



SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PSED) NEEDS THROUGH THEIR TRANSITION TO STARTING SCHOOL

Did you know?

- It is a statutory requirement to have a key person system in place (3.27) ([Gov.uk](#))
- Attachment bonds can be formed with other carers who offer warm, consistent, responsive care ([John Bowlby](#))
- Research shows that the better a child is at understanding and labelling their feelings, the better they are at regulating their emotions and behaviour

READY

- gather information to plan to meet the needs of the individual child

Universal Transition

- Conduct home visits and gather significant information. (Documents 29.1-32.2).
- Conduct previous setting visits to gather any relevant information (Documents 33.1-34.1).
- Use the transition level of need tool to identify level of support required. (Documents 5.1-5.9, 5a & 5b).
- Ensure the whole team are aware of any needs within the cohort and the strategies are in place to support them.

Enhanced Transition

- Gather the child's previous PSED experiences for example, birth history, little or no previous setting experience, and family history of mental health or family bereavement.
- Consider who the primary caregiver/attachment figure is for that child.
- Consider any children that may need additional stay and play sessions or home visits.
- Send home a transitional booklet with photos of important people and places within your setting to provide familiarity and opportunities to talk about school at home.
- Contact any external agencies involved with the child.

STEADY

- use the information to plan ahead and offer guidance for parents/carers on how to support their child to be ready for school.

Suggest home learning activities prior to starting school

- Set challenges over the school holidays that involve PSED skills. For example playing games to encourage taking turns, sharing with others and reading books to help them talk about their feelings (Document 45.1-45.2 & 58.1-58.4).



- Ensure any behaviour policies are appropriate and adapted for the EYFS and are shared with parents/carers.
- Ensure the whole team are aware of any behaviour policies and de-escalation strategies that are successful for the children in the cohort to ensure consistency.
- Set up any home/school link books for identified children and families.
- Ensure appropriate on-going communication methods are established for parents/carers to ask relevant questions.

GO

- Have in place activities and resources to support the child through their first days at school

- Create an environment that supports children to have time alone and in small groups. For example, consider positioning two chairs at a small table, a wall or having a small quiet den for reflection.
- Consider how the characteristics of effective learning are observed, assessed and planned for.
- Consider assessing the children's levels of wellbeing on entry. Children without high levels of involvement and wellbeing are not ready to learn.
- Establish a consistent daily greeting routine that prioritises welcoming children individually as well as the whole class. Avoid distractions that may interrupt your focus on the children at the start of the session. Save meetings with parents/carers for the end of the day and make this part of your school meetings policy.
- Ensure your children and families are reflected in your environment. For example, are there photos of the children with their families. Do the books, small world characters and role play props reflect the diversity of your cohort? Make labels in children's home language visible for all.
- Consider how you operate a key person system in your setting to allow children to make strong positive attachments.
- Consider allowing children to bring in transitional objects from home. For example, a handkerchief that smells like their caregiver.
- Consider the effective use of funding for disadvantaged and vulnerable children in order to support and develop PSED skills, if appropriate.
- Consider daily routines and how you manage transitions between activities and tasks. For example, tidy up time, moving around the school (lunch time).

Remember:

- Consider how you can accommodate key person roles in your setting. For example, have small group story times/song times/circle times with a 'key person' rather than the class teacher. It is important for young children to feel safe and confident enough to seek out familiar adults.
- Consistency is key for children to develop security in the routine and environment. Use visuals to support understanding.