**Moving into Reception in 2020**

**Introduction**

In the early years, children go through many transitions. Some of these are with their parents/carers such as attending parent and child groups while others involve the child developing their self identity in situations without their parent or carer. Not only does this mean being in a new setting but also contains following a routine, however flexible, which includes moving between activities, changing rooms and being with varying groups of adults and children.

Perhaps the most significant transition is when children enter reception and embark on their formal education experience.

Effective transitions are important for children’s emotional wellbeing and achievement, and planning for these transitions is fundamental to effective early years practice.

**Vulnerable Children with those with SEND**

For some children and families, the transition to school will be particularly challenging. Additional planning will be needed to ensure their transition is a positive one.

**Aim of this document**

Primary schools are aware of the importance of a good transition process and have comprehensive plans in place to support children and their families. During the COVID-19 pandemic most of the usual transition activities are not possible. Schools have therefore identified ways that this can be done to try and reassure and prepare children and households to start their reception year.

This document draws on ideas and best practice to provide Heads in Cheshire East with ideas on how they can manage the entry into Reception in 2020. Some of these are for all children while others are additional to support vulnerable children and those with SEND.

This forms a small part of the wider planning which is needed to allow schools to re-open and which will be a co-ordinated response between schools, their associations and the council based on the guidance and advice given by the government.

**Possible activities to support transition into Reception**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group of REC pupils** | **Purpose** | **Action** | **Comments** |
| All | Become familiar with the school environment and key figures | Be provided with images of school building including external view, pupil entrance, playground, dining hall, REC indoor and outdoor area etc.  Images of Class teachers, TA, Head and other key staff if relevant e.g. SENCO, S&L support staff | Could be a photo sent along with information welcome pack.  Images with simple text to explain what happens here  School may open during summer holidays for visits.  Could be made into memory game –cards with photo on 1 side and name on other |
| All | Give confidence that they are expected and that staff are aware that they have not yet had the opportunity to visit their new setting. | Letter to all new starters from Head and key EYFS staff.  Separate letter to child and parent | Could be included as part of information welcome pack. |
| All | Opportunity for parents to ask questions or raise concerns. | Website or letter to give details of how to post questions/issues. Could be as new shared email account e.g. Sept 2020 starters.  May consider anonymising and sharing questions/answers to help others in FAQ section. | Invite children with parental support to complete an ‘All about me’ questionnaire with their likes and dislikes and basic information about themselves.  Could include in the information welcome pack.  Personal response to any questions or concerns raise by parents from school has been shown to be appreciated and effective in helping families feel part of the new school community. |
| All | Give pupils taste of Reception activities and chance to show their characters. | Carry out transition visits for new reception to experience the reception setting.  Give sample activities that could be done at home as part of preparation – recognising/writing name for bag, kit etc. | This would normally be done as 2 half day visits during 1st week of July 2020.  May need to consider half days for 1or 2 weeks when initially start school. |
| All | Help children to manage the change. | Gain information about the children in order to provide the best environment for them to settle quickly to the change.  Contact pre-school settings to gather information about the children in order to put the necessary support systems in place.  Provide/loan story books about going to school | Normally children would be visited in their current setting (mainly nursery or pre-school) during May/June prior to half day visits to school.  Consider simple questionnaire as in example attached. Could also be asked of parents/carer.  See attached book list |
| All | Encourage children to complete simple profile and schools to utilise this information when welcoming and supporting children. | All children to complete ‘All about me’ profile page at home or via phone/video link.  To include  1. strengths, interests, my best features  2. what I need to feel safe – eg sit near teacher  3. how you can help me – use my name a lot | Info can be from child, household members, pre-school setting.  Could be promoted as an activity for extended family e.g child contacts grandparents and ask then for their comments |
| SEN | Carry out EHCP reviews and make plans for transfer. | Hold EHCP review meetings by phone/video link and include key school staff.  Ensure parents/carers are confident that school knows the child’s needs and that appropriate support will be in place from the start, | Ensure that parents/carers know that the support in Reception will be given to meet the needs of the child. |
| Vulnerable | Carry out PEP or CIN/CP reviews and make plans for transfer. | Hold review meetings by phone/video and include key school staff.  Ensure child knows who will be supporting in school and how info will be shared between all relevant staff in school. | See CE One Minute Guides on holding SEN and PEP review meetings |
| SEN/ vulnerable | Provide additional opportunities for children to become familiar with the school and staffing. | Set up webinars or video meetings with individual or groups of children to establish relationship with key support staff.  Provide/identify books to help with anxieties | See attached book list |