



# Transition – How can I help my child?

The prospect of moving on to a new school or a new class can be a worrying time for children as well as parents. It is normal for children to feel a mixture of excitement and anxiety before the start of term, most will settle down quite happily during the first few days but others may need a little longer.

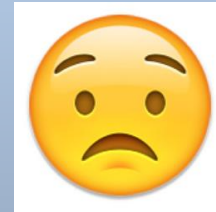




# What do the children think about moving on?

We asked the children to tell us what they thought, here are some of their quotes.

- *'I feel nervous & excited'*
- *'A bit shy'*
- *'Sad & happy at the same time'*
- *'A bit scared'*
- *'Excited about which new teacher I might be with'*
- *'Excited....new adventure, new people to meet'*
- *'Sad to end my time at John Hampden, I'll miss my teachers (Year 2)'*
- *'I'm excited to move into Year 2'*





# Transition – How can I help my child?

Here are some suggestions about how to prepare your child for starting school or a new class.





# Helping your child to prepare for change

Children may not realise it but they make many transitions every day e.g. from home to town, play activities to a meal or a visit to friends or family.



Remind them of this fact, it will encourage them to know that they already have many of the skills necessary to help them cope with something new.



# Helping your child to prepare for change

Be calm and positive about them starting school and enjoy your child's excitement even if you are anxious about it yourself - children pick up on their parent's feelings very easily and it may lead them to feel worried themselves.







# Helping your child to prepare for change

Remember that children are adaptable and resilient. Sometimes, what seems important to them one minute is forgotten about in the next and there may be certain things that worry you but not your child. Our feelings as adults might possibly be based on own experiences of school as a child.





# A listening ear

Be prepared to listen and chat about the changes ahead, your child may prefer to do this while you are both busy doing a creative activity - side by side rather than an 'interview' style situation.





# A listening ear

Do acknowledge any feelings your child may have even if they don't mirror your own.

Try saying, *'it's only natural to feel nervous'* rather than *'don't be silly, there's nothing to worry about'*.

These feelings are normal, offer reassurance by telling them that others may share the same feelings and that together you can overcome them.





# A listening ear

Your child will choose to ask you questions about starting school or joining a new class at a time that suits them.

These questions are important but if you aren't able to answer them at the time, allow for another opportunity to sit with them to talk about what they have asked you.





# A listening ear

Once they start school, they may not be prepared to answer questions that you ask about their day, straight away.



It may be last thing at night that they choose to chat about events.



# In the holidays



During the holidays, talk through what will happen when your child goes to school. Talk about the journey (a practise run for new starters is a good way to assist with familiarisation).

Watch and talk through the videos and information on the 'Classes page' on the school website, it will familiarise your child with what to expect during their first few days at school.



# In the holidays



Provide your child with opportunities to experience change during the holidays by trying out new activities and visiting different places.

Tell them ahead of time where they are going and what will be happening so that they can mentally prepare.

This should help to minimise challenging behaviour from your child because they should feel more in control of the upcoming situation.





# In the holidays



Arrange play-dates with other families whose children will be going to the same school or class as your child.







# In the holidays



Visit your local library and read books with your child about starting school and share stories that have the theme of change. Littleparchutes.com is one possible website that suggests book titles linked to different themes.





# Encourage independence

Teach your child the importance of being responsible for his or her own belongings.

Tidying up after themselves, doing up buttons & zips etc will help them to manage more independently at school.

Learning how to use cutlery, opening the lid on a water bottle or a lunchbox will help them enormously during lunchtime at school. Trying tasks on their own will also make them feel good about themselves.



'I can do it!'



# Help is at hand

Visit the school website and show your child photos of the key people who will be working with him or her at school.

Why not take your child on the 'virtual tour' of the school so that it remains familiar to them through the holidays.





# Help is at hand

Do seek advice from your child's teacher should you wish to, no query is ever too small and we are here to help.

Mrs Barnes or Mrs Parkinson will happily communicate with you should you have a serious concern.

Jo Spencer (teacher & pastoral support) is also available to speak to parents who have concerns about transition and to those who anticipate that their child might suffer from separation anxiety.





# Organisation

Look at the school website, read through useful items under the 'key information' section and familiarise yourself with the most recent newsletter, these will help you to have a better understanding about life at John Hampden school.

Look on your child's class page to view their timetable and read the termly topic planner to find out about what they will be learning.

Take note of key events coming up in the 'calendar' section; you will be able to share upcoming events with your child before they are due to take place.







# Organisation

Confirm your before or after school care arrangements.

Talk to your child about what will happen if they need to be looked after outside school hours and talk about how they will get there.



childminder



# Routine

Establish and keep routines at home which help prepare for each day in school e.g. homework times, checking timetables, making sure that their reading diary & reading books are in their book bags etc.





# Routine

Try to get your child to school in good time, a calm start enables them to continue in this way and they won't feel hurried or worried about coming into class late.





# Bedtime



Should your child have trouble sleeping or settling during the transitional phase, allow more time in the lead up to bedtime for your child to share their wonderful new experiences and any concerns.

This will provide him or her with the opportunity to talk about their day before they get into bed.

Playing music or a story tape very quietly in the background may serve to offer reassurance.



Seek advice if settling at bedtime becomes an issue.



# Bedtime



A few days before the start of term, try to ensure that your child goes to bed a little earlier.

Once term starts they will tire easily regardless of their age as they experience new routines and experiences.

Planning quieter weekends at the start of term will allow them time to relax and rest.







# What about me?

Be kind to yourself on the first day of term, it is understandable to feel sad or upset after you have said goodbye to your child, particularly if they were crying before you left.

Most children calm down quickly and settle to an activity within a minute or two of you leaving.

Do trust that a member of staff will contact you if your child continues to be tearful.



# What have children said they want from you?

*'Extra hugs'*

*'They could help us to be a bit more independent.'*

*'Mums & Dads to say goodbye to us at the gate in the mornings..... to get us ready.'*



# What have children said that they want from you?

*'They could help me to be a bit more confident.'*

*'Teach you to do laces up.'*

*'They can encourage you to feel happy & confident.... use encouraging words.'*



# What have children said that they want from you?

*'Make sure we have the right uniform.'*

*'Invite friends over that are going to be with you as well as those who are going somewhere else.'*

*'To put our own things in our book bag.'*

*'They can show us photos on the school website.'*