

Handbook for Transition from Nursery to fulltime welsh medium education



Source: TTS 2016

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Introduction

In this handbook there will be information and interventions to assist children, parents/carers, and staff in the transition from nursery to full time welsh medium education.

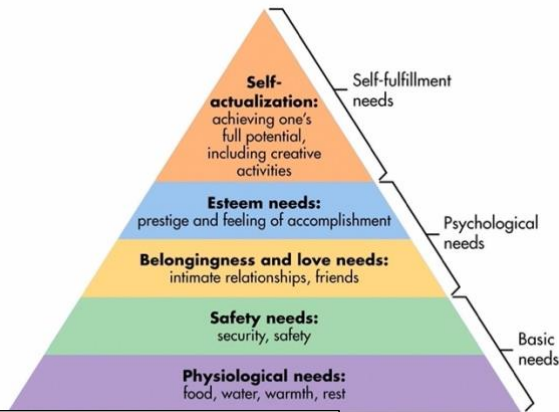
Using this handbook will ensure that all parties involved in the transition are consistent in their approach to aiding the child in their transition journey from Nursery to fulltime school. These children will be 3 years old. According to Erikson's (1963) psychosocial stages they are just beginning their "Play age", encouraging early years settings to initiate learning through play.

Consistency improves emotional, cognitive, and social development in young children and routines, regularity and orderliness reinforce a positive environment (Better Brains for Babies, 2019). Bowlby (1969) discovered that consistency in a caregiver reinforces the attachment between a child and their primary caregiver, thus creating a secure attachment. Everyone involved in the transition process should know that a transition is not a destination, but an ongoing journey (Early years matters, 2023).

How to use this handbook

This handbook should be used during the transition journey from nursery to fulltime education. Advice and information should be personalised for the specific individual. By following the advice and guidance within this handbook, children and adults should encounter an uncomplicated and straightforward transition journey together. Creating a happier child and caregivers. Early years matters (2023) describe a transition as a change, the process of which is adjusting to the change and when the transition is successful it will be as if the change did not happen, as it is forgotten.

The needs of the child



(Source: Simplypsychology, 2020)

According to Maslow (1943) there is a “Hierarchy of needs” of which the basic needs, such as food, water, warmth, rest, and safety, must be satisfied to encourage the child to develop into an accomplished and creative individual. Once physiological and safety

needs have been met, children then require the need to feel

they are loved and that they belong. Bowlby (1969) explains a primary caregiver being consistent, responsive, and sensitive establishes a secure attachment style in children. Bowlby (1969) and Maslow (1943) therefore agree that the need of the child to feel loved and to belong are vital.

Isaacs (1954) explains that a nursery setting should be an extension of the home environment. Isaacs (1954) emphasises children are the centre of all aspects of their growth and development, especially in nurseries and education. Prioritising their needs ensures that transitions are smooth and consistent.

During transition journeys children will need to be reminded of their sense of belonging and that they are safe and valued. Keeping things consistent, especially their daily routine will also be beneficial and will reinforce their positive, safe environment.

‘...the ability to form relationships with caring adults and the ability to self-regulate behaviour and exercise self-control were key skills in the Early Years in the reduction of problems in later life’

Masten & Coatsworth (1998)

The role of the adult

Bronfenbrenner (1979) established that an individual is affected by many of the relationships they encounter. Parents, caregivers, siblings, nursery staff and teachers all contribute to an individual's "microsystem" of relationships.

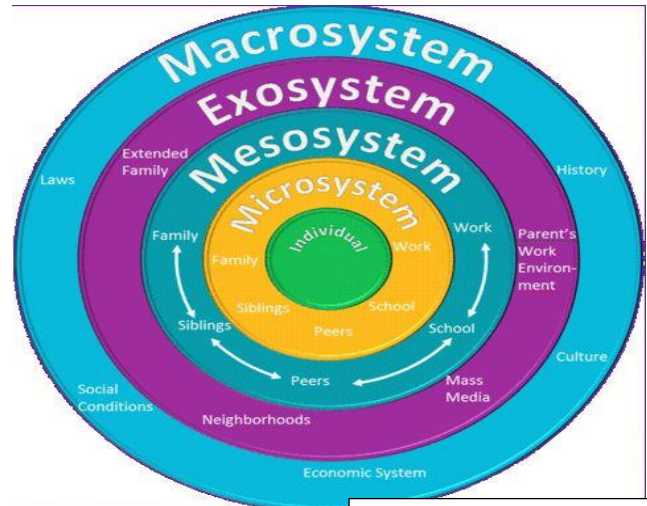
Bandura (1977) discovered children often use observational learning, mimicking the

adults and peers around them. Vygotsky (1934) reiterates Bandura's (1961) theory, stating children learn through social interaction with an individual who is more skilful or knowledgeable. Therefore, everyone has a responsibility to be a positive role model to the children in their care. Staff should always be respectful to the children as well as the other adults they encounter during their day.

Dewey (1974) describes the interests of the child and parental participation a vital part of the learning process. Working together with parents emphasises the mutual respect and encourages children to be respectful to others.

Communication is important to ensure everyone understands and is clear on the transition journey. Welsh government (2014) encourages practitioners to form positive relationships with children and parents, through mutual respect and trust. Donaldson (2015) explains that Wales requires a different practitioner, one who understands how to work with the parents and the children.

The role of the practitioner in both settings is to create a safe and loving learning environment. Piaget (1932) and Montessori (1909) agree that children learn individually and at their own pace. Settings should be using proper tools for the children, for example, if children are making sandwiches, they should be given a real knife to butter their bread. Practitioners should observe the children using these tools, but not interfere unless there is a significant danger to the child.



(Source: SusanMarie, 2017)

Partnerships

Following Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory as well as parents, caregivers, siblings, and peers having influence and helping to educate individuals, children can also be influenced by other people they may meet. Including members of their community, neighbours, and multiagency workers.

Meeting new people introduces the individual to new information, personalities, and other cultures.

As Bowlby (1969) explains, a secure attachment ensures these meetings will be positive for the individual and their transition journey.

"It takes a village to raise a child" (African proverb, no date) seems to explain how many people can influence one individual. Providing a safe and healthy environment for children to experiment, explore, observe, and experience consequences of their surroundings and actions. (Straussner, 2022)

As a nursery and as an education setting it is our responsibility to create this safe environment and to encourage the children to explore.

Interventions

Using the information outlined in this handbook, practitioners can implement interventions for the transition between nursery and welsh medium education schools. Each child is an individual and therefore each intervention will be personalised for every child. Following Bowlby's (1969) discoveries, keeping everything consistent is important for the individual. Ensure the keyworker, parent and child are well prepared for the upcoming transition. Early years matters (2023) and Little miracles (2023) suggest starting the transition as early as six months in advance as this will ensure good communication and preparation between all involved.

Brostrom (2004) suggests that children visiting the new school is vitally important. Children can see the new classroom, where the toilets are situated and meet the staff.

Transition days and evenings can be arranged, where children and keyworkers can visit the school for a session, this could start with circle time. Children and staff could get to know each other, sing familiar songs, and have story time. These visits could become monthly visits, ensuring the children get to see everywhere they will be using when they arrive. An evening visit would be beneficial for the parents, to become accustomed to the school and to meet the staff also. If a story is read in the nursery setting, the teacher at school could read the same story when the child visits, this emphasises consistency between the two settings.

While on the transition days it would be useful to take photos of the main areas of the new school, such as the classroom, entry points, the school yard where they will play, and the staff that will be involved with the children, this can include the headteacher and admin staff, dinnertime supervisors and canteen staff. With these photographs a useful school transition book can be created for the individuals. It can also be arranged that school staff visit the nursery and see how the children play, who their friends are and what they enjoy.

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) states that every child has the right to be involved, and have their feelings and opinions considered and heard in all matters that involve them. Following this, ask the individual what would help them during the transition journey. Creating a "This is me" or one-page profile of the individual would be beneficial to the individual, the new

staff members, and the school. Ask the parents to complete a questionnaire about the child, ask the child questions about themselves and use the knowledge and observations collected about the individual to collaborate a document all about them. This will include health information, likes and dislikes, specific interventions already in place to help the child, and any other agencies involved with the child. These documents have proven very useful in getting to know the individual.

What is important to me now

Music

Food

Drink

Hobbies

TV programmes

What I really doesn't like at school, home or for activities

Sheet to complete with young person

What is important to now

How gets to and from school

Things they like about school

Things they dislike about school

Sheet to complete with parents/carers

All about me, my family and friends

my name

my age

my birthday

my best friends

what my family love about me

if I was an animal I would be like a lion

my favourite things

when I grow up

things to take on holiday

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Source: Haltonchildrenstrust (2014)

During transition the individual may need a transitional object, as first described by Winnicott (1971) this item will bring comfort to the individual and help them feel safe in their new environment. Weaning the individual slowly off the comforter as they adjust and become accustomed to the new setting.

During the transition journey it is important to keep as many aspects consistent as possible (Better Brains for Babies, 2019). Supporting the child throughout the transition journey and enforcing the secure attachment the individual has formed with the practitioner (Bowlby, 1969). Enabling the individual to feel safe, loved, and positive along their journey.

Proposed outcomes

As a result of a positive, successful transition journey, the individual will feel safe, secure, and loved in their new environment. Following Winnicott (1971) comforter theory, when the child willingly comes to the setting without the need of this transitional object, it will be clear the child has transitioned comfortably into their new setting. According to Maslow (1943) "Hierarchy of needs", when the basic needs, such as food, water, warmth, rest, and safety, and the psychological needs, which are friendships and relationships, are met, the child will develop into an accomplished and creative individual. Achieving their "self-actualisation", Maslow (1943) explains the child will be happy, developing well and meeting their age-appropriate milestones (Erikson 1963, Piaget 1932). In conclusion following the UNCRC (1989) guidelines, listening to the individual and allowing them their rights as a child, while implementing the transition interventions outlined in this handbook, the transition journey should flow smoothly with all participants following the same instructions.

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