Case Study of Good Practice for Transition to School

Northamptonshire schools and setting partnerships – working together with the aim of all children’s progress being uninterrupted during their transition to school.

The Rushden and Higham Cluster.

The Rushden and Higham Cluster run an Early Years Cluster Group consisting of local head teachers, reception class teachers, teaching assistants and local preschool providers. It has been meeting for over six years and has continued to change over this time to meet both local needs and statutory duties.

Areas covered in meetings include:

- Developing a shared understanding of tracking children’s progress including joint moderation activities.
- Working together to develop joint expectations for ‘school readiness’ and sharing this with parents.
- Sharing good practice.
- Pre-school staff and children visiting the schools for an afternoon each week during the summer term.
- School staff visiting the children in their preschool at the end of the year to see the children where they are most confident and further develop a picture of what they can do.

Impact:

- Helps with the early identification of children with SEND – schools and settings working together to ensure that the child’s needs continue to be met throughout transition.
- There is an agreed and shared understanding of school readiness and the role that early year’s settings can take in supporting children and their parents to be prepared for this transition.
- Transition information for children starting school is becoming increasingly accurate.
- Baseline assessments can be rapidly completed
- When children start school full time there are appropriately targeted next steps in learning.
- Staff know each child’s preferred learning style and preferences and so can plan activities with appropriate interest, challenge and support.
- Most children do not ‘dip’ in attainment at transition and make good or better progress during their time in Year R.

The Head teacher at Tennyson Road Infant School believes that the partnership with settings has helped children to be better equipped for starting school and that pre-schools are increasingly confident in their role of preparing children for school. E.g. Preschools being more confident to develop malleable and physical skills rather than pencil skills.

Similarly, The manager at Rushden Kids Club, considers that working with the schools to define school readiness and together producing a list of top ten indicators for school readiness has afforded support for both pre-school staff and parents by providing a consistency of message and a shared understanding of children’s needs during transition to school.