

10 Top Tips to Help Children Transition Into School

Practical, everyday strategies for welcoming any child into a new class or school setting.

QUICK REFERENCE

These tips support all children settling into a new class or school, and are especially helpful for pupils who find change harder to manage.

- 1 Get ready for school**
 Encourage parents to read books and complete activities with their child. Create a photo book so the child knows what the school looks like, and have some stay and play sessions. Read books such as "The Colour Monster Goes to School".
- 2 Early support**
 Identify early on who might need additional support. For SEND children, staff to do home visits. Keep a running record of observations.
- 3 Warm welcome**
 Welcome children warmly, smile and address each child by name. Encourage pupils to ask questions. Use circle time to help pupils get to know each other.
- 4 Offer new experiences**
 Provide a safe and secure environment that allows children to take small risks to extend their development.
- 5 Support tools**
 Provide a visual timetable — this also helps children with communication difficulties or with English as an additional language. Social stories help children settle and understand daily routines. Encourage the use of transitional objects if children are anxious about leaving their parent/carer.
- 6 Build trust and safety**
 Keep familiar routines, have warm interactions, and lots of relational play. Be nurturing, and praise small achievements — help them feel special. Create safe spaces for times when they feel overwhelmed. Have alternative entrances for coming in and out of school if they find the busy-ness of those times tricky.
- 7 Watch out!**
 Look for any children that are struggling. Support them where they are at, reassure them and distract them to avoid things becoming too much. Early intervention is key.
- 8 Clear boundaries**
 Provide clear and consistent boundaries and ground rules so that children know what behaviour is expected of them. Have simple class rules that everyone knows.
- 9 Jobs**
 Give children little jobs in the classroom to boost their self-esteem, and also to give them physical breaks if they get fidgety.
- 10 Review**
 Set up a settling-in review to help staff and parents/carers talk about the child's progress and whether they may need extra support.

Need more tailored support?

If you have a pupil with SEMH needs approaching a transition and would like BPBP's involvement, contact us as early as possible — ideally the term before the transition is due.