St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School

Transition policy

September 2026

Review: September 2027

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on an annual basis.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body September 2026

It is due for review in September 2027

Hayley Francis Date: September 2026

Head Teacher



Lindsay Wise Date: September 2026

Chair of Governors



The Meaning of Transition

Transition refers to the changes and adjustments that children experience as they move from one environment, stage of learning or set of relationships to another. Throughout their early years and childhood, children encounter a range of transitions that can have a significant impact on their emotional wellbeing, confidence and development.

Periods of transition often involve change, uncertainty and new experiences. Children may need time, reassurance and support to adapt to different routines, expectations, environments and relationships. Every child responds to change differently, and some may require additional support to help them feel safe, secure and confident during the process.

By the time a child reaches school age, they may have already experienced a number of important transitions, including:

- Moving from home into a nursery or early years setting.
- Transitioning between rooms or age groups within a setting.
- Attending different childcare providers or carers throughout the week.
- Moving from a childminder, nursery or other early years provider into school.
- Changing settings or services due to alterations in family circumstances.

Transition is a journey that requires careful planning, preparation and support. When managed effectively, transitions provide valuable opportunities for children to develop resilience, independence and confidence.

Parents, carers and practitioners play a vital role in ensuring that transitions are positive experiences. By working together in partnership and sharing relevant information about a child's individual needs, interests, routines, strengths and relationships, adults can provide consistency and continuity of care. This

collaborative approach helps children feel secure, valued and well prepared for the next stage of their learning and development.

Rationale

We believe that all children should feel as comfortable, confident and emotionally secure as possible when entering and moving through an early years setting.

Young children starting nursery may need support to adjust to a temporary separation from their family. They need opportunities to develop secure relationships with practitioners, feel valued and respected as members of the nursery community, and develop positive attitudes towards new people, routines and experiences.

During periods of transition, children should be supported to retain and build upon the self-confidence, independence and self-respect they have already developed at home or in previous settings.

Getting to know each child and planning appropriately for their admission and future transitions requires parents and practitioners to work in an equal partnership. Parents have valuable knowledge about their child's personality, routines, interests, development, communication and emotional needs, while practitioners contribute their professional knowledge and experience of early childhood development.

By combining this knowledge, we can provide a consistent and individualised approach that supports each child's wellbeing and development.

Our Aim

Transitions involve a process of change and require a period of adjustment for both children and their families. We aim to make transitions as positive and manageable as possible by providing continuity of care, learning and emotional support.

We will achieve this by:

- Working closely with parents and carers to understand each child's individual needs.
- Gathering relevant information before a child starts at the setting.
- Providing families with clear information about the nursery, routines and expectations.
- Offering settling-in opportunities that are tailored to the individual child.
- Supporting children to develop secure and trusting relationships with key persons and other practitioners.
- Preparing children carefully for changes between rooms, practitioners or routines.
- Sharing appropriate information with other childcare providers and schools, with parental consent where required.
- Supporting children and families before, during and after significant transitions.
- Taking account of each child's age, stage of development, personality, communication, cultural background and individual circumstances.

- Providing additional support where a child may find change particularly challenging.
- Working with relevant professionals and services where additional support is identified.
- Ensuring that children's views, feelings and interests are considered wherever appropriate.

Where the term **parent** is used throughout this policy, this also includes carers, childminders and others who have parental responsibility or are appropriately involved in the child's care.

Our overall aim is to ensure that every child experiences transitions that are **planned, gradual, consistent, inclusive and responsive to their individual needs**, helping them to develop confidence, resilience, independence and a positive attitude towards change.

Transition from Nursery/Pre-School to Reception

We recognise that moving from our school-based Nursery/Pre-School into Reception is an important stage in a child's development and a significant transition for children and their families. As children are already familiar with the school environment, staff and many of the school's routines, we aim to build on this familiarity and provide a smooth, positive and well-supported progression into Reception.

Transition is viewed as an ongoing process rather than an event and is planned throughout the year. We work closely with the Reception team to provide children with regular opportunities to become familiar with their new classroom, teachers, routines and expectations before they start Reception.

To support children's confidence, independence and sense of belonging, we provide a range of transition opportunities, including:

- **Regular visits to the Reception classroom**, allowing children to become familiar with the environment, resources, routines and adults who will support them.
- **Transition afternoons**, giving children opportunities to spend time in their future Reception environment and experience aspects of the Reception routine.
- **Reception class picnics**, providing opportunities for Nursery/Pre-School children to socialise with Reception children in a relaxed and informal setting.
- **Participation in school events and assemblies**, helping children to become familiar with the wider school community, expectations and routines.
- **Shared Forest School experiences with Reception**, enabling children to build relationships with Reception staff and children while learning and playing in an outdoor environment.
- **Shared activities and learning experiences between Nursery/Pre-School and Reception**, supporting continuity in children's learning, development and interests.
- **Familiar routines and expectations within Nursery/Pre-School**, which reflect, where appropriate, the routines children will experience in Reception. This includes developing independence with coats and shoes, toileting,

handwashing, snack routines, tidying resources, managing belongings, listening and responding to adults, and following simple instructions.
- **Opportunities to talk about starting Reception**, allowing children to express their feelings, ask questions and develop a positive understanding of the changes ahead.
- **Sharing relevant information between Nursery/Pre-School and Reception staff**, ensuring that Reception staff have a good understanding of each child's interests, strengths, development, communication, relationships and any additional needs or support requirements.

Getting to Know You

During the **summer term**, the Reception teacher will meet individually with families as part of our **"Getting to Know You"** process. These meetings provide an opportunity for parents and carers to share important information about their child, including their interests, strengths, personality, friendships, communication, routines, family circumstances and anything that may help their child to settle confidently into Reception.

The meetings also provide an opportunity for families to ask questions, discuss any concerns and share information about their child's individual needs. Where appropriate, information gathered through these meetings will be shared with relevant staff to support a consistent and personalised approach to transition.

Preparing Children for Reception

Reception staff will become familiar with the children before they start Reception through visits, shared experiences, transition activities and communication with Nursery/Pre-School practitioners. This helps children to begin developing secure relationships with the adults who will support them and enables staff to identify any children who may benefit from additional transition arrangements.

We recognise that every child responds differently to change. Some children may confidently embrace the move to Reception, while others may require additional time, reassurance and opportunities to become familiar with their new environment. Transition arrangements will therefore be adapted where necessary to meet individual children's needs.

Where a child has additional needs, communication or developmental needs, or other circumstances that may affect their transition, Nursery/Pre-School and Reception staff will work with the child's family and, where appropriate, relevant professionals to plan additional support.

Working in Partnership with Families

Parents and carers will be kept informed about transition arrangements and encouraged to talk positively with their child about starting Reception. We recognise that families may have questions or concerns about the transition and encourage open communication throughout the process.

Information shared by families, alongside observations and information from Nursery/Pre-School staff, will help Reception staff to develop an understanding of

each child before they start. This partnership approach ensures that children's individual experiences, needs and strengths are recognised and supported.

Our aim is that, by the time children move into Reception, they feel **familiar, confident, secure and excited** about their next stage of learning. We want children and their families to feel welcomed and reassured, knowing that they are joining a familiar school community in which they will continue to be supported, valued and encouraged to thrive. A ‘Welcome to Reception Booklet’ is also shared with families and so they are well prepared for this transition before September.