

# **Being kept in mind:**

**Transition planning for  
children who have social,  
emotional and/or  
behavioural needs**

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## **BEING KEPT IN MIND:**

### **Transition planning for children who have social, emotional and/or behavioural needs**

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#### **Introduction**

This document has been devised to help early years setting staff develop and implement Nurture Care Transition Plans for children who are transferring to school or to another setting.

The children that would benefit from a Nurture Care Transition Plan are those who have social, emotional and/or behavioural needs. Understanding a child's needs will help to inform an individualised plan.

This document will help you to identify which children would benefit from a Nurture Care Transition Plan, factors to consider and ideas about what to include in the plan. It can also be used as a resource to help meet children's social, emotional and behavioural needs. **Thank you to all colleagues who have provided ideas and feedback during the development of this document.** Further advice can be obtained from:

- Your Area SENCO Advisory Teacher (ASAT)
- Jane De Ste Croix (specialist early years educational psychologist)  
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#### ***General questions to ask yourself***

- Which children are likely to find the transition to school or another setting difficult taking into account protective and risk factors?
- What is their behaviour communicating to us?
- How can we help the child to feel safe and secure, develop relationships with new people and familiarity of new environments and routines?
- Are any of the children going to a school that is part of the Get Set for School project?

## **Children's Needs**

Children need to feel safe and secure in order to develop and learn. For many children, feelings of safety and security are established at a very early age. Nurturing experiences contribute to these feelings and help to develop resilience. Resilience can simply be described as the ability to cope with, and 'bounce back' from, difficult situations or events.

Some children will feel safe and secure in certain situations and with certain people. However, they may find new situations or dealing with new people challenging. These children may display one or more of the following:

- High levels of anxiety.
- A strong need to feel in control of situations or to control the people around them.
- Delays in emotional development where their skills and abilities are similar to those of a much younger child.
- Difficulties in regulating their emotions, often needing an adult to help them when dysregulated.
- Inappropriate behaviour in certain situations e.g. biting, hitting, scratching, inappropriate language.
- Withdrawal from certain situations through being quiet and not engaging with activities, other children or adults.
- Difficulties interacting appropriately with other children due to poor social skills.
- Difficulties focusing on an activity or interaction for an appropriate amount of time in comparison to their peers.
- Hypervigilance, constantly looking around at what is going on in the setting without being able to properly settle to an activity.
- Impulsive behaviours.
- A poor sense of self, not feeling positive about themselves or their achievements.

What these children need is to know that adults are in control, they are being 'kept in mind' and that the world can be a safe and secure place.

### Factors to consider

There may be children who clearly display one or more of the areas outlined above, to a greater or lesser degree. They may be very settled in the setting due to strong protective factors that have helped them to feel safe and secure. These might include a strong relationship with a key adult ('safe person') and supportive strategies that have been implemented over several months or even years. However, transition can be a time of increased anxiety so an appropriate plan to support their transition to school or another setting will be needed. It is helpful to refer to the Resilience Checklist (see below) when considering protective and risk factors. Children who have, or are experiencing, a high number of risk factors will need more support than other children through their transition to school.

### Next steps

Date	Next steps
Pre-April	<p>Complete the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Identifying Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs</b> form to help identify needs. Highlight areas of need and add comments where applicable.</li> <li>• <b>Resilience Checklist</b> to highlight protective and risk factors. Once factors are highlighted, it will become evident whether the risk factors outweigh protective factors in each area. The higher the number of risk factors present, the more likely it is that the child is going to find transition/changes difficult.</li> <li>• <b>Nurture Progress Star</b> to identify areas to target. A <b>Nurture Care Plan</b> can also be completed.</li> <li>• <b>Nurture Care Transition Plan</b> to identify needs, strategies and plans for transition.</li> </ul>
April	<p>Once a school place has been offered, the transition planning needs to begin. This will involve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The identification of a named <b>transition lead person</b> who will be responsible for arranging a Team Around the Child (TAC) transition planning meeting to ensure a package of support is in place for the child. The transition lead needs to be a professional already involved with the child and can help facilitate a discussion around the best way to support them. If a child is already attending a setting, a transition lead still needs to be identified to facilitate the above meeting.</li> <li>• A <b>TAC transition planning meeting</b> involving parents/carers, key staff from the early years setting, key staff from the school and other professionals involved.</li> </ul>
Terms 5 and 6	Weekly activities to take place as noted on the Nurture Care Transition Plan.
Summer holiday	Communications can be sent to the child by key staff in the early years setting and school e.g. a postcard, photograph or letter. Consideration should be given to support for parents/carers and access to activities for the child.
Term 1	The key adult from the early years setting can visit the school to remind the child that they are not forgotten.

**IDENTIFYING SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL NEEDS – AN EXAMPLE**

Child's name.....Date.....

Area of need	Information (continue on new page if needed)
High levels of anxiety.	<i>Johnny is anxious around food and at transition times and needs 1:1 support to manage. It helps to ....</i>
A strong need to feel in control of situations or to control the people around them.	<i>He tries to manage his anxiety by being controlling and will try to tell the adults what to do. He avoids interacting with his peers because he cannot control them. We have been working on ...</i>
Delays in emotional development where their skills and abilities are similar to those of a much younger child.	<i>Johnny is very quick to cry when things don't go his way and he is functioning more at the level of a 2yr old emotionally. He cannot understand he might need to wait for something to happen and will tantrum. We support him by ...</i>
Difficulties in regulating their emotions, often needing an adult to help them when dysregulated.	<i>Johnny dislikes loud and busy environments and will become dysregulated. He can throw things at these times. He can become very angry when not in control and will scream and kick out at adults. At these times he needs ...</i>
Inappropriate behaviour in certain situations e.g. biting, hitting, scratching, inappropriate language.	<i>Johnny will hit and bite adults when he feels out of control. We use an emotion coaching approach so that he knows this is not acceptable and give him an alternative</i>
Withdrawal from certain situations through being quiet and not engaging with activities, other children or adults.	<i>Johnny likes to find quiet areas of the classroom or outside place to play in</i>
Difficulties interacting appropriately with other children due to poor social skills.	<i>Johnny has previously attempted to play with his peers but has been unkind or has shouted when they don't do what he wants. Some of the children avoid him. We are planning small focused groups to ..</i>
Difficulties focusing on an activity or interaction for an appropriate amount of time in comparison to their peers.	<i>Johnny will stay at an activity for a long time if he has chosen it. He has limited focus and attention on adult led activities</i>
Hypervigilance, constantly looking around at what is going on in the setting without being able to properly settle to an activity.	<i>Johnny will often startle if he hears a loud noise. He also watches carefully if a new adult comes into the room and he becomes less settled</i>
Impulsive behaviours.	<i>Johnny will hit out before acting. He cannot understand about waiting and will cry if he isn't first in the queue.</i>
A poor sense of self, not feeling positive about themselves or their achievements.	<i>Johnny avoids activities that are mildly challenging. He doesn't respond well to praise</i>
Other	

**IDENTIFYING SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL NEEDS**

**Child's name**.....**Date**.....

Area of need	Information (continue on new page if needed)
High levels of anxiety.	
A strong need to feel in control of situations or to control the people around them.	
Delays in emotional development where their skills and abilities are similar to those of a much younger child.	
Difficulties in regulating their emotions, often needing an adult to help them when dysregulated.	
Inappropriate behaviour in certain situations e.g. biting, hitting, scratching, inappropriate language.	
Withdrawal from certain situations through being quiet and not engaging with activities, other children or adults.	
Difficulties interacting appropriately with other children due to poor social skills.	
Difficulties focusing on an activity or interaction for an appropriate amount of time in comparison to their peers.	
Hypervigilance, constantly looking around at what is going on in the setting without being able to properly settle to an activity.	
Impulsive behaviours.	
A poor sense of self, not feeling positive about themselves or their achievements.	
Other	

**RESILIENCE CHECKLIST**

(Adapted from document issued by Gloucestershire Educational Psychology Service)

Child's name.....Date.....

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Resilience factors</b>	<b>Risk factors</b>
<b>Child</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good health</li> <li>• Good language skills</li> <li>• Achiever</li> <li>• Good self-esteem</li> <li>• Good social/interaction skills</li> <li>• Easy temperament</li> <li>• Good problem solver</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor health</li> <li>• Physical/mental disability</li> <li>• Sensory disability</li> <li>• Language difficulties</li> <li>• Learning difficulties</li> <li>• Low self-esteem</li> <li>• Poor social skills</li> <li>• Behaviour difficulties</li> <li>• Poor problem solving</li> <li>• Lack of empathy</li> <li>• Severe emotional needs</li> <li>• Impulsivity</li> </ul>
<b>Family</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive family</li> <li>• Close extended family</li> <li>• Supportive informal network</li> <li>• Family coherence</li> <li>• Positive parental guidance/supervision</li> <li>• No obvious family stressors e.g. finance</li> <li>• Good communication skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ill-health of parents</li> <li>• Abuse and/or neglect</li> <li>• Family violence</li> <li>• Parent in prison</li> <li>• Poor parental guidance/supervision</li> <li>• Family distress e.g. financial difficulties, out of work</li> <li>• Drug/alcohol dependency</li> <li>• Divorce/separation</li> <li>• Death of a family member or close friend</li> <li>• New step family</li> </ul>
<b>Significant life events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting a significant person</li> <li>• A positive move to a new area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Refugees</li> <li>• Moving house/country</li> </ul>
<b>Early years setting/school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive ethos</li> <li>• Positive peer group</li> <li>• Achievement</li> <li>• Friends</li> <li>• Sense of belonging</li> <li>• Opportunities for success</li> <li>• Opportunities for initiative</li> <li>• Opportunities for positive recognition</li> <li>• Close/cohesive staff</li> <li>• Staff who listen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being held back a year</li> <li>• Moving settings</li> <li>• Changing key person/teacher</li> <li>• Exclusion</li> <li>• Learning difficulties</li> <li>• Lack of achievement</li> <li>• Poor network of friends</li> <li>• Bullying</li> <li>• Peer rejections</li> <li>• Poor attachment to staff</li> </ul>
<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal networks</li> <li>• Good role models</li> <li>• Participation in community</li> <li>• Access to support/services</li> <li>• Acceptance of cultural diversity</li> <li>• Strong identity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood violence/crime</li> <li>• Lack of support services</li> <li>• Social/cultural discrimination</li> <li>• Antisocial community norms</li> </ul>

# NURTURE PROGRESS STAR

Completed by:.....Name of key adult.....

Child's name:.....

Start date: ..... Review date: .....

The Nurture Progress Star is a five-pointed star shape. At the center is a blue circle containing the number '0'. Five arms radiate from the center. Each arm is a rectangular strip with numbers 1 through 10 written along its length, starting from the center and moving outwards. The top arm is vertical, the left and right arms are horizontal, and the bottom-left and bottom-right arms are diagonal. Each arm is connected to a larger rectangular box: the top arm connects to a box above the star, the left arm to a box on the left, the right arm to a box on the right, the bottom-left arm to a box at the bottom-left, and the bottom-right arm to a box at the bottom-right. The boxes are intended for recording progress or observations.



## **NURTURE PROGRESS STAR – Some examples**

**Some examples of what can be added to the blank boxes are noted below. You can add your own ideas to this list for use with other children in the future.**

- I feel positive and motivated to be an active participant in nursery/school experiences
- I can play and interact with two other children in a positive way for (5) minutes when supported by my key adult
- I feel confident in using my voice during interactions
- I can engage in playful fun activities with my key adult without a focus on learning
- I can enjoy following an adult's direction because I trust that adults are safe and fun to be with
- I can accept and enjoy positive touch as a way of connecting with trusted people
- I can use positive and appropriate strategies to self-regulate and manage my emotions with the support of my key adult
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**A Nurture Care Plan – The Four As  
AN EXAMPLE**

Child's name.....  
Key Adult's name.....Date.....

<p><b>Anxiety –</b> Strategies to reduce levels of anxiety</p>	<p><b>Attention –</b> Strategies to meet the need for attention</p>	<p><b>Adult –</b> Strategies for key adult/s</p>	<p><b>Area –</b> Strategies for creating a safe place and areas</p>
<p>Calming activities – a special box of activities e.g. stress ball, positive touch</p> <p>Adults to recognise the signs of increased anxiety e.g. twitching, increase in volume of voice</p> <p>Transitional object – a favoured object from home</p> <p>A cold/warm drink</p>	<p>Reassurance that they will still be liked even if they have done something inappropriate</p> <p>Finding ways to 'check-in' frequently e.g. a touch on the shoulder, a reassuring word</p> <p>Providing an area of responsibility in the classroom</p>	<p>Identifying a safe person</p> <p>Indirect praise e.g. X will really like the colours that you used on the picture</p> <p>Adults to remain calm and contained</p> <p>Support/supervision for the 'safe person' to ensure containment and opportunities to talk about their work</p>	<p>Social Stories for preparation of new situations</p> <p>Visual timetable</p> <p>Preparation for change</p> <p>Clear routines</p> <p>Now and Next whiteboard</p> <p>Safe place (in and out of class)</p>

**A Nurture Care Plan – The Four As**

Child's name.....  
Key Adult's name.....Date.....

<b>Anxiety –</b> Strategies to reduce levels of anxiety	<b>Attention –</b> Strategies to meet the need for attention	<b>Adult –</b> Strategies for key adult/s	<b>Area –</b> Strategies for creating a safe place and areas

## A Nurture Care Transition Plan

Child's name.....DOB.....

Early Years Setting.....Key adult.....

School.....Intended key adult.....

Date.....

**A description of the child's needs** – use Identifying Needs form

*You can use bullet points e.g. regulating emotions, anxiety, hyperactivity, poor peer interactions*

**Protective and risk factors** – highlight relevant parts of the Resilience Checklist

**Successful strategies which**

- Reduce levels of anxiety
- Meet the child's need for attention
- Are used by and support the key person ('safe person')
- Create a safe place and safe areas

[you may also complete a Nurture Care Plan: The Four As if it will be helpful]

*Here you can talk about what you do to meet the child's needs as specified in the bullet points above and outline what works well e.g. we use a visual timetable to help relieve anxiety about what is happening during the day. We are aware of key trigger times for increased anxiety, such as lunchtimes, and provide additional 1:1 support at these times. We give the child a cuddle and talk in a soothing voice when he/she begins to cry. He/she needs time and reassurance to recover.*

Activities for.....	Who	What	By when
A transition planning meeting between parents/carers, early years setting staff and school staff. The purpose of the meeting would be to share information about the child, including their strengths and interests, and plan specific activities to ensure a smooth transition.			
A member of school staff to visit the early years setting to observe the child in a familiar environment. Ideally this would be the child's 'safe person' in school.			
A member of school staff to work alongside early years setting staff in the early years setting to develop a relationship with the child and support activities aimed at ensuring a smooth transition.			
The child to visit the school on several occasions with their key person from the early years setting. The purpose would be to become familiar with the environment and school staff. The child would benefit from having opportunities to walk around the school, with an adult, and take photographs of specific areas and people e.g. toilets, playground, dining hall, classroom, teaching and non-teaching staff.			
The child to be supported in making a photo book of his/her new school.			
A transitional object to be identified that the child can bring into school to enhance feelings of security.			
The child to be supported by their key person to make a box of calming/favourite activities to be used in school.			
School staff to identify, with advice from parents/carers and early years setting staff, a 'safe place' for the child in school. This could be an area within the classroom or in a different area of the school depending on the child's needs.			
School staff to identify support mechanisms for the child's 'safe person' to allow opportunities to talk about their work, ensure containment of feelings and allow opportunities to explore next steps. This is likely to include support from the Attachment Lead person in the school.			
A member or members of, school staff to meet with parents/carers on a regular basis to share information, talk about worries, ask questions and develop a relationship, forming a solid foundation for future partnership working.			
Other e.g. support over the summer holiday			