

Rathcoole Primary School and Nursery

"Nurture, Inspire, Flourish"



Transition Policy

Date reviewed	April 2025
Next review date	April 2027

Chair of Board of Governors	<i>Alison Bennington</i>
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Ethos Statement

Rathcoole Primary School and Nursery Unit is more than just a school.

It is a warm, family-focused community where every child is nurtured, supported, and inspired to thrive.

We believe in fostering positive relationships, embracing inclusivity, and creating joyful learning experiences that encourage resilience, kindness, and a lifelong love of learning.

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Our Vision

Our vision is to create an inclusive, nurturing, and inspiring environment where every child feels valued and celebrated for their uniqueness.

We aim to empower pupils to grow into confident, resilient, and compassionate individuals who are ready to make a positive difference in their world.

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1. Our Commitment to Working in Partnership with Others

Rathcoole Primary School and Nursery is committed to ensuring that children in the Early Years get the best possible start in life.

Rathcoole PS and NU is part of the THRiVE Partnership. THRiVE is made up of Sure Start, parent and toddler groups, playgroups, nurseries and schools in Rathcoole and Monkstown.

When children feel personally, socially and emotionally secure, when they feel safe and loved, only then will they be ready to learn.

We all want children and families to move between early years settings with confidence and ease so that there is no disruption to their learning.

We all understand that the professional sharing of information is an essential element of effective transition. We know that without the sharing of information from one setting to another, and between home and school, transition is less likely to be smooth and may become a barrier to learning. We commit to working in partnership with families and all relevant agencies to ensure the best possible start to each child's journey.

Aims of this Policy

This Transition Policy aims to outline the principles and approaches that Rathcoole Primary School and Nursery Unit believe will best support children moving to and settling into their new learning environment.

We recognise that a child-centred and play-based learning environment throughout the Early Years and Foundation Stage is the optimum vehicle for promoting successful transitions and the development of the whole child.

We understand that starting something new can be a stressful time for children and adults alike. Some points of transition e.g. Nursery to Primary 1 can be especially so, due to the change of location, different staff and our preconceptions of what this new setting will be like.

We know that when children are happy and engaged, they are more able to learn.

Therefore, this policy aims to:

- ✓ Promote the smooth transition of children from one setting to another
- ✓ Alleviate potential transition-related stress for children and families
- ✓ Promote the continuity of teaching and learning
- ✓ Encourage you as parents and carers to talk to and visit your new settings

Principles underlying the policy

- ❖ Nurture
- ❖ Inspire
- ❖ Flourish



The 6 Principles of Nurture underpin all that we do. As a nurturing school, we believe that all behaviour is communication.

We view behaviour in a positive way where praise and relationships are fundamental. It is our desire to cultivate in the whole team, an acceptance and recognition of their own decisions, their actions, and consequences.

We feel it is vital that the staff support children's behaviour in a positive manner by upholding the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

To maximise the effectiveness of our policy, parental involvement and support on a continual basis is essential.

As a Nurturing school who implement the Take5 Approach, we believe it should be consistently applied according to the age and stage of development of each pupil. It may look different across each class and Key Stage. A successful transition will support the overall wellbeing of the pupil, staff and family.



Transition Principles

1) Children and their families are at the heart of our work

- All children are unique and learn in different ways at different rates
- Approaches to transition, teaching and learning are based on a research-based practice and a deep understanding of the way that young children learn
- Approaches to transition, teaching and learning move with the needs and interests of the children
- We recognise that some children will settle into their new setting without looking back
- We also recognise that some children will take more time to settle in and we will work with them at their own pace
- Transition programmes will be designed to meet the needs of each child
- Alternative transition arrangements will be based on observation, professional understanding and arranged in collaboration with families

2) Sharing of information is an essential component of effective transition

- The sharing of information prior to a child starting in a new setting will be in cooperation and partnership with parents/carers, existing staff, receiving staff and any other relevant agencies
- Discussions and the collection of information will focus on the whole child and not just child development or academic achievement. For example, it is important for us to learn about your child's routines, interests, family circumstance and relevant medical information alongside any additional needs
- Other relevant information such as social care issues, medical information, special educational needs, children looked after etc. (all compliant with GDPR) will be shared on a 'need to know' basis [Please refer to Privacy Policy and Data Protection Policy for further information].

Effective Transition Helps Children To...



- feel happy, settled and safe



- be highly capable learners and thinkers



- aspire and succeed

- explore every possibility



- show persistence, resilience and

independence



Beginning your Nursery Journey at Rathcoole PSNU

Continuity of Teaching and Learning

- We work closely with local agencies, including Surestart, to ensure that we have detailed information about the children prior to their start at Rathcoole Primary School and Nursery Unit
- Nursery school children and their parents/carers are invited to an induction Stay and Play session in the school where parents/carers can meet the Nursery staff and where the children can familiarise themselves with the new environment
- We encourage families to attend a 1:1 family interview with our Nursery staff. Additional visits can be planned if needed
- Parents and carers will have the opportunity to talk to Nursery staff about their child's interests, strengths, pre-nursery experiences, medical history and general information about the child and family. This enables the staff to plan for the child's needs
- Nursery staff, along with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will meet for professional discussions about the children
- Staff will provide information about the Nursery in a range of ways – videos, handouts, posts on our school communication app Class Dojo and in person.



Starting the new School Year in Nursery

We want the children to be full-time in Nursery as soon as possible but there will always be a gradual build-up to the class staying full-time. It will usually be the end of September before the class is settled enough to stay for the full day but we will always keep this under review and if it is possible to stay for the full day earlier, we will let you know.

Every child will have their own timetable for beginning Nursery. Groups of children may start on different dates. This helps us to settle each child at their own pace and give them the attention they need at this milestone time in their lives. Children who are in nappies or not toilet trained [unless a medical need with supporting information] may only be able to be in nursery for a shorter session, as determined by the school. This is due to staffing levels and ratios and in line with our intimate care policy.

Every step of the settling-in period will be communicated to parents/carers in advance so that they may plan for drop-off and collection. We aim to make settling-in as logistically easy as possible for families without affecting the wellbeing of each child and the whole class overall.



Beginning your Primary 1 Journey at Rathcoole PSNU

Continuity of Teaching and Learning

- We work closely with local nurseries/other settings/home to ensure that we have detailed information about the children prior to their start at Rathcoole Primary School and Nursery Unit.
- New P1 children and their parents/carers are invited to an induction stay and play session in the school where parents/carers can meet the Primary 1 staff and where the children can familiarise themselves with the new environment.
- All children who attend Rathcoole Nursery will have several play sessions in P1 during the summer term so that by the time they start P1 they are very comfortable in our environment.
- Part of our transition programme is to involve all of the nursery children in school events such as the Nativity and World Book Day so that the “main school” is a familiar space and the Foundation Stage staff are familiar, safe adults to them before they start P1.
- We encourage families to attend a 1:1 family interview with the Primary 1 staff. Additional visits can be planned if needed
- Parents and carers will have the opportunity, at a school interview or home visit, to talk to staff about their child’s interests, strengths, nursery and pre-nursery experiences, medical history and general information about the child and family. This enables the staff to plan for the child’s needs
- Nursery and Primary 1 staff, along with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), meet for professional discussions about the children
- Staff will provide information about Primary 1 in a range of ways – videos, handouts, posts on our school communication app Class Dojo and in person

Starting the new School Year in Primary One

In Primary 1, the children will have a gradual build-up over a few weeks before they stay for the full day. We recognise that many of the children may already have been in Nursery for a number of hours each day but starting Primary 1 places different demands on the children and is a brand-new routine for the children to get used to.

Some children may need more time to settle and we will work with them on an individual basis to ensure they settle into school life at their own pace.

Children who are in nappies or not toilet trained [unless a medical need with supporting information] may only be able to be in school for a shorter session, as determined by the school. This is due to staffing levels and ratios and in line with our intimate care policy.

As with our Nursery Unit, we want all children to stay for the full school day as soon as possible and will keep parents/carers informed every step of the way.



Transition to Rathcoole Primary School and Nursery Unit at other times

We are fortunate to have many children transition to Rathcoole PS throughout the academic year (Nursery to P7). The same support will be given with transition as in any other year group.

You will be invited to meet with the Principal and/or Senior Teacher and, if required, the Learning Support Co-ordinator, to see the school and discuss your child's needs.

An agreed transition plan will be implemented and reviewed regularly. This may mean that your child is not in school full time from the start e.g. due to anxiety, a requirement for classroom assistant or for other reasons. This will be discussed with home and a support plan will be put in place.

Children within our Autism Specific Classrooms will also have a bespoke timetable (Please refer to SEN policy and ASC policy)

This helps us to settle each child at their own pace and give them the attention they need at this milestone time in their lives. Every step of the settling-in period will be communicated to parents/carers in advance so that they may plan for drop-off and collection.

Children who are in nappies or not toilet trained [unless a medical need with supporting information] may only be able to be in school for a shorter session, as determined by the school. This is due to staffing levels and ratios and in line with our intimate care policy.

We aim to make settling-in as logistically easy as possible for families without affecting the wellbeing of each child and the whole class overall.



Equal Opportunities

We recognise that for some children and parents, transition can be a particularly stressful period. This may be the case for children with special educational needs, children looked after, children who speak English as an additional language etc.

We will identify those children requiring additional support at an early stage and their receiving teacher will be made aware of this.

The settling-in programme is bespoke for every child and will be dependent on the needs of the whole class, staffing and support available to the children and school.

This should ensure as smooth a transition as possible for every child.

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