

# 10 things you should know about starting school



A guide for foster carers with looked after children starting in Early Years

1

Moving schools, sometimes referred to as *transition*, can be difficult for looked after children in normal circumstances, so in these unusual times we need to take into account the additional anxieties children and young people will have. The ESLAC team is working with designated teachers to put things in place that will support looked after children through what will be a very different transition experience this year. Here are 10 things you need to know to support the child/ren in your care to enjoy a successful transition into school.

2

You will receive a transition booklet or school readiness passport to complete with your child. Make this a fun activity that you can do together, you might just do a little bit each day. ESLAC will contact you and make sure that the finished book goes to the new designated teacher.

3

Create a setting/school box with a range of favourite toys, books which younger children can take into Nursery until they feel settled.

4

If you live close by and are able to take your daily exercise why not walk past the school, talking about the building and what they think they will do - where they will go in, who they will play with.  
When Government advice allows, arrange for a buddy who would be starting at the same time as your child to accompany your child on the walk. This can ease any fears they may have and make it a fun

	experience. If you are unsure if there are any children in the area, contact the Nursery and they may be able to help.
5	You could try using stories to explore the new situation, particularly open ended ones as these can empower a child to reason and problem solve independently.
6	If you are Thrive trained, have you used the resources on Thrive online? Do you have a plan in place which could be shared with the new school?
7	The designated teacher from your child/children's new school will make contact with you to introduce themselves to you and the child/children. A PEP Review meeting will be arranged once the child has settled in. This will be to discuss how the child is progressing and any areas they are needing supported. PEP Reviews may happen by video if the nursery or school hasn't opened again yet, so if you have the technology you should be invited. Speak to your ESLAC education support worker.
8	Create a ready for school checklist with all the things that the child is able to do now ,for instance recognise their name, count to 5, put their own socks on. This will enable the child to understand what is expected of them when they start Nursery and give them a sense of achievement.
9	Recognise that a child needs time to settle and a period of regression is normal. The young child may prefer to stand and watch before joining in but again this is normal and appropriate.
10	Once the schools do go back and the children transition to their new schools the designated teacher, ESLAC and IRO will continue to regularly monitor how they are settling in over the first year. This will be reflected in the PEP and the regular progress reviews the school submits to the Virtual School. If you have any concerns about how the child/young person is coping with the transition then please contact the designated teacher or ESLAC to discuss.
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