

4.3 Transitions

EYFS: The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements
1.16, 3.1, 3.27

Policy Statement

We recognise that young children will experience many transitions in their early years; some of these planned and some unplanned. We are sensitive to the impact of such changes to children and this policy sets out the ways in which we support children going through these transitions.

Some examples of transitions that young children and babies may experience are:

- Starting nursery
- Moving between different rooms within the nursery
- Starting school or moving nurseries
- Family breakdowns
- New siblings
- Moving home
- Death of a family member or close friend
- Death of a family pet.

Procedures

Staff are trained to observe their key children and to be sensitive to any changes in their behaviour and personality. We respectfully ask that parents inform us of any changes in the home environment that may affect their child so staff can be aware of the reasons behind any potential changes in the child's behaviour.

Starting Nursery

We recognise that starting nursery may be difficult for some children and their families. Please see policy **4.2 Settling In**

Moving Rooms

At Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nursery, we recognise that children all develop in different ways and at different paces. We therefore have our classroom ages overlapping to support these differences rather than children being required to move before they are ready or held back when they are more than ready.

When moving rooms, as well as the readiness of the children, we also have to consider the availability in the new room and the overlap of ages also supports this.

When a child is ready to move to a different room in the nursery, we follow the process set out below and work with the parents to ensure this is a seamless process in which the child is fully supported at all stages. This may include a handover meeting between the existing key person, new key person and parents and:

- For planning purposes, the 'predicted' date of room move is entered on the system by the Nursery Manager when the child first joins Hopes and Dreams.
- These dates are printed three months in advance and issue to the Room Leaders for them to review based on the individual child's readiness to move. Please note that whilst they may be advance in some ways, the key person will look at the whole picture when finalising dates such as emotional readiness and physical readiness.
- Room Leaders will then check with the parents that they agree the planned move date and ensure that it doesn't clash with anything else in the child's live e.g. holiday, new home, new baby etc. If necessary, the date will be adjusted to accommodate any of these situations.
- Once the date is confirmed, parents will be issued with a Transition Pack which will include:
 - Welcome Booklet for the new room
 - Name of new key person
 - Any key changes about the new room, e.g. uniform, daily feedback
 - Details on extra-curricular activities including order forms
 - The link to the new room Parent Forum
- We will then arrange a transition meeting for you to meet the new key-person and see the new room and will complete a 'Transition Form' to share any relevant information required. This meeting may be in person or through Zoom.
- Settling in sessions will be booked in for a week or two prior to the transition date and you will be informed of these in advance.
- The initial visit will be with their key person or another familiar staff member and then they will step back for the new key person to support the child and build their relationship
- If the child needs additional settling into the new room, we will of course accommodate this and in discussion with both key persons and Management, will amend the official date.

Starting school or moving childcare providers

Starting school is an important transition we are very aware of the impact moving onto school can have on children and we do all we can to facilitate a smooth transition and minimise any potential stresses. An effective transition will involve preparation of child, understanding how each child's transition to school is unique.

We also consider the needs of the parents in this process and the key person and manager will be there to support them and try to answer any questions they may have.

We have to recognise that each new setting may have their own policy of transition that may not work in conjunction with ours, which we may then need to adjust accordingly.

Our programme includes:

- About six months prior to children leaving for school, we ask parents to complete a 'School Readiness' questionnaire to give information about the new school, and a named contact if possible, any transition procedures and their view on their child's development to the key person
- The key person will initiate conversations with their key children, who are due to move to school, about the school and discuss what they think may be different and what may be the same. They will talk through any concerns the child may

have and initiate activities or group discussions relating to any issues, enabling these to be overcome

- We encourage parents to pass on our information to the new setting
- If we have a number and/or named contact, we will initiate the first contact.
- We invite school representatives into the nursery, where possible or invite them to talk via online platforms such as Zoom so they have the opportunity to introduce themselves to the children and also to see the child in an environment where there are comfortable and settled.
- We request that we can visit the new setting. We hope that this visit will give the child the opportunity to visit their new setting with the support of a familiar and close person, therefore instilling confidence in the new environment. During this visit, we hope to allay some of their uncertainties e.g. the meeting of new friends, what activities will take place, where the bathroom is etc. and also take some photos to bring back to nursery to show their friends.
- If no visits are able to take place, then we aim to have telephone contact with the new setting so that we can pass on any information that we feel would help with a smooth transition.
- We produce a comprehensive report on every child leaving the setting and with parental permission will share this with the school to enable teachers to have a good understanding of every child received. This will include their interests, strengths and level of understanding and development in key areas. This will support continuity of care and early learning

This above process relates to children going to school. However wherever possible, we will adapt this process to support children moving to another childcare provider e.g. childminder or another Nursery.

Other ways we try to support transitions to school are:

- Build relationships with local schools where possible throughout the year and invite them to key events and request attend their key events, e.g. nativity, sports day
- Where possible we use other ways to support the transition to school, e.g. inviting previous children/parents from the nursery who have moved on to school to come back and talk to the children/parents about their school experiences.
- Set up Zoom Video call meetings with local schools to talk to parents about the process of moving to school.
- With parental permission around school allocation day, we may share details of the schools children are going to so parent/carers can see which children may be going to the same school. This can offer some reassurance for the children to know that are moving with some familiar peers.

Family Breakdowns

The nursery will ensure the child's welfare is paramount in all operations relating to their time within the nursery and will always act in the best interest of the child.

- Comply with any details of a Court Order where they are applicable to the nursery's situation, provided the nursery has seen a copy/has a copy attached to the child's file
- Provide information on the child's progress within the nursery to both parents wherever requested

- Invite both parents to nursery events, including parental consultations and social evenings
- Ensure that all matters known by the staff pertaining to the family and the parent's separation will remain confidential
- Ensure that no member of staff takes sides within the separation and treats both parents equally and with due respect

Please note that the nursery cannot restrict access to any parent with parental responsibility unless a formal Court Order is in place. We respectfully ask that parents do not place the nursery in this position.

We ask parents to:

- Provide us with all information relating to parental responsibilities, Court Orders and injunctions
- Update information that changes regarding any of the above as soon as practicably possible
- Work with us to ensure continuity of care and support for the child
- Not involve nursery staff in any family disputes, unless this directly impacts on the care we provide for the child
- Talk to the Manager/key person away from the child when this relates to family separation in order to avoid the child becoming upset. This can be arranged as a more formal meeting or as an informal chat
- Not ask the nursery to take sides in any dispute. We will only take the side of the child, which will require us to be neutral at all times

Moving home and new siblings

We recognise that both these events may have an impact on a child. Normally, parents will have advance notice of these changes and we ask parents to let us know about these events so we can support the child to be prepared. The key person will spend time talking to the child and providing activities that may help the child to act out any worries they have, e.g. through role play, stories and discussions.

Bereavement

We recognise that this may be a very difficult time for children and their families and the key person will spend time talking to the child and providing activities that may help the child to act out any worries they have, e.g. through stories and discussions. A fantastic book for this is 'The Goodbye Book' by Todd Parr.

If parents feel that their child requires additional support because of any changes/transitions in their life, we ask that you speak to the Nursery Management Team and the key person to enable this effective support to be put into place.

Reviewed: April 2022	Next review date: April 2023
Signed on behalf of the nursery: <i>L. Thorpe Zurawska</i>	