



Transition Policy

Date of Policy: January 2020

To be reviewed: Annually

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies: Teaching and Learning policy, Assessment and Recording Policy, Sensory Policy, Communication Policy, and Attachment Aware Behaviour Regulation Policy.

Overview

Throughout life there are many changes that will involve transitions; these could be minor or major changes in routines, rules and boundaries, procedures and personnel. Transition within the school setting can be seen as being:

- Change from one lesson to another
- Change from one place to another
- Change from one educational establishment to another; either coming to Delamere School or moving on to another establishment

At Delamere School, many of our pupils face difficulties during transition. Preparing for and managing change is important for all the children at our school regardless of their background or ability. However it is recognised in research that pupils with autism will have difficulties in the following three key areas known as the 'triad of impairments' that were described by Wing and Gould in 1979:

- Communication
- Socialisation
- Imagination

In addition to the 'triad', pupils may also have sensory issues and motor planning, gross motor and fine motor problems. Sensory difficulties can have an enormous impact on how a pupil is able to interface with other individuals, situations and activities.



For some pupils with autism a complete change of environment can be more easily accepted than changes to familiar places and routines and therefore moving from one class to another may be more likely to cause anxiety than changing school. All transitions must be carefully planned and prepared for if the pupils are to adjust to them with a minimum amount of stress and anxiety. The following areas may have an impact upon the way in which they cope and take ownership of transitions:

- Making choices
- The ability to see the whole picture; seeing only individual parts of situations
- Understanding and communicating what is important to them
- Thinking ahead
- Understanding language related to change and future
- Planning and organising
- Anxiety around change
- Fixed and sometimes unrealistic choice

Intent

Our vision, our values and our rights underpin all of our policies and the education we deliver. Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: "The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions that affect children". This policy has been created to keep the children at Delamere School safe and happy.

At Delamere the aims of transition plans and practices are:

- To enable pupils to move between activities in class or within school with a minimum amount of stress and anxiety. (Micro transition)
- To enable pupils to move class or school with a minimum amount of stress and anxiety. (Macro transition)
- To ensure teachers, parents, carers and others have the information they need to facilitate as smooth a transition as possible for each individual pupil. Pupils with autism can become reliant on familiar people to help them to cope with the challenges they have. Therefore it is important to ensure the knowledge and understanding of pupils is shared with all those involved in the transition.



Pupils may start at Delamere in the Nursery provision on a part-time basis. However pupils can and do start in Reception on a full-time basis and also transfer from other schools at any time during their primary school years. Part time placements or a gradual build-up of days may be considered.

Before attending Delamere, parents and/or carers are invited to visit the school with their child. A priority on this visit is to make the child's initial experience of Delamere as enjoyable as possible so that the first association with school is a positive one.

During this visit the child may stay with their parent whilst they look around the school or spend some time in an appropriate class. Parents/carers and children (as appropriate) are consulted as to which of these options would be the most appropriate introduction to school. Further visits may then be arranged if required. If the child is already in a school, it is possible that staff from their current class will accompany them on these visits, as this provides an opportunity for information to be shared. It is common practice for the class teacher or member of Senior Leadership Team to observe the child in their current setting to gain further information within a familiar context

The child will be given information about the school and their proposed class, usually in the form of photographs of rooms, activities and staff and specific to their understanding and needs. Parents /carers are generally invited to come into school to meet with the class teacher to share information about their child, and in particular to identify things which may help to make their first experiences of Delamere positive as well as completing the schools admission booklet.

In most cases class staff will offer a home visit prior to a child starting at Delamere School

Micro Transitions

The Morning Routine / Home-time routine

At Delamere, we recognise that the transition at the start of the day with the journey from home to class can be a difficult one for our pupils. We use many strategies to make this a calm and successful transition. These strategies help to create a feeling of calmness and aid the transition into school.

Familiar adults are present at the front of school to greet and receive pupils from transport or parents/carers. Pupils with known difficulties with transitioning to class have motivators or distractors provided and visuals to aid their understanding of what is happening and where they are moving to. Some pupils use alternative entrances if required or arrive during quieter times. For example, Nursery pupils arrive by the side gate and enter class through a separate entrance to enable parents/carers to



liaise with class staff and for our youngest pupils to have a quieter entrance to school. Other pupils have entered through the large hall to avoid the busier entrance during periods of challenging behaviour and over sensitivity to busy environments.

Pupils with a visual impairment will use the trail boards to identify the route / areas within school. All arrangements are made in discussion with parents/carers and the class team. At the end of the day, the school Tannoy announces which buses are ready to accept pupils and these children are taken to the front of school. Class teams are aware of pupils who require their exit to be low arousal and use resources to ensure this. All school staff are involved in ensuring that this is a calm and organised process.

Moving from one activity to another

At Delamere we cater for the individual needs of our children and a variety of approaches can be seen when helping the transition between tasks and activities. In all classes a visual timetable is used to help pupils see what lesson or activity is next. In many of the classes within the provision for pupils with autism, the pupils have their own individualised schedule including objects of reference, photos, symbols or written text. The pupils are encouraged to be as independent as individual needs allow in using their schedules to help them understand that the activity has finished and it is time to move onto the next. In the classes within the provision for pupils with autism, visuals are always used alongside verbal communication and staff carry these visuals with them at all times. Other visuals are readily available around the classroom. Traffic lights are used throughout the day.

The green signals the start of an activity, the yellow means “one minute” and the red shows the activity has finished. These are used alongside the ‘go’ hand which the child taps and can then leave the area and the orange, oval ‘wait’ sign. Many children use a “First and Then” reward card or an ‘I am working for’ approach. A wide range of transition resources / strategies are used throughout school including music/songs, photographs, objects of reference, labels, verbal prompts, signs, trail boards etc.

Moving within school

Delamere is a small school and therefore all the pupils and staff benefit from being in an environment where everybody knows and has regular contact with everyone else. Pupils have opportunities to go into other classes on occasions such as theme days, lunch/ playtimes, and joint or mixed class activities. The pupils also use a range of locations across the school day including the sensory room, soft play room, halls, pool and wide range of outdoor areas. All rooms around school have visual door labels and pupils reference these on their individual schedules or adults show the corresponding photos. If the activity is new to the children, class teams will prepare the pupils through the use of photographs and symbols or using the interactive



whiteboard. These factors facilitate smooth transitions across classes for most pupils. As a school we offer a wide range of opportunities that are provided by external and less familiar adults such as sports coaches, musicians, theatre groups, artist etc. The pupils are prepared for these activities using the visual support systems and countdowns.

Macro Transitions School Outings

At Delamere, many pupils go out on weekly minibus visits as part of the curriculum or have opportunities to go to special sports or drama / music activities out of school. Children are prepared for these visits through the use of photographs, symbols and presentations on the interactive whiteboard. On the day of the outing the activity is reflected on the visual timetable in class or individual schedules. A social story may be written and symbols may be used during the actual outing. Mini symbolic/word schedules, communication mats and photographs may be taken out into the community along with motivating and distracting activities personalised to each child. Again, this preparation is provided on an individual's need and will vary from child to child.

Moving classes

Pupils will likely move classes yearly. Changes of class usually occur at the beginning of a school year. In grouping classes, pupils are kept where possible with age appropriate peer groups but individual need is the greatest factor in grouping pupils into classes. Towards the end of the school year all pupils take part in transition sessions, during which pupils spend time with staff from their new team, in their current class. Records are passed on at the end of the school year, and discussions take place during staff meeting time to enable staff to help children to settle into their new classes e.g. exchanging communication advice, pen portraits, feeding plans, sensory profiles/diets and Learning Support Plans and a handover of academic information. A range of strategies may be used including; taking a favourite piece of equipment to their new classroom; a familiar member of staff spending time with a pupil in their new class; a familiar routine being followed in a new class in the first few days/weeks, and ensuring that visual supports used in one class are transferred and used consistently in the next class.

Transferring to another school

Pupils transfer from Delamere to a small number of schools. These include special schools, specialist support units within mainstream schools, and mainstream schools. Children generally move from Delamere at the end of key stage 2; however transfers may occur at any time. We aim to ensure an individual and seamless programme in place for every pupil at the point of transition.



Transition to Secondary School

It is important to note that this transition is as much about supporting the parent as it is about supporting the child. From year 4 onwards parents are invited to a Moving On event at school. This includes presentations from Brentwood High and Manor Academy as well as giving advice about puberty.

During year 5 parents are invited to visit both Brentwood and Manor with a view to having made a decision about which school they feel is most appropriate by the Year 6 Transition Review. This is held early in the Autumn term. Staff from Brentwood or Manor are invited to the reviews. Once the school had been agreed through the review process parents are invited to various welcome and information sessions at the school.

In the Summer term where Year 6 pupils have a personalised transition plan which may include regular visits to their chosen high school, spending time in classes, taking part in lessons and experiencing the lunch time system. They are supported by staff from Delamere during this process Staff from Brentwood and Manor also visit the children at Delamere to see them in class. Regular communication between the class teachers takes place in order that all the information about a child is passed on including communication and visual support systems

Transition Project

Delamere has recently joined the Trafford Teaching School Alliance's Transition Project. It is a two year project where we are partnered with Pictor and Manor to look closely at Transition to high school, ensuring we are giving our children the best possible life chances. Updates on this project, including the specifics of our focus will be posted on our website in due course.

Impact

Children will make successful transitions and the skills they learn during their time at Delamere will equip them for life.

This policy will promote the following, that are embedded into the school; Attachment Aware, Self-Regulation and Team Teach.

This supports excellent teaching, learning and progress. It will promote the high standards and high expectations set out in the school's aims