

**Starting
School
2020**

**Transitions:
Ideas for
Schools**

Due to the coronavirus pandemic it is likely that usual transition events and activities may not take place this year. To support children with their transition into school in September, schools could consider the following ideas:

- Record a practitioner reading 'starting school' books to share on your school website/ Facebook page. (Please check publishers copyright first)
- Gather a list of good starting school books to share with parents (website/ Facebook page/email)
- Make a virtual school or classroom tour which could be shared on the school website or use photos to make a PowerPoint to share via email or on the website.
- Make a 'New Starters' part of the school website to upload information such as PE kit requirements, drop off and pick up times, breakfast or after school clubs.
- Ask key members of staff to record introductions to themselves to post on the school website or email to parents. This will help children to get to know them.
- Use photos to make a school transition book to publish on website you could include cloakrooms, library, playground, lunch hall etc.
- School readiness is not just about a child being ready for school but for schools to be ready for their new children. Consider sending out a 'getting to know me' questionnaire for children to complete with their parents e.g. favourite toy/ story/ song/ food/ pets/ siblings etc.
- Ask children to draw a picture and display it in your classroom in September.
- Ask parents to send a photo of their child so coat pegs etc. can be labelled ready for the children starting.
- Include a photo of the school uniform on the website, indicate items that can be purchased from school such as ties when school returns (if applicable)
- Share a timetable of the school day, include PE days when kit will be needed.
- Share top tips for parents to get their child 'school ready' e.g. being able to put on their own coat, dressing skills, independent toileting skills etc.
- Share the Cumbria County Council 'Help your child get ready for school' leaflet with your parents
- In September consider stay and play sessions for parents to attend with children so they are not dropping them off in an unfamiliar place.
- Many children will have been out of childcare and routine for some time so try to be flexible in the approach to starting school. Some children and families may need a more staggered and slower start than others. Allow parents to stay with their children to settle them for longer and be accommodating if children need to bring a transitional object such as a soft toy for reassurance.
- Children will be starting Reception classes following a significantly shorter experience of their preschool year, therefore they may be at a different developmental stage than they typically would be expected. Consider if classroom environments, planning and practice takes this into account.
- When children start Reception consider your expectations regarding routines and boundaries. Potentially children will have been away from early years settings for some time.