Hampshire County Council
Educational Psychology

Guidance for settings on the Transition Partnership Agreement: Supporting Transition

Background

The original Transition Partnership Agreement (TPA) meeting template and guidance was developed in 2017 and it has now been reviewed and replaced by a significantly revised version. The TPA is designed as a process for joint action planning with parents/carers and children as appropriate, to support the transition process. This is usually transition to school but may sometimes be transition to another setting or class. This remains the purpose of completing a TPA.

The TPA is intended to support the process of ensuring that there is a cooperative and child centred approach to meeting a child's needs. It is not intended as a gateway to additional funding. It can form part of the evidence gathered to support a request for an Education, Health and Care assessment when implemented and reviewed over time.

How is the Transition Partnership Agreement different from other plans?

A TPA is not intended to replace other personalised plans where those are working well. The reason for using a TPA is to ensure collaboration and a good transition plan for a child.

What is a Transition Partnership Agreement?

The TPA is a template used to record a meeting. We know that although what is written on a piece of paper does matter, it is people that make a plan work. The success of a TPA or any plan depends on a commitment to a child and their progress, on effective communication and on positive relationships.

Why has it been revised?

The TPA has been revised to respond to changes in practice, especially the development of person-centred approaches. Person centred approaches emphasise choice, growth, constructive fulfilment and principles of equality, empowerment and collaboration. Person centred approaches place the child at the centre of planning and decision making; create a shared vision for the future; identify strengths and support needs; build relationships; develop action plans (with a set review date) and establish accountability and follow up. These are principles at the heart of the legislation on special educational needs and disabilities and are also important principles for planning for transition.

Who has been involved in revising it?

The new TPA has been developed with representatives from Services for Young Children Inclusion Team and Educational Psychologists.

Is it a legal document and will other local authorities recognise it?

The TPA is not a legal document. When a child moves to another local authority, the TPA will form one of the range of documents that will be helpful in planning to meet their needs. When TPAs have been successful it is because they record a clear and accountable plan, based on collaboration, trust and the strength of positive relationships.

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Guidance on using the form

General guidance

- To make a TPA meeting efficient, copies of the form should be sent to parents or carers, so that they can record their thoughts before the meeting.
- As well as parents or carers, someone who knows the child best and has a current responsibility for that child should also complete the form before the meeting.
- For preschool children, their contribution will be recorded on their behalf, based on the parents/carers and practitioners' knowledge about the child
- Staff in a preschool setting can discuss completing the TPA with any other professionals involved with the child (these should be listed on the TPA form as part of background information).
- If a person-centred planning meeting has been held, then the information from that meeting can be transferred to the TPA form.
- Information that has been gathered for another purpose (for example, a one-page profile) can be used as part of the TPA.
- The form is available as a word document. The headings on the form should be personalised with the name of the child. All the headings should be used.
- Part of the form includes a signatories section. Everyone present at the meeting should be asked to sign this section at the time (electronically or handwritten). The setting manager and head teacher should also be asked to sign the TPA to demonstrate their commitment to its implementation.

Specific guidance - please refer to the TPA record form

Section 1 (not numbered on the form):

- Copy and paste a picture of the child to the child's photo box.

Section 2:  **Background information:**

This section could include key information such as family life, a brief history, relevant medical details, settings attended, days/hours attended at the setting, other agencies involved and key adults that are important to the child.

If the child already has a one-page profile (templates can be found here: [One Page Profile - NDTi]) or if their views have already been represented through photographs or other means of recording, then these can be used and attached to the TPA form. Where this is the case, please simply record on the form that this information is attached. This section should be completed before the meeting.

Section 3:  **Strengths and interests:**

This section can be completed before the meeting by both parents/carers and setting staff. It should include information about what the parents/carers and other key adults know and admire about the child. It can include information about what the child enjoys/likes doing and their character strengths on their best day. Think about times when the child is at their happiest/most content: What are they doing? What character/personality strengths do you notice? Note what and who is important to the child.

If the child’s views have already been represented through other means of recording (e.g., through a one-page profile), then these can be used and attached to the TPA form. Where this is the case, please simply record on the form that this information is attached.

Section 4:  **Now:**

This section should also be completed before the meeting. It aims to consider what things are like now, at the present time, for the child. This can help in identifying what might be potential barriers to progress, for example, social and emotional factors, differences with communication, challenges in early learning and play development and physical or sensory concerns. It is helpful to consider what might get in the way of the child feeling happy, learning, interacting or doing what they enjoy. It might be helpful to use the child’s support plan or individual education plan to help inform this section and note what the child is currently working on and what they need support with.

Section 5:  **What’s helping?**

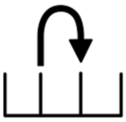
This section can be completed both before and within the meeting and includes information about what is already helping to make a difference for the child e.g., what/who helps the child to be most successful. The following questions may be helpful to consider when completing this section:

- What support is helpful to the child (e.g., visual supports)?
- Are there any strategies/programmes of support that are helping the child to make progress?
- What helps things to go well for the child?
- What helps the child to communicate, interact, learn, focus, regulate, and access their environment?

Section 6:  **What is unhelpful?**

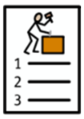
This section can be completed both before and within the meeting and includes information about what barriers (e.g., environmental barriers such as large groups, noise etc.) prevent the child from being their best. The following questions may be helpful to consider when completing this section:

- What is unhelpful to the child?
- What environmental factors affect the child’s communication/interaction, learning, focus, regulation, and access to their environment?
- What might adults do that is unhelpful for the child?
- What strategies have not been successful in supporting the child?

Section 7:  **Next steps**

This section should also be completed before the meeting. In this section it is important to use the time scales that are most appropriate for the child in the circumstances. It must take account of what the child might wish for if they could express their wishes for the future, and the wishes of their parents or carers, and other people working with the child. It would be helpful to consider thinking about a year from now in terms of **positive** and **possible** goals. The following questions may be helpful to consider:

- What are your hopes for the future?
- How would you have liked things to have changed?
- How would you like the child to feel?

Section 8: 

Agreed actions

Based on the goals noted in the next steps section, note during the meeting what actions need to be carried out by when, who is taking responsibility to see that the actions are carried out in the child's present setting and if relevant, who will take responsibility in the setting to which the child is transferring. Please record who needs to know that an action has been carried out.

In every case there should be agreement about:

- What will be said to the child about the plan.
- Who will talk with the key people not at the meeting who need to know what was discussed and what actions were agreed.

Section 9: Signatories and  **review**

The signature sheet is to be signed by everyone present at the meeting before they leave or before copies are circulated. It must be noted when the TPA and by whom the TPA will be reviewed (this should be within three months when it involves a transfer to a new setting).

Copies

Please ensure that everyone working with or supporting the child either receives a copy or knows where a copy is kept. In addition, please consider who else might need a copy to know that transition planning has taken place. There is no requirement to send a copy to the SEN Service.

Guidance prepared by Dr Cerian Hughes and Dr Kirsty Joisce, Hampshire Educational Psychology, March 2025.