

# Transition and Settling-in Policy

## 1 Introduction

*“Transition as we know it involves moving from one environment or situation to another and hence it is a continual process for children. They are almost always on a journey, and almost permanently in transition. The process of transition itself may therefore be viewed as one of adaptation.*

*Research has shown that the best adaptation takes place where*

- *conditions are similar*
- *communication is encouraged*
- *the process of change takes place gradually over time”.*

(Gould T 2012 – Transitions in the EYFS).

Transitions are not one-off events, but something which is on-going. Children may move between several settings in the course of a day, week, month or year.

## 2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 This policy aims to support both staff and parents/carers in recognising that all children bring different experiences, interests and competencies that affect their ability to learn.
- 2.2 The objective of this policy is to ensure that, during the transition process, all staff maximise their efforts to recognise and meet the specific and additional needs of individual children.

## 3 Transition and settling-in

We recognise that schools that are successful in handling transitions, and settling-in, are those which make planning for transition (settling-in) a priority.

- 3.1 We aim to make any transition as seamless as possible and a positive experience for the child and their family.
- 3.2 All staff will work with parents/carers and children to ensure that children settle in well and make successful transitions.

## 4 Practice to support effective settling-in and transition

We will plan to ensure that the child’s key person, class teachers in KS1 and KS2 work alongside parents/carers in all arrangements and events in the transition (settling-in) period.

- 4.1 To achieve this we will ensure:
  - all staff are supported to adopt a consistent approach in line with this policy that is open and transparent to all involved parties;

- all staff communicate effectively in a consistent way with parents/carers and children about transition beforehand and include visits for all EYFS children, and for older children if it is deemed necessary;
- guidance for parents/carers on how they can prepare for and support their children's learning and development in our school or the one they are moving to.

**4.2** Prior to the child starting at Grangewood, their key person or class teacher and head teacher will meet with the parents/carers to share information about how the school operates, for example, timings, homework, communication, etc.

**4.3** Our staff will also do a number of other important things to support transition (settling-in) into our school including:

- clearly signposting the entrance, office, toilet and other key areas;
- providing a bright, welcoming and informative environment that reflects cultural diversity;
- making sure the person who shows parents/carers round the school is both knowledgeable and friendly;
- making sure all practitioners (including administration staff) are aware of and clear about the transition process and schedule;
- bearing in mind that parents/carers may be anxious about whether their children will get a place at the school;
- completing any necessary forms in partnership with the parents/carers;
- if possible, provide a translator where needed;
- helping parents/carers to make informed decisions about their children by giving them full information and answering their questions.

## **5 Settling-in to Early Years** (*The Role of the Key Person in Settling-in*)

At the point of transition the parents/carers will also share information about their child with their child's key person including:

- the important adults in the child's life;
- child's interests;
- favourite foods;
- sleep patterns;
- how the child usually shows anxiety or distress;
- what soothes/comforts him/her;
- child's motivation/schemas (patterns of play);
- how the parent would like to approach the first separation
- transition objects/toys.

- 5.1** Before a child starts to attend the setting, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information. These include:
- A home visit
  - Foundation (Induction) Evening
  - Assessment Day
  - School Prospectus/Website
  - An Induction Pack with written information such as healthy foods, snacks and drinks; our behaviour management policy; handwriting scheme; contact details for the Chair of Governors; uniform requirements; etc
  - Individual parent meetings of children new to the school
- 5.2** We allocate a key person to each child and his/her family during the first few days of starting school; we explain the process of settling-in with his/her parents and jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting.
- 5.3** We judge a child to be settled when they have formed a relationship with their key person; for example the child looks for the key person when he/she arrives, goes to them for comfort, and seems pleased to be with them. The child is also familiar with where things are and is pleased to see other children and participate in activities.
- 5.4** When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- 5.5** We recognise that some children will settle more readily than others but that some children who appear to settle rapidly are not ready to be left.
- 5.6** We do not believe that leaving a child to cry will help them to settle any quicker. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the setting.  
We reserve the right not to accept a child into the setting without a parent or carer if the child finds it distressing to be left.
- 5.7** Within the first five to seven weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to start to create their child's record of achievement. Then the "learning Journey" begins.

## **6 Bilingual children**

We recognise that settling-in is a particularly important time for bilingual children and it is important, for the success of this, to ensure that the environment and resources reflect (in some way) their family, ethnicity and culture.

- 6.1** All staff value and celebrate language diversity and recognise the importance of maintaining and developing the child's mother tongue, as language is closely linked to identity and self-esteem.
- 6.2** Bilingual children and their families often have very specific needs, which we will take into account in order to help them settle into their new environment; for example:
- Parents/carers may have had very different educational experiences from the ones we are offering. At Grangewood we recognise that we may need to provide extra support to help their understanding of how and why we plan for

young children to learn through the activities and learning experiences we provide.

- Recent-arrival families or asylum seekers and those with refugee status may be coping with particularly difficult social circumstances, which staff need to be aware of in order to support the child appropriately.

## **6 Children with special needs**

It is important that we know and understand the needs of children in order for us to successfully meet them. We will therefore, adopt a multi-agency approach for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), which, will be shared with their next school.

**6.1** This will help prevent vital information being missed on admission and provide a balanced profile on individual children allowing the receiving school to liaise with other involved professionals to gain necessary resources and/or equipment.

**6.2** Strategies we will employ include:

- meetings with both SENCOs, the sender and receiver, to discuss the child's individual needs (Transitional Review). This provides the opportunity to share information between all involved and help to prepare for the comprehensive integration of the child into the school, including any further strategies to be put into place which will support the individual needs of the child and those of their parent/carer. This will help to make the transition as smooth as possible.
- additional transition (settling-in) visits will be planned on a needs-led basis to enable the child and parents/carers to familiarise themselves with Grangewood and its routines and for the child to be observed in their responses to the new provision. These visits will normally take place when the school is operating and children are in situ and should be arranged when time can be given to the child and parents/carers.
- all information and records (e.g. EHC plans, medical history, Support Plans, reports from other agencies) will be handed over to the receiving school in good time and before the child starts to make any visits to the school. Further meetings will be arranged to clarify information concerning the child, as appropriate.
- in the case of a transition from home to Grangewood, we will liaise with professionals from any pre-school Special Needs Services and/or other agencies (eg Health Visitors) who have vital additional information on the child or insight into their needs. We will ensure consent from the parent/carer is obtained before information is passed to the receiver.

## **7 Taking Into account the feelings and views of parents/carers**

Developing a close working relationship with parents/carers is most often key to a positive transition experience for the children, the families and the school.

**7.1** All staff at Grangewood Independent School will take into account the feelings and views of individual parents/carers and make every effort to reassure them.

**8** To support our overall good practice we will:

- always put the children’s social and emotional well-being at the centre of the transition process;
- ensure that transition (settling-in) is not seen as an event but an on-going process;
- provide all staff with appropriate training on transition (settling-in) so they understand the Transition and Settling-in policy of our school;
- make sure that sufficient time is allocated for consultation with parents/carers, children and the receiving school staff;
- ensure all staff have an induction period when transition (settling-in) is highlighted. Recognition of the importance of the flexibility of the transition process will be a key part of the staff induction process and updated training for all staff as a team;
- ensure that enough time is allocated to visits by the child to the new school;
- prioritise giving staff time to talk to parents/carers each day so we will be able to minimise concerns about change;
- use an “all about me “ type booklet which will be completed by parents/carers then shared with the child’s key person.

**9 Monitoring and review**

**9.1** This policy was agreed and implemented on July 2013.

**9.2** The Governing Body undertakes a review of this policy every two years.

**9.3** There will be on-going monitoring of this policy as some aspects may require amending/updating before the review date should there be any incidents which take place relating to it that give cause for concern.

Signed:

Member of Governing Body:

Date:

Chair of Governors:

Date:

Next Review Date:

September 2020