

Supporting pupils with Transition

Tips to support transition and change:

Change is difficult for many pupils on the Autism Spectrum because of an impairment in flexibility of thought, alongside anxiety linked to the unknown. Pupils with Autism have difficulties in predicting what might happen in a new setting so prefer to stick with what is familiar. Difficulties in social understanding mean that a pupil with Autism is likely to take longer to understand the expectations and social rules of a new environment or social situation. The need for routine and familiarity leads to anxiety when interruptions occur.

They respond best to a consistent approach, and this is likely to be interrupted during a transition period which can include working with new staff teams. Pupils with Autism often have an intense focus once engaged with a task, and it can be difficult for them to disengage from one task and re-engage in a new activity.

The sensory processing differences that many pupils on the Autism Spectrum experience can also contribute to the difficulties associated with transition periods as the person may quickly become overwhelmed with sensory stimulus in a new environment.

Transition Planning

Consider implementation of the following as and where appropriate:

Additional visits to receiving setting
Personal information booklet
Photographs
Map
Schedules / Timetables
Cue cards
Social stories
Comic strip conversations
Symbols
Pupil passport
'Goodbye'/ Closure activity
Identified training needs and support for Staff

Pupil Passports

Create a pupil passport with some of the following headings:

- Personal Interests
- Important people
- Things I am good at ...
- Things I need help with ...
- How I like to communicate
- Difficulties I have with communication
- How adults can help me to understand
- How to help me when I am stressed

Pupil Passport Template

PUPIL PASSPORT

Include pupil name and date of birth

INTERESTS

In this section ask the pupil to describe hobbies, clubs, places which they enjoy visiting and favourite foods. This section is useful for staff when finding motivators and rewards for pupils and is also useful for safe areas of discussion to promote conversation and to help to develop pupil interaction and expressive language skills. It is often helpful for key staff when beginning to build up working relationships with new pupils.

IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN MY LIFE

In this section ask the pupil to tell you about who they live with and wider family, ie grandparents, cousins etc. Pupils also list friends and pets

THINGS I AM GOOD AT

In the Things I am Good at and Things I find Difficult sections it is important to get the pupil's perspective on what they perceive to be their strengths and areas which they need help with.

THINGS I FIND DIFFICULT

HOW I LIKE TO COMMUNICATE

In this section prompt the pupil to tell you if they prefer face to face conversations, messaging etc.

DIFFICULTIES I HAVE WITH COMMUNICATION

In this section discuss whether the pupil struggles to talk to new people, or in a group, whether people speak too quickly or they cannot understand or remember what people have said (possible issues with sensory overload or auditory processing.)

HOW ADULTS CAN HELP ME TO UNDERSTAND

In this section discuss using visual prompts, such as symbols or writing down key information, speaking more slowly, repeating information, allowing pupil to work in a quieter, low sensory area.

WHEN I AM STRESSED

In this section ask the pupil to describe what they do when they are upset, stressed or anxious.

ADULTS CAN HELP BY...

In this section ask the pupil what they would like adults to do when they are upset and what adults can do to help them to calm.

TRANSITION CHECKLIST FROM YEAR TO YEAR

Name of Pupil:	DOB :	End of Year:
Completed by:		

Issues to consider when deciding on which class	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengths of CT/TA's 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching style 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which classroom would be best 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix of peers <p><i>NB pupil will need to know who the next teacher etc... will be by the end of June at the latest. Support staff will need to know earlier in order to prepare photos, social stories etc..</i></p>	
Within school communication	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current staff discuss and write down strategies that have been successful 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current staff pass on information about strengths and difficulties, trigger points and any other useful information to new staff 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a pupil passport/All about me document (this should be completed with the pupil as much as possible) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with parents, especially the passport 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving staff observe pupil in class 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current staff pass on resources (e.g visual symbols, behaviour supports) to the next class 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify training needs of receiving staff 	
Preparing the pupil	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange for the pupil to visit receiving staff e.g take note of them 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think of ways for the pupil to get to know receiving staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Staff visit pupil in class and do an activity together ➤ Send pupil to receiving staff to show good work <p><i>NB Prepare pupil if any of these involve change</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange for pupil to visit new classroom when it is empty 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show/discuss things that will be the same e.g lunch, toilets etc.. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show the pupil anything that will be different e.g cloakroom, play area, way in and out of school etc.. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take photographs of new classroom, staff, cloakroom area and make a book for parent/carer to share with the pupil over the summer 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a social story about the change and ask parent/carer to share over the summer holiday 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a chart for the summer holiday to help with understanding time 	
Review	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange a date to review the transition around October/November with parents/carers and relevant staff 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write down what went well and what you would have done differently 	