

Vision Team

Top tips for transition - for Parents

Children starting School or Nursery

	Challenges	How to reduce challenges
Communicating with the new school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making links and building relationships while face to face meetings aren't possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make early contact with the SENCO – talk about your child and their needs, share any worries, help to find solutions to any issues. Ask for telephone or video communication with your child's class teacher / teaching assistant / key worker.
Getting to know the new school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are anxious about your child starting school. Understanding how school will 'work', knowing what to expect. Understanding how school staff will keep your child safe during the COVID -19 situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk about school as openly and frequently as possible, acknowledge how you feel. Even if you are anxious, stay positive with your child, talk about what a great time they will have. Talk to friends or neighbours who already attend the school, ask questions. Walk passed school, look from the outside. Look on the school website and social media pages, find the information you need and show photos to your child.
Getting to know the new environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your child is worried about being in a new place. Visits to school aren't possible this year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask about a visit – this might still be possible at a time when no children are in school. Take photographs or make a video to look at during the summer holidays. If a visit isn't possible, ask if the school has a virtual tour or videos / photos available.
Meeting new people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting to know new people. You are worried that your child won't settle or that staff won't understand their needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make a list - write a list of the key people you and your child need to know e.g. SENCO, class teacher, teaching assistant, mid-day supervisor. Keep communicating Make recordings – ask if key staff could make a short, clear video introducing themselves and maybe sing a favourite song or tell a story. You and your child can play this repeatedly, getting to know names and voices.

<p>Making friends</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting to know classmates when you can't see them easily. • You are worried that your child won't make friends or will be left out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with other families – make links with friends and neighbours whose children attend the school. If your child has been to nursery, there may be children you know also starting the same school. Maybe arrange a socially distanced picnic or walk with them. • Practise social skills such as turn taking, sharing, helping and waiting to speak. • Practise social situations when you're playing at home, model language such as 'can I join in?' 'can I play with you?' or 'what's your name?'
<p>Being independent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are worried that your child may not cope with being more independent at school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to your child about the school day – learn about lunch times (make sure your child understands they will be at school all day and have lunch, not part time like pre-school), assembly, PE and any other activities that won't take place in their classroom. • Practise dressing independently at home before you need to do the morning dash! Practise dressing and undressing, folding clothes and turning things the right way around. Practise tricky things like buttons. Use high visibility markers (such as a bright pen mark on the labels) to help your child find their clothes. Think about ways to make this easier, such as Velcro rather than shoelaces, polo shirt rather than shirt if allowed and choosing a coat in an unusual colour. • Practise using a knife and fork and involve your child in simple kitchen tasks such as making a cold drink or a sandwich.
<p>Summer holidays</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping busy and having fun while restrictions remain in place. • Preparing for a new school when no one knows yet what school will look like in September or when your child will start. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep talking positively about school and do as much practise and preparation as you can. • Keep talking to the school and to your VI teacher about any concerns. • Involve your child in the preparations, such as buying uniform or choosing a lunch box.