

Moving to the outside world and school - Home is where we start from

Attachment can provide a suitable assessment that can support interventions within residential child care and educational settings.

We need to assess if the child has begun to make a primary attachment to an adult and to identify the profile.

At the very least an assessment will need to include the following:

- The child allows a primary carer to take care of all their basic needs.
- The child shows a basic interest in the primary carer – being curious about ‘who they are.’
- There is evidence that there is a ‘preferred’ adult (the difference can be noted)
- The child is beginning to show the ‘first signs of trust.’
- The child is able to make eye contact (if culturally appropriate) with the primary carer
- The child is seeking appropriate forms of physical contact from key and co-workers (for a child this might mean being close, and for a young person it might mean ‘being alongside.’)
- The child is clearly missing ‘something’ when the primary carer is away

The assessment we make ‘at home’ will also include a ‘readiness for school’ and where this is found will also lead us to be able to provide essential material for schools and teachers regarding engagement and learning styles.

Readiness for school

A child will not be able to begin to make the transition into school until 2 major tasks have begun.

Firstly, there must be clear evidence that an attachment to a primary carer has been established.

Secondly the following must also be in evidence:

- The ability to live alongside peers
- Social skills are evident
- Personal care independence
- Generally will respond to adult boundaries
- Can cope emotionally without their primary carer
- Can manage small transitions
- Curiosity about the world and a desire to learn

An environment that promotes these is likely to include

- A focus on relationships
- A focus on language, social and emotional skills, moral development
- Play (especially for teenagers!) as this encourages independence and self-management (remember the play stages = solitary, parallel, group)

Transferable experiences learnt at home useful in school environments

- Trust – from grown ups who have taken time to build a child's trust in them – like Attachment Trust is demonstrated by a grown up and absorbed by a child
- Consistency – from grown ups who are reliable and predictable
- Learning from mistakes – having a resilient sense of self
- Being 'good-enough' – accepting doing different next time
- Transitions – clear routines at start and end of activity - well-designed plans that support steady phased transition at the pace the child can manage successfully. Signal early any transition
- Modelling learning behaviour – what is present when effective learning is occurring.
- Providing the child with emotional language and skills to talk through feelings of feeling 'unsteady' perhaps when encountering difficulties with an activity
- Soothing – things the child likes to do in order to soothe them
- Building self-esteem by recognition of success
- Linking activity to school type situations – colouring in, keeping to the lines, like school rules

Learning that doesn't look like learning

- Weighing
- Recording
- Following a recipe
- Going for a walk and sharing what is being seen, heard
- Giving responsibility for tasks
- Bus journey = handling 'money', clear communication, timetables, behaviour in social spaces, personal safety

Almost anything can become educational

Share what works at home with the school

Create a This is me/Personal Passport

This is the property of the child and they decide what goes in it and with whom they want to share it. It is not public property. If the 'other' person wants another to read it they need to ask for the child's permission.

It contains the things the child wants a school to know - likes/dislikes, do this/don't do this, how I show I am happy, how I show I am getting unhappy, if I start feeling 'unsteady' this is what helps early on/ at later stages

The keyworker and class teacher/ Head of Year need to meet before transition.

The same as for any child.

Think about the phased entry to school – some children needs small steps over half a term, some need full time

Think about how you and the child will get to and from school

Having a routine is good – do the same things everyday,

- Going to school – time, journey, dropping off point, dealing with anxiety. Use motivational/coaching methods.
- During the day – having something to remind them of you
- Collecting – where and when, include how to decompress, talk through situations. Use reflective methods.

School readiness as transition

School readiness includes the readiness of the individual child, the school's readiness for children, and the ability of the family and community to provide optimal support. Existing relationships change and are extended for all participants. Young people move from a setting of 'being' to one of 'doing', where expectations and roles are different. Parents are learning to work with a sociocultural system, school. Schools are engaging with many relationships.

3 components of school readiness

Readiness in the child, defined by:

- Physical well-being and motor development, including health status, growth, and disability;
- Social and emotional development, including turn-taking, cooperation, empathy, and the ability to express one's own emotions;
- Approaches to learning, including enthusiasm, curiosity, temperament, culture, and values;
- Language development, including listening, speaking, and vocabulary, as well as literacy skills, including print awareness, story sense, and writing and drawing processes; and
- General knowledge and cognition, including literacy and numeracy, emotional literacy, spatial relations.

School's readiness for children, ensured by:

- Facilitating smooth transition between home and school, including sensitivity to social and emotional history and current needs;
- Using learning profiles to ensure high-quality instruction, appropriate pacing, and understanding that learning occurs in the context of relationships;
- Demonstrating commitment to the success of every child through awareness of the needs of individual children

Home and community supports contributing to child readiness:

- Those with parenting roles should devote time daily to helping their child learn and should have access to education and support to be an effective 'study skills support person' teacher.

Some things to always be aware of

- Emotional security precedes educational engagement, advancement, achievement and attainment
- School can be therapeutic but it cannot be therapy: Therapy can be educational but it cannot be school
- School introduces a transition from Being to Doing; from Self to Others
- The whole child is affected – think ‘whole child’ = physical, gross motor, fine motor, auditory, language and social emotional
- Cognitive delays or issues are common
- Primary care is essential for healthy cognitive growth – mediates the environment – ‘the world in manageable doses’
- Global delay – fine motor, gross motor, impulsive, low tolerance inattentiveness
- Discrepancy between capacity and performance – as part of their capacity is taken up with emotional sustenance – keeping it at bay or dealing with the incoming overload
- Regulate to learn how to learn – first teach reciprocity – turn taking – PLAY
- Sequencing – cause and effect
- Processing
- Maintain equilibrium - arousal = tension = dissipated focus
- Control – initially dependent on another
- Self-esteem satisfaction by being able to do task offered