

Promoting Positive Transitions

For what age?	At what level?
All Ages	Universal and whole class

What are transitions?

The term 'transition' can include moving between classes or moving between schools, either at the end of a key stage or at another time. Transition should be seen as a process, rather than a single event.

Why are transitions so important?

We know that an individual's experiences of transition can have a powerful and long-lasting effect on academic outcomes, (Alexander, Entwisle & Horsey, 1997; Gutman, Sameroff & Cole, 2003), self-esteem and emotional wellbeing. Whilst transition can be a time of great excitement and opportunity, children and young people may also experience:

- A loss of attachment to familiar people, friends, and the environment
- Role and identity uncertainty
- Entry into an environment that is less predictable
- A perceived loss of control
- A feeling of being de-skilled and less valued
- Uncertainty about the future

Whilst change can be a normal part of life and bring opportunities for personal growth, it can also be an anxious time for children and young people, so will need handling sensitively.

What makes a positive transition?

- **Communication between settings/ new teachers is key.** Having a lead for transitions in each setting who can focus on this is helpful and allows for clear information sharing
- **An individual approach.** Identify children or young people who may find the transition particularly difficult early on and make sure you work with them to find strategies that work
- **Involve parents and carers.** Parents and carers have an important role to play in information sharing and ensuring positive messages about transitions are given to their children
- **Giving a positive message.** Children and young people pick up on the feelings of those around them. Staying positive and maintaining positive body language will be essential in supporting them
- **Remember that transition is a process.** It needs to be considered throughout the year and planned well in stages, rather than being left until the end of term
- **Help children and young people make new connections.** This could be teaching staff or other children and young people who will be in their class or school

- **Be available to listen.** Children and young people may have concerns or worries which need to be acknowledged. It is also important to remember that a trusted adult needs to be available to listen to concerns or worries after the transition, as well as beforehand
- **Help to build self-efficacy.** Support children to have an element of control and independence, for example, creating checklists of equipment they will need to take in each day if transitioning to secondary school. How this is done will need to be adapted dependent on the needs, age and stage of the child's development.

How can I access training?

To access centralised training, including at the TaMHS Conference if appropriate, please visit:

- [LGSS I Learn booking website](#)

Training at your school, or within clusters, for your staff can be commissioned from the Educational Psychology Service by contacting the TaMHS Administrator:

tamhs@childrenfirstnorthamptonshire.co.uk or by speaking to your Link Educational Psychologist