09 Early years practice procedures

**09.14 Prime times – Transition to school**

Moving on to school is a major transition in a child’s life involving separation from familiar adults and children. Older children have a more secure understanding of ‘people permanence’ and are able to approach new experiences with confidence. However, they need preparation if they are to approach transition to school with confidence and an awareness of what to expect.

**Partnership with schools**

* Details of the school that a child will be attending are recorded in the child’s file along with the name of the reception class teacher.
* Every effort is made to forge and maintain strong links with all schools that children may attend. The setting manager will approach schools in order to open lines of communication where these have not previously existed.
* Details of the school’s transition or settling in procedures are kept by the setting and are referred to so that members of staff are familiar with them and can develop a consistent approach to transition with teachers, parents and children.
* Teachers are welcomed into the setting and sufficient time is made for them to spend both with the child and with the key person, to discuss and share information that will support the child’s transition to school.
* 09.14a Richmond Pre-school School Transition Sheet is completed for all children leaving for school and is given to the school along with other information that will aid transition and settling in e.g One Plans and EHCP.
* Parents can download their child’s Learning Journey through Tapestry when they leave us.
* Any action plans relating to a child’s additional needs are also shared, where this is in place.
* Other formal documentation such as safeguarding information is prepared in line with procedure 07.04 Transfer of records.
* We attend the local area ‘speed dating’ style transition meeting with all school settings in the areas

**Partnership with parents**

* Through our group chat for Nemo room parents are notified of key milestones on their child’s transition to school such as applying for a school place, being notified of their allocated school and social activities for children going to the same school.
* Key persons discuss transition to school with parents and set aside time to discuss learning and development summaries. Parents are encouraged to contribute to summaries.
* Key persons will discuss with parents how they are preparing their child for school and will share information about how the setting is working in partnership with the school to aid transition. During the last half term at pre-school the parents are sent a school readiness summary that states how parents can help support their child to be ready for school.
* The manager will make clear to parents the information that will be shared with the school, for example, information regarding child protection and work that has taken place to ensure the child’s welfare.

**Increasing familiarity for children**

* Where the setting is on, or adjacent to a school site, there will be opportunities for children to become familiar with staff and school premises, for example shared use of outdoor and indoor spaces, activities and resources.
* Where possible, the key person will take the child to visit the new school, if this is the school’s transition policy.
* If there are several schools in a catchment area, or the setting is not within a reasonable distance of the school, other means of familiarisation will be explored, we will try to get parents to meet us at the school, so that we can take them in for a visit. We may also use videos, photographs or other information about the school that can be shown within the setting. Staff may borrow resources from the schools and will use these with the children.

**Transitions within the setting**

Most children move from Simba to Nemo room on the September following their third birthday. We help them manage this transition with these steps.

* During the first summer half term the Simba children start to play in the Nemo garden, introducing them to the Nemo staff and environment.
* During the second summer half term children are allocated a key person in Nemo room based on the bonds they have made.
* Parents are sent an observation from their Simba key person stating who their new key person will be in Nemo room and summarising the progress that the key child has made in Simba room and any development needs or next steps that are being worked towards.
* On the first day of term in the new year all Simba children moving to Nemo are invited to an Open Day where the children can show their children around Nemo room and meet their key person

**Preparing children for leaving**

* Children and parents form bonds with adults and children in the setting and will need preparation for separating from the relationships they have formed.
* The child’s last day should be prepared for in advance and marked with a special celebration or party that acknowledges that the child is moving on.
* Parents should not be discouraged from bringing the child for the occasional brief visit, as separations often take time to complete. Sometimes children need the reassurance that their nursery/pre-school is still there and that they are remembered.