

# Transition Top Tips for school staff



In the summer term we are all thinking about transition, either to a new school or year group. We are sure that you have many of your usual plans in place but in these times preparing children for the next stages of their education is even more important without the usual face to face contact normally provided. Here are a few of our ideas for how to help support a smooth transition for the child.

## Downright Special can support you with:

- Advice via email, phone or Zoom for preparing for their starting dates
- Training – “An Introduction to working with children who have Down syndrome”. Available dates can be found here: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/downrightspecial](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/downrightspecial) or contact us if you would like school-specific INSET training
- A Dropbox link to the literature which is usually provided in ‘The Resource box’ before a child starts school.
- A book for each first time school starter called ‘Going to School’ which we will send to the child’s home address.

## Things schools can do to support the child’s transition:

- **Make and send home a transition book** – this should include photographs of staff, the classroom, the dining hall, the PE hall, corridors, the entrance door, playground, toilets or other spaces that the child will use often. This can be a printed version using social story wording or made online using an App such as Special Stories.
- **Make a video** – this could include a walk through the entrance door, into the corridor and then through to their classroom. It could be narrated and be like a virtual tour of the school. This may help parents too.
- **Ask parents to make a simple photograph book for the child** to bring into school when they start. It could include photographs of significant people, those who will collect them, their pets, favourite toys or activities so that they can share it with their class.

## Other ideas for what you could do:

- If the child is already in your school then current staff can pass up the Downright Special Resource Box to the child’s new staff. Ensure it is complete using the checklist, give them a basic guide as to what you have learned so far, what works well and any resources, visual timetables and support materials you have used
- Share the contact information for colleagues you have worked with from Downright Special and professionals from other agencies
- Share the child’s EHCP with all new staff
- Contact parents to discuss the changes taking place and how you will be supporting them, the child and staff

**As the new teacher you could:**

- Call parents to introduce yourself and/or arrange a video call with the parent and child
- Read the child's EHCP and ask questions about the information
- Read the literature sent by Downright Special and other reports by professionals supporting the child
- Attend relevant training such as that provided by Downright Special or the new online signing training provided by The Makaton Charity
- Prepare a work space for the child with all their familiar resources and a visual timetable
- Set up a home school communication book

We hope you find this helpful but please do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like further support, advice or resources.

Kind regards,

The Downright Special Teaching Staff

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