Best practice principles: transition reports in EYFS

Introduction

The format, content and use of transition reports within the EYFS varies between local authorities. These reports are designed to be used for all children moving between early years providers, or from an early years provider to a primary school. They are not specific to children with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) and do not always capture the information needed to ensure a smooth transition for these children and their families.

As part of the Mayor's Early Years Hubs Programme, a SEND task and finish group was formed to explore how best to support children with SEND in the early years - including devising best practice principles around transition. The group recommends that local authorities review the format, content and use of their current transition report against the following best practice principles.

Best practice principles

1. **Format of the transition report**

- It's concise, focussing on key information which the new setting will need.
- It includes a summary or 'child on page' section for at-a-glance information.
- It uses plain English and is accessible to both settings and parents. Ideally, it's been tested with both of these groups to incorporate their feedback.
- It's easy to complete, including prompts or guidance if necessary.
- It uses tick boxes where appropriate to ensure information is shared clearly and consistently e.g. identifying a child's key characteristics.
- It also has adequate space for written comments to ensure a more holistic picture of the child is shared – one size doesn't fit all.

2. **Content of the transition report**

- It collects the following key pieces of information about the child:
  - **Basic information** e.g. name, DOB, gender, languages spoken, name of current setting, date of entry/exit, any other settings attended; attendance pattern
  - **Key characteristics** e.g. Pupil Premium, Child Looked After, refugee status
  - **SEND status** e.g. SEN support, EHCP
  - **Additional support and/or funding accessed** e.g. FEE2, Disability Access Funding, Special Education Needs Inclusion Funding
  - **Date of two-year-old check**, with space for commentary on any needs or issues identified
  - **Health needs** where separate to SEND e.g. allergies, dietary requirements
  - **Assessment of development** (based on EYFS)
  - **Key things to know about 'me'** - child's likes and dislikes etc; any information which will help the child settle
  - **Basic information about parent(s)** e.g. languages spoken and whether an interpreter may be needed
  - **Comments from parent(s)**
  - **Name of key person**, as well as any other relevant professionals

- It includes a tick box to indicate whether a transition meeting is required for the child in question
- It is a positive document, sharing useful information which will help the child and family in their transition.
- It acknowledges progress, rather than just the child's current abilities - for example, by sharing the setting's assessment of development upon entry as well as exit.
- It focuses on solutions and next steps - for example, not just identifying the child's current development level, but what they can do to move this forward.
- It clearly lists any additional reports (etc) which are included - making it clear to the new setting what information they are receiving. These documents are clearly labelled and referred to clearly throughout the report.
- It includes space to be signed off by the original setting and the parent/carer – this makes it clear to the new setting that the parent/carer is aware of the information being shared and has given their consent for this to happen.

3. Use of the transition report

- A transition report is completed and shared as standard each time a child moves between early years settings or from an early years setting to primary school.
- Guidance and/or checks are in place to ensure that early years practitioners feel confident in completing these reports, particularly for children with SEND.
- Each report is 'owned' by a named professional at both the original and the new setting
- Reports are produced and shared in a timely manner, with consideration given to children with SEND, where settings may need to undertake training or take on additional staff. For most children starting primary school in September, this information should be shared by the end of May.
- Any safeguarding concerns and/or issues raised by the report should be discussed with the designated safeguarding officer in accordance with borough protocol
- For children with SEND and emerging needs, a transition report is not enough; additionally:
    - upcoming transitions are discussed with the local authority and settings involved as soon as the move is known about
    - meetings take place between professionals involved with each child and parents/carers
    - visits are arranged for the child (and parents) to the new setting and/or practitioners from the new setting visit the child in the current setting to support them to settle in
- Information shared with parents is always presented in a clear and succinct format.
- Local authorities could consider:
    - running transition events between schools and early years settings (particularly PVIs)
    - developing separate packs for parents, nurseries and primary schools to support transition.