but adoption has been completed	SGO is in place	Child has been on a CIN in the past 6 months and has now stepped down to Family First Assessment (FFA); or child on FFA; with regular Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings
Number of children in Reception 2020	20	73	34	27	88
Number of children in Reception 2021	15	64	34	24	185
Number of children in Nursery 2020	10	38	13	11	33
Number of children in Nursery 2021	5	25	15	11	34

Practitioners must be aware of the needs of these children and information passed between professionals to ensure a smooth transition for the child and family. Records and dates for meetings need to be shared for continued support around the child and family. At the multi-agency transition surgery, the Family Support team gave guidance on their role and support available for practitioners.

In 2021, there was an increase of over 110% in the numbers of reception children with a Family First Assessment plan or CIN plan in place, increasing from 88 children to 185 children.

At the multi-agency surgery, the Virtual School team provided information on their role and how to access support for CLA/PLA and support for those children with SGOs.

Bereavement criteria

Bereavement	Intensive	Personalised
	18 Close Bereavement	P10 Bereavement
	Child has experienced the death, or will do in the near future, of a parent/carer, sibling or a person that is/was caring for them	Child has experienced the death, or will do in the near future, of a relative or friend
Number of children in Reception 2020	33	78
Number of children in Reception 2021	36	75
Number of children in Nursery 2020	10	24
Number of children in Nursery 2021	10	19

This information is crucial for practitioners to be aware of to be able to support children who may be experiencing the death of a parent/carer or sibling. Practitioners are then able to plan support and liaise with appropriate professionals to provide support to the child and family.

At the multi-agency surgery, the Library Service provided practitioners with a book list of resources to support children who are experiencing bereavement.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) criteria

English as an additional language (EAL)	Personalised	Targeted
	P15 English as an additional language (EAL) – No English spoken within the family	T9 English as an additional language (EAL)
	Child is new to English	Child is at the early stage with acquisition of English
Number of children in Reception 2020	347	1,011
Number of children in Reception 2021	220	1,505
Number of children in Nursery 2020	186	467
Number of children in Nursery 2021	85	572

These criteria help to highlight the different levels of English acquisition for the child and the child's family.

Through the EAL workshop, language development processes were shared, along with descriptors for proficiency in English, to support practitioners to recognise the varying needs of their cohorts. Strategies were provided on communicating with home, ensuring children can access the learning environment effectively and supporting children appropriately with English language acquisition.

“ This session has left me feeling really positive and strengthened my knowledge of good practice. ”

Hammond Academy, Hemel Hempstead

Within the transition toolkit, information is provided on how to support children with EAL, “Ready Steady Go - supporting children with EAL through their transition to starting school.”

In 2021, 10 schools were provided with support for EAL children as part of their transition visit.

Attendance criteria

Attendance	Intensive	Personalised	Targeted	Intensive
	I12 Attendance	P17 Attendance	T14 Attendance	I13 Exclusion
	Attendance is less than 50% of their scheduled time in the setting	Attendance is below 75% of their scheduled time in the setting	Attendance is between 85%-75% of their scheduled time in the setting	Child has been excluded from current or previous setting
Number of children in Reception 2020	88	399	708	6
Number of children in Reception 2021	86	227	348	10
Number of children in Nursery 2020	87	152	280	0
Number of children in Nursery 2021	69	82	121	0

In comparing 2020 and 2021, the numbers of children and their attendance has improved, with fewer children recorded as attending for less than their scheduled time. This may be because, in 2020, the information was collected in early summer term, during full COVID-19 lockdown, and this may have resulted in increased numbers of children's attendance being recorded as non-attendance, when this was not due to the child or parent/carer not taking the child to school.

This information enables practitioners to ensure strategies are consistent across the settings for those children with poor attendance records. The parent/carer induction presentation includes information on the importance of children attending the school on a regular basis.

Guidance in the toolkit includes “Children's unique development needs at transition”, (section 14) which provides suggested support for each criterion, including managing children's attendance.

Home learning activities are provided in the “Ready child” chapter in the toolkit and the home learning packs. These can be used to support children’s learning at home and shared with parents.

Family experiences criteria

Family	Intensive	Personalised	Personalised	Targeted	Intensive
	I11 Transient families	P13 Transient families	P14 More than one change in home circumstance	T8 A change in home circumstance	I14 Child who has been cared for at home
	Child who has no permanent residence, has moved frequently	Child who is in temporary residence or may need to move at short notice	Child has experienced more than one recent change or event at home	Child has experienced a recent change or event at home	Child has not attended any form of early years provision
Number of children in Reception 2020	Not collected	15	431	773	Not collected
Number of children in Reception 2021	2	31	156	626	129
Number of children in Nursery 2020	Not collected	8	169	362	Not collected
Number of children in Nursery 2021	4	7	42	206	423

These criteria inform practitioners of potential family issues which may impact on the child as they start school.

For 2021, (I11) Transient Families was added to the intensive level criteria to identify families who are moving frequently, for example refugees. Within those children starting reception, there is an increase from 15 to 31 children identified as personalised need, living in temporary accommodation.

The multi-agency transition surgery provided information from the Private Fostering team on key issues with children who may be unaccompanied by their parents or being cared for in a private fostering arrangement. Practitioners need to confirm the status of the child/family to ensure the child has access to a GP and who has parental responsibility for the child.

The criteria looking at the changes in home circumstances enables practitioners to have some awareness of the changes that are likely to affect the child, as starting school is also a significant change for the child to cope with. This includes moving house, a new sibling, family separation. The numbers of children identified in 2020 is higher than those for 2021.

The criteria “a child who has been cared for at home” is to record those children who have not attended an early years setting prior to starting school. This is recorded as an intensive level of need. There is guidance in the toolkit (section 9) to support practitioners to gather information from parents/carers around the

holistic needs of the child. There is a total of 552 children identified as “cared for at home”. It is noted that many schools reported feedback from parents/carers who kept their children at home due to COVID-19 worries and, therefore, the children did not attend their early years setting

Delayed entry and Deferred entry

	Intensive P16 Delayed Entry	Targeted T10 Deferred Entry	Targeted T11 EYPP/G	Targeted T12 Funded 2 year old	Targeted T13 Child born prematurely
	Parents/carers have opted to delay their child's start date into reception	Parents/carers have opted to defer their child's start date into reception	Child is receiving EYPP/G funding	Child is in receipt or has received funding to attend a pre-school setting.	Child was born at 36 weeks or earlier
Number of children in Reception 2020	Not recorded	Not recorded	1,035	396	Not recorded
Number of children in Reception 2021	115	98	1,430	641	102
Number of children in Nursery 2020	Not recorded	Not recorded	356	489	Not recorded
Number of children in Nursery 2021	49	53	361	543	46

Delayed entry and deferred entry criteria were added in 2021 to recognise the needs of these children, as they are older than the rest of the cohort and the practitioners need to take this into account when planning for their transition and to be prepared to meet any potential gaps in the child's learning.

Funding – EYPP/G and Free Early Education Entitlement for children aged 2 years

This information provides an overview of those children who are identified as disadvantaged and vulnerable. Practitioners can gather information from the previous setting on the success of any interventions used with the EYPP funding and discuss with parents.

Child born prematurely; this criterion was added in 2021 to recognise the potential health needs of these children, along with the additional support that may be required to support their learning and development.

“ The Transition Level of Need Tool (TLoNt) was straightforward to complete and it helped the team to access support for a child with specific needs earlier, including making contact with an advisory teacher who was already working with the child and their family. The TLoNt provides a clear overview of who needs what, individually and, sometimes, in groups. For instance, a number of children have had significant changes within their family, so early PSED activities and support were planned to address these. The school also reported that the suggestions of things parents and carers could do at home to support their children in getting ready for starting school were well received by families. ”

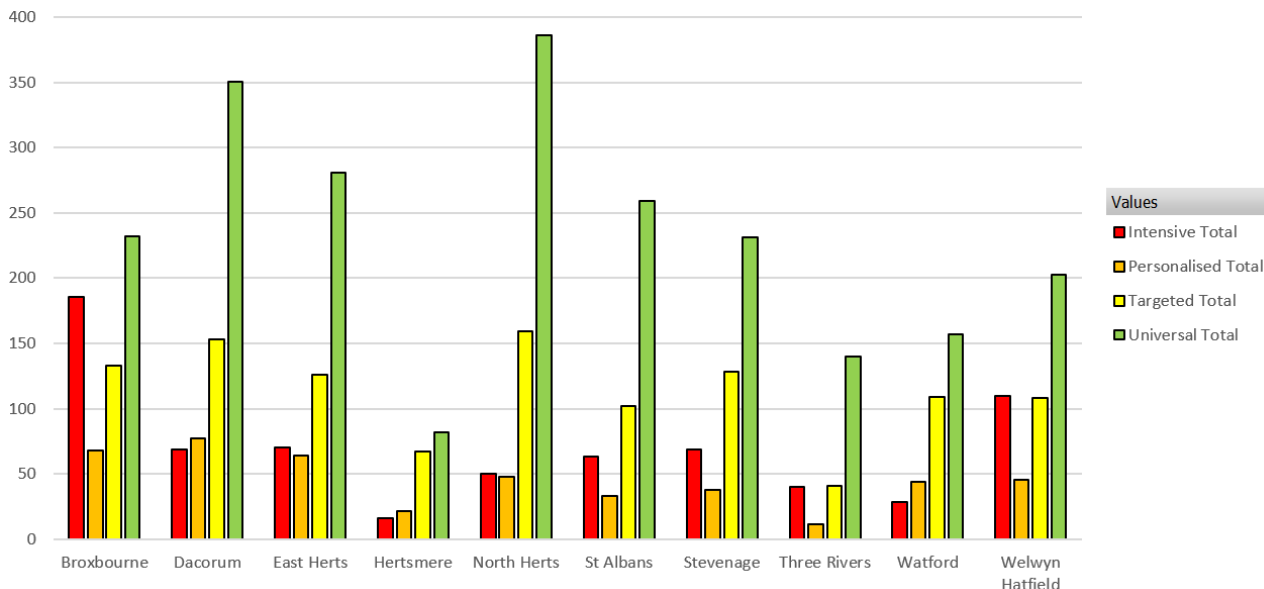
EYFS leader, Boxmoor Primary School, Hemel Hempstead



Transition Level of Need Overviews by District

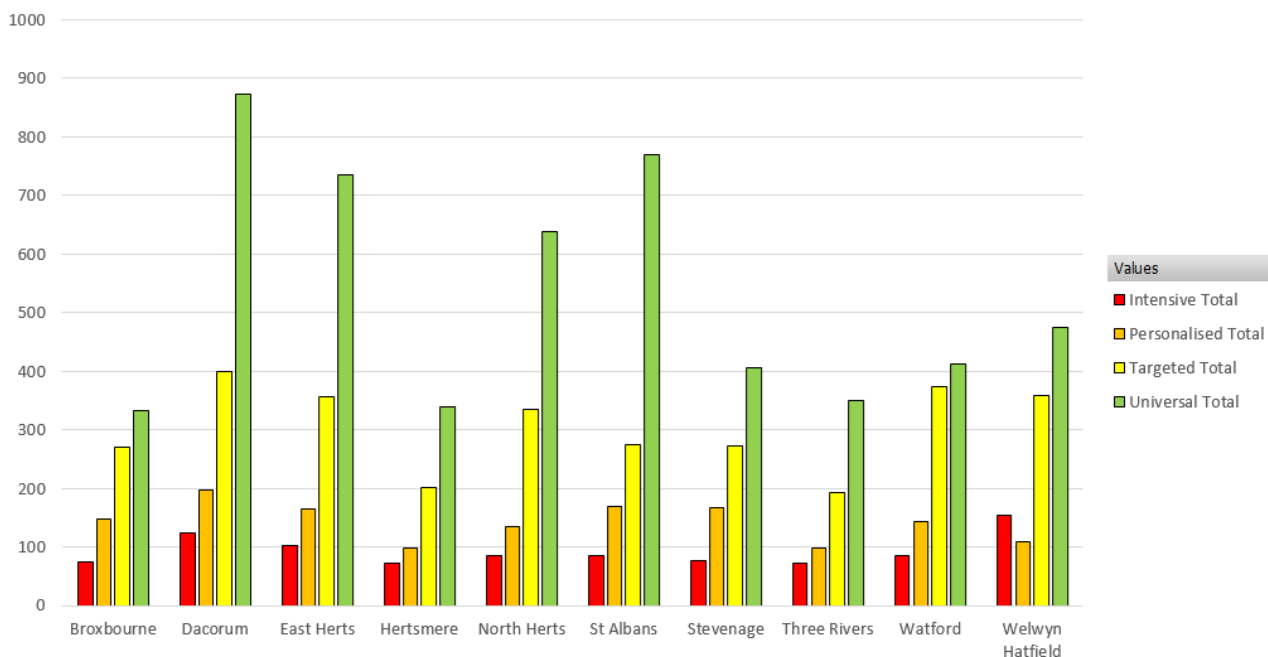
The transition level of need overview submitted from the schools enables analysis of the data by each criterion (noted above) by individual school and by district.

Nursery cohort summary of the transition level of need by District 2021



Broxbourne has the highest number of children identified as requiring intensive support on entry to nursery (186/701 – 27%).

Reception cohort summary of the transition level of need by District 2021



Welwyn Hatfield has the highest number of children identified as requiring intensive support on entry to reception (154/943 – 16%).

Project Impact

Gathering stakeholder feedback has been done periodically during the project to inform relevant changes and updates to materials, gather responses and comments about the usefulness of specific activities. This has helped to monitor the impact of the project overall as well as identify activities that have made the most difference to practitioners, children and families. Methods for gathering quantitative and qualitative feedback has included anonymised school surveys, interviews, delegate questionnaires, training and visit evaluations.

Feedback indicates that more than three quarters of schools found the TLoNt helpful to prepare for the September cohort. It highlights children that need additional support to make a smooth transition. It also:



3/4

of schools found the TLoNt helpful to prepare for the September cohort.

- helps EYFS leaders organise classes so that there is an even split of need across a cohort, which supports teacher workload and manageability of the class
- enables them to make relevant adaptations to provision and practice
- ensures that other professionals and parents have been contacted much earlier than they were able to be in previous years
- enables relevant plans of support to be put in place before the child starts
- helps school leaders confidently 'feel ready' to receive new children and settle them well.

“ It is useful to be able to see at a glance what each child needs and this has helped the school to be responsive to the children’s needs. It has also improved communication with other settings. It is clear what a school or setting is flagging up for a child so this really focuses the information-sharing conversation. It has also highlighted intensive needs much earlier, enabling the school to get things in place more effectively before the child joins the school. ”

Maple Grove Primary School, Hemel Hempstead

“ It gives you a clear picture of the needs of your new intake and helps with setting classes and see where they are coming from. ”

Hertsmere Jewish Primary School, Radlett

Information from the cohort levels of need can provide a local authority-wide view of the potential barriers and issues for children starting school and the possible challenges faced by schools.

A high return rate of the level of need overviews results in the deployment of resource to support schools adapt provision, get expert advice and have professional dialogue about how to make positive changes to their practice. In 2020, 50% of children starting nursery had a potential barrier to making a smooth transition and almost a third of children starting reception required targeted support. The impact of the pandemic makes it even more important that information is shared early, so that schools are as well informed as possible to put early intervention in place and provide support where required.

Over 3,720 delegates from schools accessed professional development opportunities, either synchronously or asynchronously.

Developing on demand training about the project and the tools has resulted in wider reach to more schools, practitioners, governors and school business managers, ensuring that all those directly impacted in hearing about, or being instrumental in, using the tools were empowered to understand the benefit of the project and how to engage.

“ The TNLT was really useful as more than half the cohort had come from other settings. Most feeder settings completed the TNLT and if children were highlighted as intensive level of need (red) the setting contacted for further information. In previous years planning, this could not be done so early. Having an improved level of information did make a difference. The webinars have been useful, particularly the training on how to complete the spreadsheet and to hear what other settings were doing. ”

Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School, Hemel Hempstead

“ **“Are you ready?” workshops** I gained a lot of understanding of how to tailor continuous provision and teaching to individual children. ”

Lordship Farm Primary School, Letchworth

“Are you ready?” workshops for school-based practitioners have helped improve practitioner skills and knowledge in supporting:

- children with English as an additional language at the point of transition
- children’s personal, social and emotional development at the point of transition
- children’s communication and language development at the point of transition
- children with SEND at the point of transition
- children’s physical development at the point of transition

They have empowered school practitioners to support those at risk of underachievement as they start school.

Transition surgeries have helped to improve practitioner knowledge and understanding about when and how to access support from SEND SAS, Integrated Therapy services and Educational Psychology team.

The cumulative outcomes of this work to date are:

- a shared understanding of effective transition processes provided through the transition toolkit materials and transition level of need tool
- a universal and consistent approach to supporting smooth transitions used by 97% of schools to share 63% of pupils’ level of need at the point of starting school in 2021
- swift identification of schools with a high proportion of children with greater levels of need; shared with HCC colleagues to inform deployment of relevant external support and support for schools by HfL advisers
- practitioners enabled with professional development information to adapt practice, put in place early intervention to support those at risk of delay and accelerate progress to close attainment gaps.

A sample of qualitative feedback from schools is shown in the [video here](#).

“ During a discussion with a SENCO of a receiving school we discussed the information I had entered into the level of need tool. It was clear that from reading the spreadsheet the SENCO had prepared some questions she would like more information for. It meant that our discussion was focused and relevant and kept us on task. I feel that the handover of this child was therefore very thorough and all the information that would help that child in the next school was passed on. ”

New Road Pre-school, Croxley Green, Watford

Impact of COVID-19

Whilst the disruption caused by COVID-19 did impact on the face-to-face nature of planned delivery, it has not had a negative impact on the overall project. In fact, it has highlighted the need for effective transition systems and information sharing more than ever before, to support children and families make a smooth transition into school.

In the first year (2020), COVID-19 delayed the return of the TLoNt overviews due to intermittent school and setting closures, increased number of practitioners working directly with children with less time to complete information and attendance of children being disrupted.

In the second year (2021), fewer children were attending their preschool place and this resulted in less information being shared through the TLoNt. Many children were being cared for at home. Consequently, guidance was provided in the transition toolkit to help school practitioners gather the TLoNt information through discussion with parents/carers. This information can be added to the TLoNt overview to help support planning for the needs of the cohort.



Sharing information using the tools and materials developed in the project is helping to make sure that early intervention can be put in place.

If support can be put in place before children are five years old then it should **impact positively on the child's educational success and help alleviate pressure in Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and beyond.**

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