



IGNITING LEADERS  
CHANGING LIVES

# TRANSITION GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

SUPPORTING YOUR  
CHILD'S WELLBEING DURING  
TRANSITION

**Transition from one year group to the next is an exciting time but it can also present challenges as your child may be facing a new classroom, new teacher, new learning experiences and new routines. It is important that all children feel safe, secure and confident about this change.**

There are many ways that you can support your child during this time to help ensure that they thrive during the transition and that it is a positive and calm experience for them. The most important thing that you can do is listen to your child and to encourage them to share how they are feeling when they want to.

Many children will take transition in their stride, but it is important to look out for signs that they may need some extra support with their mental wellbeing during a new phase or transition in their education. Some signs to look out for are:

- Your child is struggling to make friends
- They don't feel like they belong
- They have ongoing difficulties coping with daily routines
- They don't want to go to school
- They show challenging or disruptive behaviour
- They are not making the expected amounts of progress with their learning

### **What can you do to help?**

#### **1. Prioritise their health**

We all know that to be at their best and ready to take on new challenges, children need to eat the right food, get the right balance between exercising and resting, and of course, they need enough sleep every night. If you can support your child to get the basics right, they are likely to feel more resilient and able to cope with change. Routines are important so keep bedtimes, mealtimes and morning and evening schedules as consistent as possible. You could try to use a weekly planner so you and your child can plan what will happen each week and when.

#### **2. Communicate**

Keep talking to your child daily because opening conversations, listening to them, smiling, hugging and reassuring them helps them to feel safe. Small things make a huge difference. Share stories together and encourage your child to talk to you and others. Talk about how you feel when things change in life as this might help your child to open up about their own feelings.

#### **3. Work together**

Be a team with your child. Help them to solve problems, support them with their home learning and talk about their day at school. Find out what your child really wants to achieve and make action plans with them, setting mini goals to help them to stay motivated. Make sure your child knows that you are there to help and support them.

#### **4. Be calm**

Try and stay as calm as you can if your child is feeling distressed. Reassure them that you are there to help them and give them a hug. Give them space when they need it and help them to identify things which can calm them down such as mindful colouring in, reading a book together, watching a film, going for a walk or doing some crafts. Try to identify where your child's 'happy place' is so you can support them to get there when they need to.

#### **5. Show interest**

Your child will be learning new things, experiencing new activities, and feeling new emotions. Take notice of what they are doing and listen to their point of view. Show interest in your local community and the news. Talk to your child about what they are interested in, what books they have read recently, what they are engaging with digitally, what games they like and why, or what kinds of music they enjoy.

#### **6. Encourage independence**

Help your child grow by encouraging them to be more independent. This could relate to daily routines, responsibilities at home, tidying their room, doing their homework, reading, or learning an instrument. Your child's needs will change and, as parents and carers, we need to adapt our level of support to make sure that we are promoting our child's independence.

#### **7. Have fun**

Having fun together is so important. Do activities they love, play games, be silly, laugh together. Get creative, go outdoors, see friends together and find a good balance of quality time to spend together each week.

#### **8. Be their rock**

When other elements of life are changing, it is more important than ever that parents and carers provide an anchor for children. Be your child's comfort and their consistently safe place. You are the one they can talk to, show emotions in front of and ask for help.

#### **9. Be involved**

Be involved with your child's school and communicate with their teacher. This will reassure you and your child. If you feel that your child is struggling and needs some extra support, reach out to their teacher. By working together, you will find the best way forward.

#### **10. Look after yourself**

If you don't look after yourself then you won't be in the best place to support your child. Make sure that you are in a healthy, positive place by talking to friends, making time to do the things that you enjoy, and being healthy by getting enough sleep and eating well. Be kind to yourself and know that you are doing your best and being the best role model that you can be.

## Some activities to try with your child

1. **Worry jar** – ask your child to write down their worries on small pieces of paper. Fold them up and put them in the jar. Use this as an opportunity to talk to your child and help to reassure them.
2. **Journaling** – encourage your child to keep a notebook and pen by their bed. They can write down their thoughts or feelings, create a diary of their day or week, or write down their worries or things that they are excited about. It can be enjoyable and give them a safe place to share what is on their mind. Model this to your child by writing down your own thoughts too.
3. **Calming techniques** – encourage your child to do some slow, deep breathing exercises, yoga or stretching to help them feel relaxed and to reduce their anxiety.
4. **Create soundtracks** – help your child to create some soundtracks to help them feel calm or happy. They could listen to them and carry out some mindful colouring or do a calming activity.
5. **Calm down kit** – create a box with your child which will give them comfort. Ask them to include different items which are meaningful and helpful to them, such as a fidget toy, a few photos, a notebook and pencil, some colouring in, building blocks, a poem or a book. It can help them to regulate their emotions and feel safe and calm.