

# **Transition Policy**



**St Oliver Plunkett Primary School**

## **Transition Policy.**

At St. Oliver Plunkett our transition policy reflects the ethos that emotional well being is essential in terms of learning. We endeavour to have appropriate expectations of our children, and empathy with them too, therefore we have put in place a transition policy to reflect this.

Our main aim is to ensure a smooth transition for children from their pre school/nursery setting to Year One in Foundation stage.

To ensure this transition goes smoothly there needs to be a combination of the following:

- Effective communication between teachers on each side of the transition.
- Parental engagement
- A thorough induction programme
- A focus on both continuity and progression in pastoral care and curricular content.

This is in keeping with the guidance outlined by DENI, stating "strong links should be established where possible with the pre school setting the child previously attended to ensure a smoother transition."

**Source: DENI "Guidance on Induction and Transition-Year One of Primary School " 2014-15**

### **How do we do this?**

#### **Effective communication**

We ensure there is effective communication through transition meetings with the child's teacher/ Principal from pre-school/ nursery. These meetings are held before a child begins school to enable sharing of information and written records. The class teacher will retain these records to inform planning as the child settles and progresses in Year One.

#### **Parental engagement**

The Starting School booklet is given to all parents during the induction meeting.

Parents of new children are invited to an initial open day in January and an induction meeting in May whereby they can meet with class teachers, look around the school and ask questions. (Details of these meetings are given below).

Our school operates an open door policy where parents are encouraged to feel that they can easily approach teachers with any concerns or questions they may have,

#### **Induction Programme :**

During the induction meeting the new children are invited to explore their future classroom in the company of their new class teacher. This helps them to gain some ownership of the setting they will be working in.

The Year One teachers visit the pre-school/ nursery throughout the summer term, to familiarise themselves with the children . During these visits the teachers have an opportunity to interact with the children while learning a song or reading a story together.

## **Continuity and Progression:**

We aim to have all new pupils settled in to Year One as quickly as is reasonably possible. To help with this we operate a staggered intake. This allows adequate time for the teachers to get to know the pupils and help them settle smoothly into their new environment. All pupils are settled by the third week in September, staying for a full school day, with school dinner or lunches from the very start. We acknowledge that most pupils have been to some form of pre school and take this into account while settling them.

The DENI guidance on Induction clearly states "by the time they start primary school the majority of children will have benefited from a pre school experience, and primary schools should consider this when deciding on the optimum time for phasing children into Year One of the Foundation Stage.....The majority of children should be settled into the first term of Year One of primary school within the first two weeks of September;it is expected that the majority of children should be staying for meals within four weeks".

**Source: DENI "Guidance on Induction and Transition-Year One of Primary School " 2014-15**

During the pupils' time in Year One the teachers use information gathered during discussions with parents, children, classroom assistants and any relevant outside agencies, eg: educational psychologists/ speech therapists to ensure a clear understanding of the child's current level of development in all six areas of learning. This will then be used to inform planning.

The Year One teachers identify individual children who have special or additional needs and then brief the relevant Year Two teaching staff prior to the next transition.

The Year Two teachers use the records from Year One and liaison with the teachers to plan pupils' further development.

## **Year One ( relevant meetings and procedures)**

### **January**

#### **Open Day**

At this initial meeting the Principal addresses the parents in the assembly hall. The parents then have the opportunity to visit the Year One classrooms. The Year One teachers talk to the parents about the school curriculum, showing them resources and types of learning used at this early stage.

The parents are given an information leaflet on Year One to take away.

### **May**

#### **Visits to the Nursery, Playgroup and other pre school settings.**

The Vice Principal (SEN Co-ordinator) and Foundation Stage leader make visits at this stage to the relevant pre school settings to gather information on children coming in to Year One.

This information includes details on family background, ability, well-being and involvement and any other concerns regarding individual pupils. These visits are extremely valuable as they dictate how the Year One classes are formed.

As stated in the Guidance on Induction and Transition document by the Department of Education "induction arrangements should reflect the needs of the individual child, including any Special Educational Needs."

**Source: DENI "Guidance on Transition and Induction" 2014-15**

### **Induction Day**

While letters are sent out to the parents inviting them to the Induction Day they are asked to complete some forms relevant to Year One. These include information on contact and medical details, as well as consent forms. It has proven very useful to have these forms already completed at this stage as it saves valuable time on this important day.

Parents are given an information booklet about Year One which teachers discuss and talk through highlighting any important details. Pupils are given their starting date for school at this time.

### **June**

Visits by pre-school pupils with their teachers to the Year One classes

On different arranged dates the pupils from the Nursery and Playgroup are given the opportunity to visit the Year One classes while the present pupils are there. All of the incoming pre school pupils are afforded this opportunity.

By this stage the new pupils' classroom and teacher has been allocated. These visits have been very successful. They give pupils another chance to participate in the real working classroom environment. Teachers too appreciate this time to talk to the pre school staff while interacting with the new pupils.

### **Follow up visits by Year One teachers to pre schools**

Year one teachers have an opportunity to meet with and talk to pupils and teachers within the pre school setting. This last visit in the summer term offers teachers a chance to ask any further questions or raise any concerns they may have.

Again these visits have proved very worthwhile and valuable for everyone.

DENI guidance here states "end of year visits by the Year One teacher to pre-school settings provide an opportunity for staff to exchange information about children and the curriculum they have experienced which could help the Year One teacher in planning and preparing for the individual needs of the children and to help them settle into their new environment".

Source: DENI "Guidance on Induction and Transition-Year One of Primary School " 2014-15

Throughout the pupils' first year in the Foundation Stage strong links are maintained where possible with their relevant pre school. The children from the Nursery and Playgroup are invited to the school for special assemblies, sports days and school concerts.

We feel it is vitally important to maintain and foster good relationships in order to do the very best for all pupils in our care.