COVID-19: Transition guidance for schools

Advice about transitions for new pupils and schools: COVID-19

Aim
The aim of this guidance is to:

- Establish a coherent borough-wide approach to transition for all children and young people in Kingston and Richmond schools and settings, including those with SEND or otherwise vulnerable, during the COVID-19 disruption period.
- Provide children, parents, teachers and practitioners with tools and materials to support this process.

The guidance is based on the assumption that social distancing measures will remain in force for the foreseeable future.

Introduction
The starting point for us all is an understanding that:

- Children and young people experience many transitions including starting at a setting for the first time, moving on to a new activity, moving between spaces, or moving to a new setting or school.
- The extended time away from school during the COVID-19 crisis makes it highly likely children and young people of all ages, whether they are transitioning to a new setting or merely returning to their existing school may find the transition difficult.
- Effective transitions are important for a young person's emotional wellbeing and achievement; planning well for these transitions is therefore fundamental to effective practice.
- To ensure continuity of experience for children, transition should be seen as a process rather than as a one off event. Discussions involving the child, parents and others throughout the planning process will support successful transitions.
- *Children, young people and parents are unable to visit their new schools/settings and therefore will need to work closely with the practitioners in establishing a transition pathway that is best for them.*

Principles of transition
The following principles are appropriate for all transitions:
- Effective communication between the setting, parents and other people involved with the child.
- Fact finding about a child's needs and context, including the involvement of any other agencies, their interests and any specific details that will help them to settle.
- Discussion about changes to the environment/routines that may be needed.
- The child's and parent/carers views, which are central to the planning for a child's transition.

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Children with SEND or other vulnerabilities

- For some children and families, transition can be particularly challenging. This may be doubly so during this unsettled period. Additional planning is therefore needed to ensure transition for these children and young people is a positive one.
- To ensure the appropriate level of information is shared and planning put in place for a smooth transition, practitioners should therefore also refer to supported transition guidance.
- *Practitioners should work closely with parents and carers to provide a transition package which suits the individual pupil.*

Student centred (resources from AfC):

- Promoting positive transitions during and after the COVID-19 crisis: Guidance on supporting children and young people to start or return to school: [View here](#)
- Transition, recovery and learning in the aftermath of a pandemic: A resource for educational settings: [View here](#)
- Managing unexpected endings and transitions: [View here](#)
- Guidance to support the emotional well-being of the school community [View here](#)
- Back to school: Using psychological perspectives to support re-engagement and recovery: [View here](#)

Parent guidance:

- Advice for parents and carers around returning to school: 'families under pressure': [View here](#)
- Pointers on parenting under pressure: [View here](#)
- COVID-19 Advice for parents and carers: talking to children and young people:
  [View here](#)
- [Advice for key worker parents](#)

Emotionally Related School Avoidance [ERSA]:

- Parental guidance of students who are too anxious to attend school: [View here](#)
- Guidance aimed at staff in relation to options of how to best intervene with students who are too anxious to attend school [View here](#)