Are you ready for your **four-year-olds?**

A reflective tool for reception class teachers

Effective and seamless transitions are vital for children to get the best start to their school life.

This document is intended to be used as a reflective tool to support reception class teachers and support staff to ensure that an appropriate environment and curriculum is provided for the very youngest children as they start school.

A Unique Child

Good practice	Things to consider	Where to find more information
		Documents in blue are available by accessing the resources section of the EYCC website **www.essex.gov.uk/ earlyyearsandchildcare** For other documents click on the link or use website address.
I know about each child's interests and motivations	• How have you gathered information about each child's uniqueness, what motivates and excites them? • How is this information to be used to ensure they feel safe, secure, and welcome?	• Early Years Outcomes DfE • Development Matters • 'Right to Go' – guidance on helping schools manage continence issues
I know about each child's preferred learning style	• How does the environment reflect the learning styles of the children?	• Alistair Bryce Clegg Environment Plan www.abcdoes.com • A Unique Child Audit
I know the 'best fit' stage of development of each of the children	• How am I using the 'best fit' age/ stage information gathered during transition to inform my environment and planning?	• Early Years Inclusive Environments Audit
I know which children may need additional support	• How am I using the information gathered during transition regarding children's SEND/EAL? • How are agencies working together to ensure a smooth transition? • Are there any children that need additional support from their key person from the previous Early Years setting to ensure a smooth transition?	

Positive Relationships

Good practice	Things to consider	Where to find more information
Each child is assigned a key person who is responsible for ensuring that every child's learning and care is tailored to their needs and seeks to engage and support parents to guide and support their development at home	• How am I implementing the key person approach? • What does this look like for the children, the EYFS team and the school?	• [Positive Relationships Audit](#) • [Guidance: The Key Person in Reception Classes and small nursery settings (National Strategies)](#) • Early Home Learning Matters: A Brief Guide for Practitioners www.nptfamily.com • Key Persons in the Early Years – Peter Elfer and Elinor Goldschmied, 2012
Development of trusting, warm relationships helps children feel secure and ensure their emotional needs are met	• Have you allocated adults to play alongside the children, engaging in their play, modelling access and return of resources? • How are you establishing routines which enable children to feel safe whilst still being flexible and responding to individual needs?	
Development of positive relationships with parents is vital to supporting children's well-being and learning and development	• What systems do you have in place for building positive relationships with parents? How are their views sought and fed into planning? • What messages are you giving parents about how best to support their child's learning and development and how are you communicating this? • How are you using information gathered from parents about their child's learning and development during induction to ensure appropriate activities are provided from the start of term?	

Enabling Environments

Good practice	Things to consider	Where to find more information
The learning environment reflects the developmental needs and learning styles of the children	• How are you using the information you have gathered during the transition process to inform the planning of your environment? • Do you have quiet and cosy corners? • Is there enough space to move freely? Do you have too many tables? Can children access resources readily? Are there too many resources?	• [Enabling Environments Audit](#) • Alistair Bryce Clegg Environment Plan- See Unique Child section above for link. www.abcdoes.com • The Irresistible Classroom- Community Playthings www.communityplaythings.co.uk • Early Home Learning Matters – A Brief Guide for Practitioners- see Positive Relationships section above for link
The routines and structure of the day reflects the developmental and emotional needs of the children	• How is your day structured? Is it beneficial for children to attend assembly? What is an appropriate length of carpet time for the youngest children? • Are there extended periods of time where children can become engaged in exploring activities that interest them thereby demonstrating deep involvement and high level learning? • Are you able to provide free flow movement between indoors and outdoors? If so how often do you need to use your hall time? • Do you need to stop for a snack or could you consider a café style snack? • See key person approach above regarding creating a safe emotional environment and promoting children's emotional wellbeing	
The home learning environment is supported by developing trusting, open relationships with parents	• How are you supporting parents in the first days and weeks to understand the importance of the home learning environment and their part in this? • Do you hold workshops based around key themes such as Learning Journeys and early reading, writing and mathematics?	

Learning and Development

Good practice	Things to consider	Where to find more information
By completing a baseline assessment on entry and using this in conjunction with information from parents and previous settings I can identify the starting point and next steps for each child	• How am I managing the adults in the classroom to ensure that there are adequate opportunities to observe what children do and say, what interests them and to assess where they are in their learning journey? Have I created an enabling environment that allows children to demonstrate what they can do (their 'embedded learning')? • How does this information inform next steps and feed into planning of both continuous provision and adult led activities?	• [Learning and Development Audit](#) • Early Home Learning Matters – A Brief Guide for Practitioners- see Positive Relationships section above for link • [Learning, Playing and Interacting – National Strategies (Pg. 14 'Strategies to Join in Play'/ pg.27 Skilled and thoughtful practitioners support learning by…)](#) • [Finding and Exploring Young Children's Fascinations- National Strategies (pg. 13 Possibility Thinking)](#)
The enabling environment both indoors and outdoors supports children to develop their Characteristics of Effective Learning	• Are adults clear about their role in supporting children to develop their Characteristics of Effective learning? • Are systems in place for tracking where each child is in respect of their Characteristics of Effective Learning?	• [Starting Points Analysis Document](#) • [Development Matters in the EYFS pages 5,6,7 (Characteristics of Effective Learning)](#) • [Characteristics of Effective Learning Tracking Sheet](#)
Children are able to access resources independently	• Is the environment set up so that children can access and return resources independently? How much time do I need to invest in establishing systems for the return of resources and care and consideration for?	
All adults are clear about their roles and responsibilities and how best to support the learning and development of each child.	• How are you deploying adults? Are they clear on their role? • How can they support learning and development by playing alongside children? Do adults understand how to be a playmate? Is their confidence in this area high?	