

## **EIS Advice on Transition Arrangements from Nursery to Primary (Special Education)**

The importance of planning and supporting children through transition periods is well recognised in early years education, particularly in the context of Special Education. Teachers and early years practitioners play a vital role in sensitively supporting children as they encounter new arrangements.

The updated Scottish Government guidance now makes provision for Primary schools to offer some level of 'in-person' transition support to those children who will be starting school in the next academic session.

**The EIS would recommend that decisions about the level and nature of the 'in-person' transition support should be made on a collegiate basis, with full involvement of the school and ELC staff involved and risk assessed with due regard to the protection level in which each setting is based.**

In planning transition visits, **a rigorous risk assessment should be conducted and appropriate risk mitigation measures adopted.** The guidance makes the following recommendations to inform practice:

- the number of children involved in each visit should be kept as low as possible;
- risk assessments should be conducted in accordance with the schools' guidance and on the basis of school mitigations applying;
- where possible, schools should plan for visits to take place outdoors to reduce the potential for transmission of the virus;
- consideration should be given to grouping children according to their ELC setting or where necessary, in small groups from different settings. The EIS would recommend that careful consideration is given to whether it is necessary to invite groups from different settings to one visit. If after collegiate discussion, it is deemed necessary, then due regard should be given to implementing

enhanced mitigation measures to reduce the potential for transmission of the virus.

- unless absolutely necessary for the wellbeing of the children, ELC staff and other adults (including parents) should not be present with the children throughout the transition visit; and
- ELC staff should avoid interacting indoors with staff and pupils in the Primary school.

**Transition visits should not take place if there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in either the ELC setting involved or the Primary school.**

Given the restrictions on visitors to schools, children should be accompanied to the visit by ELC staff, rather than parents. Consideration could, however, be given to the use of virtual tours where this would be appropriate to enable parents to support their child prior to attending for the first time.

**In the context of Special Education, the individual needs of the children involved would also require to be considered in determining whether an enhanced 'in-person' transition is necessary and factored into the assessment of risk.** Appropriate risk mitigation measures should be identified to address the risks presented and appropriate arrangements made on this basis.

Education Scotland has developed two resources to support transitions during COVID restrictions: [Transitions in 2020](#) and Wakelet on [Supporting young children at points of transition](#)