**Policy Statement**

At Portreath Preschool we recognise that children experience many transitions throughout their early years. We understand that these transitions can cause anxiety, worry and many other emotions for both the child and their family. We ensure that we are sensitive to and aware of these feelings when planning for and supporting transition. Our aim is to make any transition process is as easy and enjoyable for the child and their parents as possible so that levels of wellbeing remain high and progress in development is not hindered.

**Transition when beginning Pre-school**

Please see our ‘*The Role of the Key person and Settling In’ Policy* which explains our procedures and processes for this extremely important transition into Portreath Pre-school life.

**Transitions that may happen at home during the child’s time with us**

We support all children in the pre-school with any transitions they may be encountering during their time with us. As a team, we aim to be as sensitive as possible to any changes in children’s behaviour and wellbeing and share any changes that we observe with parents and carers. We work sensitively with parents to ensure that they understand the importance of sharing any changes that have occurred in the home environment with us, so that we can be aware of the reasons behind any potential changes in their child’s behaviour.

We work to support the child and parent with transitions that are occurring at home through providing books which relate to the subject for the child to share at home, sensitively adapting our interactions in play with the child to provide them with the space needed to explore feelings around the transition, signposting parents to organisations or online information, or referring them to the Early Help Hub for support from specific professionals.

**Transition from Star Fish to Flying Fish**

Our children are divided into two cohorts – the Starfish who are our 2 and 3 year olds and the Flying Fish who are the children who are in the last year of Pre-school and will moving on to Primary School in the September. When the children transition from being a Starfish to becoming a Flying Fish there are various factors that we consider in ensuring the transition is a smooth one.

**Key person**:

* When children begin at pre-school as a Starfish, they have a key person who will have visited the child at their home and whom they will have spent a lot of time with whilst at the setting. The key person will have built up a good relationship with the child’s parents and have often been the main point of contact for any worries, concerns or celebrations that have arisen. The child’s key person is often the first person that the child may have been left with when not with their parents and subsequently very strong attachments are built.
* When the child becomes a Flying Fish this key person usually changes and the child is assigned another member of the pre-school team. We decide who the child’s new key person will be in the summer term so that there is plenty of time and opportunity for the new key person to get to know the child well and for the child to feel comfortable and confident with interactions and engagement with them.
* We ensure that the child’s parents are informed of the new key person during the summer term so that they too can begin to build a relationship with them. We handout our ‘Getting to Know Your Key Peron’ profiles about their new adult to the parents and encourage/recommend that parents talk to their child about their new Key person during the summer holidays in preparation for the September.
* When the children return to the pre-school after the summer holidays, we make sure that both their new and old Key persons are present on that day and can help with the separation from parents and the settling in on those first few mornings.

**Exchanging of information between staff**

Due to the size of our pre-school, we are fortunate to work as a team who all have similar knowledge of each child that attends. However, there will still be some information about a child which it is possible that only the Key person knows, so we ensure that time is given during the end of the summer term for the team to sit down together and discuss each child so that their new key person (and all other staff) understand their uniqueness, strengths and needs.

**Out and About sessions**

Flying Fish children have regular ‘Out & About’ sessions during their final year with us and these begin from the September. In order to prepare the Starfish for this element of transitioning to becoming a Flying Fish we aim to take them on ‘mini Out & About’ sessions during the last part of the summer term so that they can begin to understand what it involves, get to know the procedures and expectations and become accustomed to the different environments they may experience whilst on an outing.

**Transition to Primary School**

We recognise the huge step that children take when they move to Primary School and the anxiety and worry that this can cause both the child and their parents. We aim to reduce and ease these concerns by supporting the transition in this way:

* Holding a **Getting Ready For School Parent’s meeting** during the Spring Term so that parents and carers understand what the expectations are (and are not!) of Reception teachers and the possible feelings and subsequent behaviours that their child may experience and display during this time. During this meeting we talk about what ‘school readiness’ really means (e.g., being able to use the toilet independently, getting undressed/dressed, putting shoes on, asking for help, understanding and accepting boundaries) plus things that they can be doing now to support their child with ‘being ready for big school’ (independence, being able to problem solve when issues occur, knowing how to play with others, listening to stories and singing songs etc).
* Once school places are confirmed we make contact with the Primary schools that the children are moving up to and discuss the transition arrangements that the school is planning. We encourage all reception teachers of these schools to visit the pre-school to meet the child and so that we can discuss the child’s uniqueness, strengths and needs. If they are unable to do this we make sure that we have a phone conversation with them about the child and to share all relevant information.
* We ask the schools for photos so that we can make books/display all about each of the schools that the children will be transitioning to so the children can talk to their friends and the adults at preschool about their new teachers and classrooms.
* We create ‘Getting Ready for School’ bags which each child can take home for one week. These contain – a uniform for the specific school that the child is going to transition to, two picture books about starting school, a school dinner tray for the child to practice carrying with food on and eating their dinner from, photos of the class teacher, teaching assistant and any other important adults who will be in their class plus of the school itself, and ‘Super 10’ laminated board with a pen so that the child can tick off the 10 Super powers that they need at big school (being able to put shoes on by themselves, recognising their name, going to the toilet by themselves, wiping their own nose etc.). We also include an information booklet for parents with further information that reiterates that discussed in the spring term ‘Getting Ready for school’ meeting.
* We have props and resources available in the setting for children to dress up in and use in their child initiated play.
* Sharing of information – we send a ‘Moving On’ report for each child to the school that they will transition to which details the child’s development at the point of leaving the preschool, plus any concerns that we or the parents may have. We also share SEN paperwork (please see below) and any safeguarding concerns or incidents relating to that child with the school SENDCO, designated safeguarding lead and the class teacher.
* Throughout all of this we are very sensitive and alert to any changes in the behaviour and wellbeing of the child which we share and discuss with the child’s parents. If we feel that they are experiencing strong anxiety or other emotions which are possibly linked to the forthcoming transition, then we will adapt our strategies and support in line with that individual child and what their parents and ourselves feel may be needed or appropriate for them.

**Transition for children with additional needs**

In addition to the above procedures we ensure that another layer of support and preparation is in place for any child who has needs which require extra support and understanding. This begins as soon as we know the primary school that they child will be transitioning to and involves:

* Meeting with new SENDCO (primary school), parent(s), key person and either SENDCO or Manager of the pre-school to discuss and put together a detailed plan that addresses the child’s specific needs and ensures that the school is ready for supporting their development. This meeting may also include the Local Area Senior SENDCO from Cornwall Council, Speech and language therapist plus any other professionals who are involved with the child and able to attend the meeting.
* Providing a Communication Passport for the school which details the child’s interests, likes and dislikes, possible triggers and calming strategies, and ideal responses from adults to ensure maximum support. We encourage schools to share this with all staff who will be in contact with the child so that everyone has a good awareness and understanding of the child
* Paperwork – all paperwork which is related to the child is delivered by hand to the school and signed for. This includes, at the minimum, the child’s complete SEN file and developmental report.

Further additional support may include:

Extra visits to the school for the child with their key person or parents.

Photo book that is specific to the child (social story) about their school, uniform, classroom, toilets etc.

Additional visits at lunch times to experience eating in the hall and becoming accustomed to the sensory stimuli at this time.

Possible visits when the playground/classroom is empty of other children so that the child can get use to the environment in a less stressful atmosphere.

Making of resources that can travel with the child from pre-school to the Primary school, e.g. Now/next boards, choosing boards, communication books, familiar photo books, visual timetable and traffic lights.

\*This list is not exhaustive! We pride ourselves on doing whatever we can to ensure that the transition for the child is as unique as they are so that the process is as smooth as possible. This will vary from child to child.\*

* Policy written on 05.05.2023.
* Latest Review Date: 24/06/2024