

# Parent Guide



@twinklparents

We are excited to share this content with you. If you are interested in finding more resources made especially for Parents, then check out these links to different areas of the **Twinkl Parents** hub.

**SEND Support**



**Subject Guides**

**Pregnancy & Baby**



**Health & Wellbeing**

**Supporting Learning**



## What is this resource and how do I use it?

If your child has a change on the horizon, such as a new school, school setting or an amount of unstructured time ahead, such as a holiday, this guide provides you with advice on how to approach the transition and how you can support your child. Use it to help them to develop coping strategies and see change as something positive.

## What is the focus of this resource?

Managing Emotions

Dealing With Change

Relationships

## Further Ideas and Suggestions

To support the development of communication, your child might like this **BSL: Emotions and Feelings Communication Fan**. We have plenty more BSL resources to help with communication in **this category** at the **Parents' Hub**. You might like to use this **Games to Play with Your Child to Develop Their Communication Skills** to have some fun. If your child has ADHD or if you suspect they might have ADHD, **this guide** will help you to support them at home.

Parents Blog



Parenting Wiki

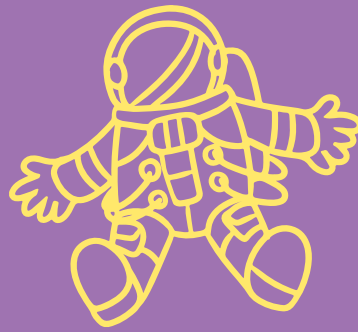


Parenting Podcast

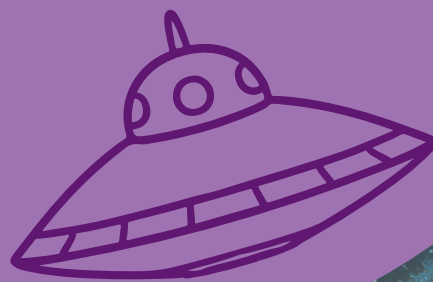


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Parents  
Hub



# Helping Your Child Cope with Transition

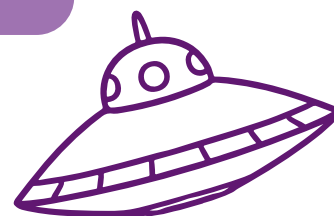


# Helping Your Child Cope with Transition



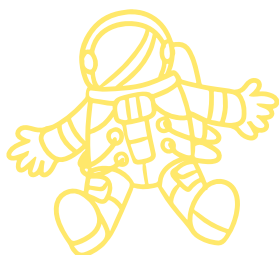
Many children find transitions to different settings or routines upsetting and this can affect their wellbeing and their behaviour. Changes that children find hard can be large ones, such as a move to a new setting or a new school, or small, everyday ones, such as having a supply teacher for a day or not doing an activity that had been planned. Going from a very structured day to one with no particular focus, such as the summer holidays, can be tricky too. Use the following tips to ensure a smooth transition and support your child to view the change as a positive experience.

## Meet Key People



It's important to meet any key people in a new setting so that your child can start to build relationships and know that they can be trusted. Many children like to know they are 'known' and worry if nobody knows who they are, so regular meetings will help them to feel that any key people really are looking out for them.

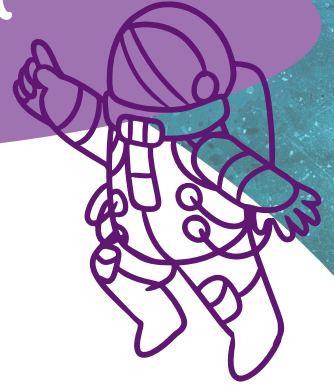
If your child is moving to a new school, ask if key staff can come and visit your child in their current setting. This will give them an opportunity to observe how your child behaves and interacts with others and see what their work is like. They can chat informally with your child and their current teacher or key worker and find out what works for them. This will help them not only to know your child more thoroughly, but also to begin to plan any support that your child might require to make progress and thrive.



## Countdown to a Transition

Give your child regular time reminders in preparation for a transition so that they can mentally prepare. This might be a change to a routine, such as a weekend plan, where you give them a reminder every ten minutes to prepare for a change in activity, or it might be a longer-term change, such as the summer holidays approaching. Your child is more likely to feel like they are in control of a situation if they know what's coming up.

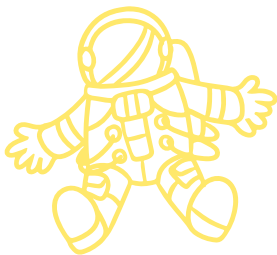
# Helping Your Child Cope with Transition



## Take Photos

If your child is going to be attending a new setting, try asking the setting to take some photos for you. Pictures of key staff will help your child to recognise people when they get there. Photos of the classroom, including spaces such as their peg, the tables, trays, lunch hall and playground, will enable your child to become familiarised with spaces they'll be seeing every day. Pictures of the toilets are really important because some children feel worried about going to the toilet in a new setting.

If you're going on holiday or going to visit a new place, see if you can find photos on the Internet to show your child so that they can begin to imagine themselves there. Pictures of your room, the swimming pool, the restaurant or a new shopping centre will all be useful. Photos of any transport you'll be using will help them to understand the process of getting there. Where possible, try to use actual photographs rather than illustrations or drawings.

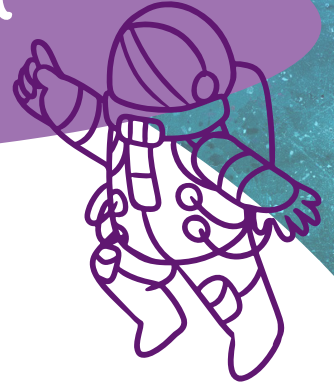


## Share Information

If your child is going to be attending a new setting, their current setting should share any information held on your child with them automatically. However, it's always useful to ask to make sure they have received copies of paperwork, such as **EHCPs**, SEND plans or care plans. If your child is due to have a SEND plan review or EHCP review before changing schools, ask if staff from the new setting can be included to give input and set out what support they can offer. Many schools now do this and it helps for a much smoother transition.

If your child is going from home to a setting, try to put together some information that the setting would find useful. For example, if your child has a cochlear implant, how often do the batteries need replacing? If your child needs support to help them concentrate, what strategies work well? If your child feels anxious, what things can help to calm them? Additionally, let them know of any strengths your child has - they'll love to know about your child's keen interest in the ancient Egyptians or their skills in gymnastics. It helps a new setting to build a picture of the whole child and develop close relationships.

# Helping Your Child Cope with Transition

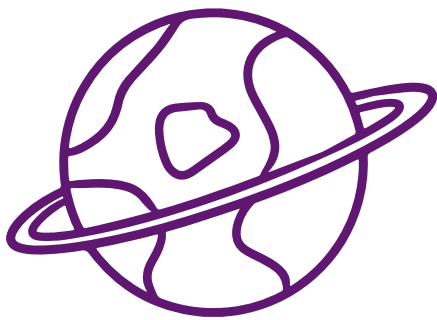


## Ask Questions

If your child is starting in a new setting and you have any questions, make sure you ask them because you can guarantee that, if you have queries, your child will too. You could ask about key workers, what the timings of the school day are and any other practical information.

Let your child ask questions too - they'll probably have other equally important things to ask, such as when lunch is, what time breaktime is, who they'll be sitting near and whether they can bring a toy or favourite thing with them.

If there's a transition, such as a visit or a holiday, give your child the opportunity to ask you any questions about the outing - don't give them a 'wait and see' answer because it may be really important for them to know. If you genuinely don't know or are not sure of something, explain to them that, as soon as you know, you'll let them know.



## Home Routines

During the holidays, many children find a lack of structure very hard to deal with and this may result in poor behaviour, anxiety, tantrums and meltdowns. To make things easier, ensure you have a predictable routine for each day with some activities set in stone, such as meal times, a bedtime routine and a routine for getting up and ready for the day. Try to ensure your child continues to have a consistent time to get up and go to bed so that the transition back to school after the holidays is a much easier one.

Why not plan some activities together during the holidays so that your child can have an idea of what is going to happen? A weekly planner displayed somewhere obvious will help your child to see when they're busy and when they've got free time.

# Helping Your Child Cope with Transition



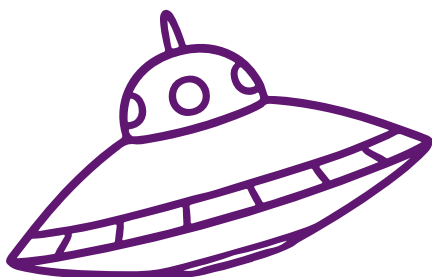
## Visual Timetable

Planning a schedule during unstructured times can be enhanced with the use of a **visual timetable**. A visual timetable is something that your child might have come across at school. It uses little symbols or pictures put in order of occurrence so that your child can quickly see what is happening and what they need to do over the course of a day. Having one at home might be useful for your child, especially during larger periods of unstructured times, such as the summer holidays.



## Create a Continuity of Routine

Schools and other settings are built on routines. Your child might have some routines that are personal to them - for example, they might be allowed to have a fiddle toy during a lesson introduction or they may have a sticker chart that works well. They might have other routines, such as a physio session straight after break or a strategy to keep calm at lunchtimes. Discuss these routines with staff to see if they can be continued across to their new setting or as part of a holiday routine at home. Your child will feel more confident and reassured if they already know some of the routines.

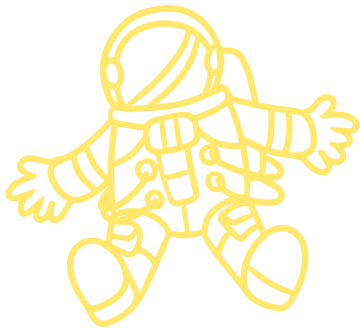


# Helping Your Child Cope with Transition



## Develop a Goodbye Routine

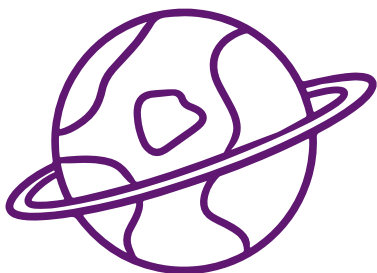
It's hard for a child sometimes to say goodbye and be left: they might feel abandoned and out of sorts, especially when they've been placed in a new setting or summer holiday club. Plan for this by introducing a goodbye routine with them before they go, so that you can practise and use it across any setting. It could be a series of three quick kisses, a personalised handshake or a set saying shared between you which can provide comfort and make leaving a positive experience.



## Health for Wellbeing

Exercise has many benefits - as well as supporting physical health, it can improve mental wellbeing too. It can help improve mood and reduce feelings of anxiety or stress. During times of change, provide plenty of opportunities for your child to be active and exercise so that their self-esteem is increased, enabling them to deal better with change.

Diet is another important factor. A balanced diet which provides slow-release energy and steadies the blood sugar is said to help reduce feelings of anxiety. Making these changes may help your child to approach transitions more positively.



# Helping Your Child Cope with Transition



## Talk, Talk, Talk

Talk to your child about changes that are happening in their routine and allow your child to talk about how they feel. Never dismiss your child's worries or fears - they may seem irrational or insignificant to you, but to your child they might feel like enormous barriers to overcome. Chatting to you can help to relieve these fears and see change in a positive way.



## Social Situations Resources

A social situation is a narrative, often with pictures, about settings and situations. They are written by an adult to be personal to the child. Social situations will help your child to imagine themselves within a scenario and mentally practise any events so that when they happen, they will feel reassured and know that they are okay. It's great to try a social situation so that your child can work through any worries and know that they have some strategies to help them. You could use this [template](#) to create your own social situation.



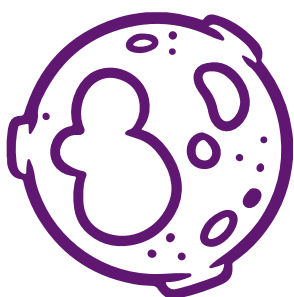


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## Be the Anchor in a Changing World

Your child will be looking to you and taking their cues from you, so it's important that you feel calm and happy about any changes in the pipeline. Your feelings of anxiety can be transferred to them through your use of language and gestures. Be open with your child if you are nervous, but explain how you are coping with this emotion to show your child that they can develop coping strategies. In your child's changing world, they'll be looking to you to be the consistent, calm and measured voice, rooting for them all the way.



## Revisit Old Feelings

After your child has had some time to settle into a new routine or setting, spend some time chatting with them about how they are feeling now and how they have overcome their difficulties. What have they learnt about themselves? Talk about strategies that helped so that these can be used in the future. Praise them for settling in and for developing coping strategies that made the transition successful. Make sure your child can see that everything is okay and that nothing bad happened so that they view change positively.



We hope you find the information on our website and resources useful. As far as possible, the contents of this resource are reflective of current professional research. However, please be aware that every child is different and information can quickly become out of date. The information given here is intended for general guidance purposes only and may not apply to your specific situation.