

Effective transition support for Black Caribbean children

Transition to Reception class is always a time that requires careful consideration by schools, Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) and childminder (CM) settings.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, we have faced unique challenges, and this requires us to adapt our practice and to work even more closely together to provide highly effective transition arrangements, including with a sharp focus on our Black Caribbean children and their families.

Ealing data for 2019 shows that there was a 5% gap between the number of Black Caribbean pupils who achieve a Good Level of Development (GLD) in reception compared to all other Ealing pupil groups. This attainment gap for Black Caribbean pupils significantly increases throughout their school career which is why it is so vital to prioritise the early years so that children are set up for future success.

All stakeholders agree that frequent and transparent communication is the key to a smooth transition process, which must be personalised to the needs of our children and circumstances of the receiving school.

Below is the recommended transition process that has been produced for use by schools, PVIs and childminders

It should be noted that considerations for transition to Reception included in this guidance are to be used in addition to those outlined for 'all children' in the [Ealing Reception Transition Guide](#)

Transition – All Ages

Ensure a sharp focus on the provision of highly effective transition arrangements for our Black Caribbean children, young people and families

- To your school / setting / organisation
- Within your school / setting / organisation
- From your school/ setting / organisation

Transition to Reception Class: Holistic and Collaborative Approach

Ensure a holistic and collaborative approach between our Black Caribbean child, parents, previous setting and new school

First Meeting - Before child starts Reception

Who: Child, parents, current key person and the new keyperson/class teacher

When: One academic term prior to the child's transition to the new school

How: Face to face or via a virtual meeting (if COVID risk assessments are in place)

Why: To co-construct a transition plan.

- Devise a transition plan for the child to be shared with the school that focuses on developing a strong emotional attachment with the new key person / class teacher and agree:
 - Who will do what, by when and the desired outcomes. For example:
- Personable information provided about the key person/class teacher alongside their photographs. For example hobbies and interests, favourite food, favourite story or book, favourite smell, What helps me to relax or feel happy
 - Ways in which the child may express themselves generally and during times of heightened stress. E.g., during major transitions such as transitioning to school.
 - Strategies that will support or enable the child to self-regulate.
 - Successful strategies an adult can use to provide co-regulation. For example:
- Getting down to child's level and emotionally connecting with them (child knowing and feeling the adult is tuned in and has their best interest at heart)
- Acknowledging and naming emotions
- Using a soothing tone
- Comfort toy, object, or photograph
- Calming environment or area
 - Any special interests/strengths the child has that can be planned into the child's first day to reduce any anxieties

Consider keyperson of feeder nursery/school being present at the receiver school on the child's first day (using any required social distancing measures) to support the emotional wellbeing of the child

Second Meeting – After child starts Reception

Who: Child, parents, current key person / class teacher, and the previous keyperson

When: 2 to 3 weeks after the child has started their new school.

How: Face to face or via a virtual meeting (if COVID risk assessments are in place)

Why:

- To check in and collaboratively review the child's early transition experiences in relation to the previously agreed and co-constructed transition plan.
- To make any necessary collaboratively agreed adjustments to the transition plan.

Third Meeting – After child starts reception

Who: Child, parents, current key person / class teacher, and the previous keyperson

When: 5 to 6 weeks after the child has started their new school.

How: Face to face or via a virtual meeting (if COVID risk assessments are in place)

Why:

- To check in and collaboratively review the child's early transition experiences in relation to the previously agreed and co-constructed transition plan.
- To decide whether another review meeting is needed and, if so, to schedule a date together accordingly

Transition to Reception Class: PVI / CM Communication with Parents

- Invite parents to visit the new school's website and look with child at photos of classroom, staff, etc.
- Invite parents to walk by the new school often and talk to child about it on daily walk (if local)
- Encourage parents to prepare child for new start in advance, through use of books /photos of school / choosing and trying on the school uniform / through role play at home.
- In early July / September - arrange group meetings with parents and key staff (using social distancing / accounting for COVID-19 risk assessments, if required)

Transition to reception class: PVI / CM communication with child

- Schedule a 5-10 minute video call conversation with child and their new key-person/class teacher (in the parents' presence) to begin to develop a rapport and an emotional connection.
- Consider using the personable information about the key-person and the child to support meaningful conversations and emotional connections.

Transition to reception class: Primary school communication with parents

- Consider sharing tip sheets with parents on getting ready for school (what to expect), who will support their child etc.
- Consider developing a new tab on the website to show a virtual tour of the school /class /teachers, etc.
- In early July / September - arrange group meetings with parents and key staff (using social distancing / accounting for COVID-19 risk assessments, if required)
- Emphasis on getting to know the Black Caribbean parents and developing a positive and strong emotional connection with them.
- Find out and address parents by their names with correct pronunciation
- Ensure parents feel genuinely and positively 'seen' and 'heard'. Thus ensuring all school staff remain highly self-reflective and self-aware of how they are being perceived by others, and of any deep level feelings that they may have, positive or otherwise, pertaining to any particular parents (which may be inadvertently communicated, verbally and/or non-verbally, to the parents).
- Recognise that parents and staff alike may exhibit certain behaviours when feeling nervous or uncomfortable; and be able to see beyond those behaviours in order to wholeheartedly develop a positive and emotional connection with our Black Caribbean parents.

Transition to reception class: Primary school communication with child

- Provide an example of a daily visual timetable of what a school day could look like
- Provide a photo book with 'People I will meet at my new school'.
- Engage in a video call before start of school to get to know child (see previous sections)
- In early July / September, invite child and parents in for a tour while the school is empty (using social distancing / accounting for COVID-19 risk assessments, if required)
- Ask child what might help them to settle on their first day at school e.g. a quiet corner to go to, if needed; see sibling across the playground to wave to
- Learn what interests the child has (e.g. trains, cars, etc.), and talk about these together during the video call;
- During the video call, subsequently show the child the resources you have at school linked to the child's interest e.g. trains/ cars, etc.

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- [Neutral](#)
- [No](#)

Last updated: 22 Jun 2022
