



**Transition from Preschool  
to Primary School:  
Audit of Transfer Documentation  
in Ireland**



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An Chomhairle Náisiúnta Curaclaim agus Measúnachta  
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Research conducted on behalf of the  
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

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## Executive Summary

The transition from preschool to primary school is recognised nationally and internationally as a very important time in children's lives. This transition is a priority area of work in the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment's Strategic Plan, 2015-2018. A coordinated information-sharing process between the preschool and primary school is an important way of supporting children making this transition. As part of *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020*, the NCCA was assigned responsibility for developing reporting templates and to make these available online to

*Improve arrangements for the transfer of information about the progress and achievement of students between all schools and state-funded ECCE settings by requiring all settings and schools to provide written reports in standard format to schools and settings to which students transfer (reports to be provided following admission of student to the new school/setting)* (Department of Education and Skills, 2011, p.82).

The Department of Education and Skills (DES), and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) are to make the transfer of information a requirement (DES, 2011, p.82).

As preparation for this work, the NCCA commissioned the following:

- A review of literature nationally and internationally (O'Kane, 2016).
- An audit of policies relating to the transition from preschool to primary school in 13 jurisdictions. The audit looks at data transfer and the transition process. The jurisdictions identified for investigation were Australia (Victoria and Queensland); Canada (Ontario); England; Finland; France; Netherlands; New Zealand;

Northern Ireland; Scotland; Singapore; Sweden; US (Massachusetts); and Wales. For comparison, it was decided to include information on the Irish context also, bringing the total to 14 (O'Kane and Murphy, 2016a).

- An audit of transfer documentation developed in Ireland to support the transition from preschool to primary school. The audit focuses on ten transfer documents that have been developed in a collaborative way and compares and analyses these (O'Kane and Murphy, 2016b).

A lot of work on the transition from preschool to primary school is already happening at a local level in Ireland. To learn from, and build on this the NCCA commissioned an audit of transfer documentation developed in Ireland. The audit focuses on ten transfer templates that have been developed and used in Ireland, and considers these questions:

- What **documentation has been produced and by whom** to transfer information from the preschool to the primary school?
- What **aspects of children's learning and development** are recorded in these? Do they **link to Aistear**?
- To what extent are **children and parents involved** in the process?
- **When** do the documents transfer from the preschool to the primary school?
- Are formal recommendations made as to **how** the templates should be transferred?

The audit has found that in the absence of nationally agreed transition templates or stated policy direction regarding the transition process, a number of stakeholders have taken the initiative and have been involved in developing transition documentation. The audit has identified a range of transfer documents used by individual settings and by private training companies. It has also highlighted a number of research and development projects that happened or are happening at local level across the country. Many of these have

produced templates and resources to support children in making the transition to primary school. Although a dedication to improve the transfer of documentation between preschools and primary schools is apparent through many of these local initiatives, it is also clear that the fragmented nature of this development has seen a duplication of effort by stakeholders.

Consequently, although individual settings have developed their own unique transfer documentation, this audit considers ten specific documents. The ten focused on were chosen for consideration as they were developed following consultation and cross-sectoral cooperation. These documents are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Transfer documentation developed in Ireland

Title	Developed by	Year
<i>Child Snapshot</i>	Centre for Social and Educational Research, Dublin Institute of Technology	2010
<i>All About Me</i>	Sligo County Childcare Committee	2010/2015
<i>An Traein</i>	Forbairt Naíonraí Teoranta	2011
<i>Supporting Transitions for School Success: Personal Education Plan</i>	Dublin North City Children's Services Committee	2011
<i>Happy Talk Transition Flower</i>	Cork City Partnership Ltd (National Early Years Access Initiative/NEYAI)	2012
<i>Parent Child Hub Transition Form</i>	Dublin South West Inner City National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI)	2012
<i>Little Steps to Big School - Preschool to Primary Transfer Document</i>	Louth County Childcare Committee, Dundalk Institute of Technology	2012
<i>Child Snapshot with Developmental Outcomes</i>	Kilkenny County Childcare Committee	2013
<i>Moving on Transition Statement</i>	Donegal County Childcare Committee	2014
<i>I Can Book</i>	Kildare County Childcare Committee	2014

The ten documents were examined under three headings: development process; skill sets covered; and the transfer process. The main findings are outlined under thematic headings.

The term transfer documentation is used to refer to the materials as a whole, that have been developed to transfer information on children's learning and development from the preschool to the primary school in Ireland. Within the projects examined in the audit specific terms may be used to refer to individual items, for example template, booklet, book, workbook. For the most part, the audit uses the specific terminology from within a particular project, but the term transfer documentation is always used to refer to **all of the documents as a whole**.

## Aspects of children's learning and development recorded in the documents

- The skill sets focused on in the transfer documents emphasised language and communication skills, social and emotional skills, independence and self-help skills, thinking skills (cognitive development), and fine and gross motor skills with less focus on pre-academic skills.
- Generally speaking, these align closely to the skill sets identified both in international and in Irish research as being important for children's success during the transition to primary school.
- Some of the documents moved beyond these areas and also considered aspects of learning and development such as left/right-handedness, knowledge of the world, creative development.
- Some of the documentation stressed the importance of agreed interpretations of terminology or skill categories across the sectors – that there should be dialogue within and across the sectors to ensure that everyone is clear on what the terms mean.

## Aistear's visibility in the documentation

- When some of the first templates were being developed, settings were just beginning to become familiar with *Aistear* and links were not made with the framework.
- However, three of the recently developed templates in the audit have explicit links to *Aistear*. These are the *All About Me* template, the *I Can Book*, and the *Moving On Transition Statement*.
- Building links with *Aistear* in transfer templates is critical as it has the potential to support greater coordination and consistency across the preschool and primary school sectors, particularly when supporting children making the transition from one sector to the next.

## Parental and child involvement

- Parents were specifically asked to contribute to four of the ten templates.
- In other cases, although practitioners were primarily responsible for outlining the strengths and capabilities of the child, the templates were completed in collaboration with the parent or, at least, the completed information was discussed with parents.
- Children were asked to contribute to four of the ten templates. This often involved attaching a photograph of themselves or drawing a picture, and including information such as the things they liked best about preschool, or the reasons they were looking forward to primary school.
- The audit questions whether the input of the child in these ways really gives the child the right kind of opportunity to have their voice heard, especially when compared to a tool such as a Child Portfolio which highlights the voice of the child to a greater extent.



## When and how information transfers

The audit investigated if and when information transfers from the preschool to the primary school, and whether formal recommendations were made within the transfer documentation as to how the information should be transferred.

- Some documentation outlines recommended procedures to be followed prior to and/or during transfer, although it is not clear if these recommendations are being followed. For example, where personal transfer of documents is encouraged little information is available on the extent to which this is actually happening.
- There is little, if any, information available on what happens to these documents/ templates once they have reached the primary school.
- In general, the final term of preschool was mentioned as being the most appropriate time to complete and transfer documentation.

## Conclusion

The transfer documentation reviewed in this audit provide practical ways of sharing information about children's progress and development as they transfer from preschool to primary school in Ireland. Consequently, they have a number of implications for policy and practice. Their use affords an opportunity to preschools and primary schools to work in partnership with each other and with families to provide relevant information in support of the child's transition. The importance of cross-sectoral dialogue and co-operation along with the transfer of the templates cannot be overstated.

However, although a commitment to improve the transfer of documentation between preschools and primary schools is apparent through many local initiatives in Ireland, particularly by those in preschool settings, the work to date is somewhat fragmented, leading to a duplication of effort by stakeholders in different parts of the country. Developmental work undertaken by the NCCA in this regard will ensure that there is greater consistency in the information that is shared, and when and how this sharing will happen. It will also be important for the NCCA to explore how a template and the information detailed in it, will be used in primary schools.

The development of a national template to transfer information on children's learning from the preschool to the primary school is a key part of this complex transition process. This audit along with *Transition from Preschool to Primary School*, Research Report No. 19 (O'Kane, 2016) and *Transition from Preschool to Primary School: Audit of Policy in 14 Jurisdictions* (O'Kane and Murphy, 2016a) provide a strong foundation on which the NCCA can build when developing reporting templates for transferring information on children's learning and development as they make the important transition from preschool to primary school in Ireland.



# **Audit of Transfer Documentation in Ireland**

## Introduction

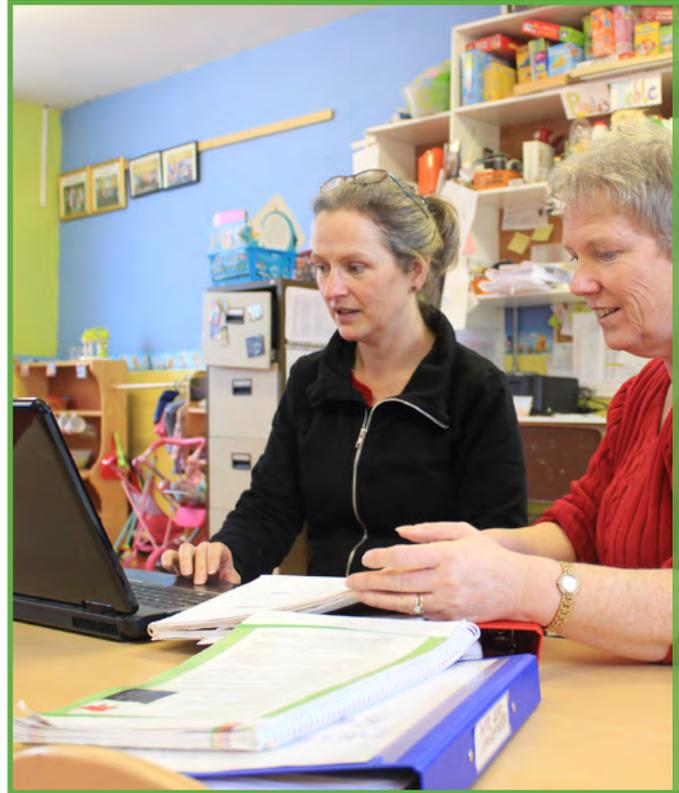
The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has identified the area of transition from preschool to primary school as one of the priorities in its Strategic Plan 2015-2018. A key aspect in support of children making this transition is a coordinated information sharing process between these two educational settings. As part of *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020* (Department of Education and Skills, 2011) the NCCA was assigned responsibility for developing templates suitable for the Irish context for this cohort of children. The remit is as follows:

*Improve arrangements for the transfer of information about the progress and achievement of students between all schools and state-funded ECCE settings by requiring all settings and schools to provide written reports in standard format to schools and settings to which students transfer (reports to be provided following admission of student to the new school/setting)* (Department of Education and Skills, 2011, p.82).

The Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs are to make the transfer of information a requirement (DES, 2011).

As preparation for this work, the NCCA commissioned the following:

- A review of the literature nationally and internationally (O’Kane, 2016).
- An audit of policies relating to the transition from preschool to primary school in 13 jurisdictions. The audit looks at data transfer and the transition process. The jurisdictions identified for investigation were: Australia (Victoria, Queensland); Canada (Ontario); England; Finland; France; Netherlands; New Zealand; Northern Ireland; Scotland; Singapore, Sweden; US (Massachusetts); and Wales. For comparison, it was decided



to include information on the Irish context also, bringing the total to 14 (O’Kane and Murphy, 2016a).

- An audit of documentation developed in Ireland to support the transfer of information on children’s learning and development from the preschool to the primary school. The audit compares and analyses these (O’Kane and Murphy, 2016b).

The aim of this national audit is to consider projects and initiatives within Ireland that support children making the transition from preschool to primary school with a specific focus on transfer of documentation between the two.

The audit addresses the following questions:

- What **documentation has been produced and by whom** to transfer information from the preschool to the primary school?
- What **aspects of children’s learning and development are recorded** in these? Do they **link to Aistear**?
- To what extent are **children and parents involved** in the process?
- **When** does the information transfer from the preschool to the primary school?
- Are formal recommendations made as to **how** the information should be transferred?

The NCCA has prior experience of this type of developmental work. For example, 'The Education Passport' was developed through consultation in support of the transition of children from primary to post-primary schools. The Passport includes the 6<sup>th</sup> Class Report Card, *My Profile* sheet for children to complete, and *My Child's Profile* sheet for parents/guardians to complete, plus where relevant, a Special Educational Needs summary form. From 2014/2015, primary schools have had the opportunity to use the Education Passport when reporting to parents and sharing pupil information with relevant post-primary schools (NCCA, 2014)<sup>1</sup>.

The NCCA now seeks to ensure that templates are developed which demonstrate the achievements of individual children making the transition from the preschool to primary school. In addition, the templates will highlight any supports the child may need. Indeed, the Department of Education and Skills (DES) notes that the current policy, where intervention in terms of support is focused on children in senior infants, should commence earlier. This will necessitate communication and sharing of information about children's strengths and areas requiring support between preschools and primary schools (DES, 2011). Such sharing of information is intended to facilitate the progression of children who require additional support, and ensure a clear progression between the different stages of children's learning and development for *all* children making this transition.

In Budget 2016 a new initiative, *Supporting Access to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme for Children with a Disability* (Inter Departmental Group Report, 2015) was announced to enable children with special educational needs in Ireland to participate in the state-funded 'free' preschool year in mainstream settings alongside their peers. There is a 7-level framework of support ranging from universal supports to highly

targeted ones based on the needs of the individual child. As many young children don't have a formal diagnosis when they start preschool, the 7-level programme doesn't rely on diagnosis, but focuses on children's developmental level, their abilities and their needs. As part of the framework, a template called an *Access and Inclusion Profile* has been developed to ensure as many children as possible can access mainstream preschool provision. All the information including a copy of the profile is available at [www.preschoolaccess.ie](http://www.preschoolaccess.ie) The profile takes a strengths-based approach and is completed by both the parent and practitioner. *Better Start, the National Early Years Quality Development Service* established in 2014 to bring an integrated approach to developing quality in early childhood care and education for children from birth to six years in Ireland, has been given responsibility for many aspects of the framework including the development of the *Access and Inclusion Profile* as well as supporting preschool staff through a team of 40 newly appointed inclusion specialists. The Profile will be an important point of reference for the NCCA's work on developing a template for the transfer of information on children's learning and development as they make the transition to primary school.



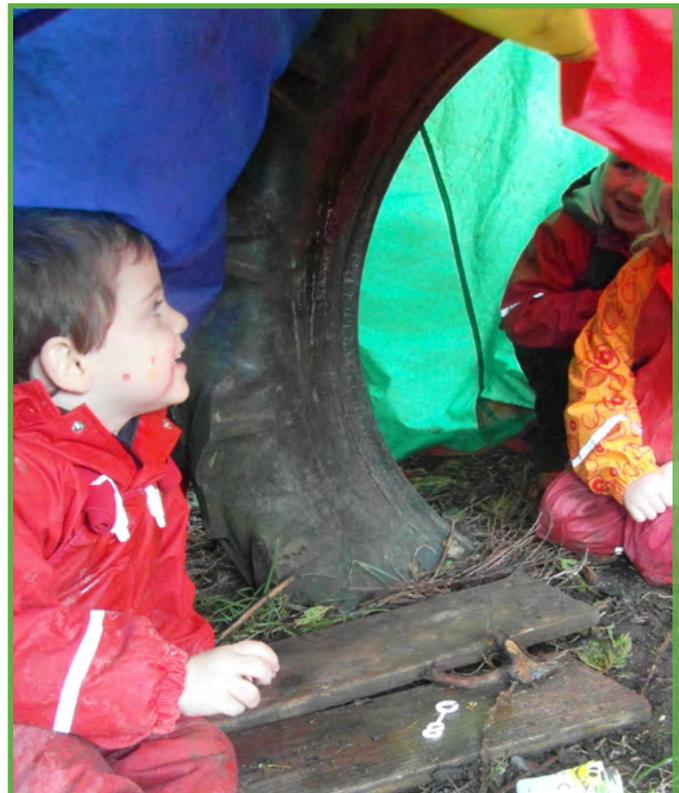
<sup>1</sup> Post-primary schools have responsibility for initiating the pupil information transfer. They send a written request for the children's report cards to the relevant primary schools once enrolment in the post-primary school has been confirmed by his/her parent(s)/guardian(s).

## Background to transfer of documentation between preschools and primary schools

There is an increasing focus by various stakeholders on communication, continuity and coordination between preschools and primary schools (O’Kane and Hayes, 2010). With this in mind, the focus has moved from providing information for parents and guardians, to also making connections across the two sectors; including the transfer of relevant information about children making the transition. In the absence of nationally agreed transition templates or stated policy direction regarding the transition process, a number of stakeholders have taken the initiative and have been involved in developing transition documentation. Some County Childcare Committees have been involved in developing transfer documentation for use in their counties. Educational institutions such as Dublin Institute of Technology and Dundalk Institute of Technology have conducted research projects involving the development of transfer documents. Partnerships involving organisations such as those in the National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI)<sup>2</sup> have also developed transition projects which involved developing transfer documents.

This audit has also identified a range of instruments developed by individual settings and by private training companies. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some providers have taken documents developed through the various research projects, and adapted them for their own individual use. This has resulted in a considerable range of documents for the transfer of information from preschool to primary being available nationwide. Consequently, although individual settings have developed their own unique transfer documentation, this audit considers ten specific documents. The ten focused on were chosen

for consideration as they were developed following consultation and cross-sectoral cooperation. The audit notes that similar projects are underway around the country at present but does not include these as they are just beginning, for example, those in Dublin, Waterford and Galway/Roscommon. The ten focused on here are outlined in Table 1. Contact information for each of the templates and, where available, links to templates which can be found online are included.



The term transfer documentation is used to refer to the materials as a whole, that have been developed to transfer information on children’s learning and development from the preschool to the primary school in Ireland. Within the projects examined in the audit specific terms may be used to refer to individual items, for example template, booklet, book, workbook. For the most part, the audit uses the specific terminology from within a particular project, but the term transfer documentation is always used to refer to **all of the documents as a whole**.

<sup>2</sup> The National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI) was a four-year initiative [2011-2014] designed to improve access to and practice within early years settings through interagency collaborations in 11 projects in areas of disadvantage in Ireland.

Table 1: Transfer documentation developed in Ireland

Number	Title	Developed by	Year
1.	<i>Child Snapshot</i>	Centre for Social and Educational Research, Dublin Institute of Technology Contact: Dr Mary O’Kane <a href="mailto:Maryok.oakleigh@gmail.com">Maryok.oakleigh@gmail.com</a>	2010
2.	<i>All About Me</i>	Sligo County Childcare Committee Contact: Viola Craig, Sligo CCC <a href="mailto:viola@sligochildcare.ie">viola@sligochildcare.ie</a>	2010/2015
3.	<i>An Traein</i>	Forbairt Naíonraí Teoranta Contact: Máire Mhícmhathuna, Dublin Institute of Technology <a href="mailto:maire.mhicmhathuna@dit.ie">maire.mhicmhathuna@dit.ie</a> An Traein is available for download at: <a href="http://www.gaelscoileanna.ie/assets/An-Traein-P%C3%A1ip%C3%A9ar-C%C3%BAtra.pdf">http://www.gaelscoileanna.ie/assets/An-Traein-P%C3%A1ip%C3%A9ar-C%C3%BAtra.pdf</a>	2011
4.	<i>Supporting Transitions for School Success: Personal Education Plan</i>	Dublin North City Children’s Services Committee [Project Completed]	2011
5.	<i>Happy Talk Transition Flower</i>	<i>Cork City Partnership Ltd</i> (National Early Years Access Initiative/ NEYAI) Contact: Aoife Doyle, Cork City Partnership <a href="mailto:adoyle@partnershipcork.ie">adoyle@partnershipcork.ie</a> Happy Talk Transition Flower is available for download at: <a href="http://corkcitypartnership.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/transition-flower.pdf">http://corkcitypartnership.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/transition-flower.pdf</a>	2012
6.	<i>Parent Child Hub Transition Form</i>	Dublin South West Inner City National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI) Contact: Sharon Moore, Barnardos <a href="mailto:sharon.moore@barnardos.ie">sharon.moore@barnardos.ie</a> Barbara Gavagan, Fatima Children’s Day Care Centre <a href="mailto:fcdc@eircom.net">fcdc@eircom.net</a>	2012
7.	<i>Little Steps to Big School - Preschool to Primary Transfer Document</i>	Louth County Childcare Committee, Dundalk Institute of Technology Contact: Claire Woods <a href="mailto:claire@louthchildcare.ie">claire@louthchildcare.ie</a> Little Steps to Big School is available for download at: <a href="http://www.louthchildcare.ie/images/Transition_Programme_Transfer_Document.pdf">http://www.louthchildcare.ie/images/Transition_Programme_Transfer_Document.pdf</a>	2012
8.	<i>Child Snapshot with Developmental Outcomes</i>	Kilkenny County Childcare Committee Contact: Gretta Murphy <a href="mailto:gretta@kkccc.ie">gretta@kkccc.ie</a> The Child Snapshot with Developmental Outcomes is not currently available for download, but it will be available in near future at: <a href="http://www.kkccc.ie/">http://www.kkccc.ie/</a>	2013

9.	<i>Moving on Transition Statement</i>	Donegal County Childcare Committee  Contact: Avril McMonagle <a href="mailto:avrilmcmonagle@donegalchildcare.com">avrilmcmonagle@donegalchildcare.com</a> Moving on is available for download at: <a href="http://www.donegalchildcare.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Moving-on-Transitions-Statement.pdf">http://www.donegalchildcare.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Moving-on-Transitions-Statement.pdf</a>	2014
10.	<i>I Can Book</i>	Kildare County Childcare Committee  Contact: Emma Berney, Kildare Children and Young People's Services Committee <a href="mailto:emmab@countykildarelp.ie">emmab@countykildarelp.ie</a> Marie Dowdall, Kildare CCC <a href="mailto:marie@kccc.ie">marie@kccc.ie</a>	2014

Most of the research projects which resulted in the development of transfer documentation are broader transition projects, of which the template is but one element. This is important to note as both are necessary – the documentation and the broader transitions project. The majority of projects involve meetings between the preschools and primary schools, where the sectors work together, along with parents, to develop the documentation and to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible for children. Many of the projects encourage further liaison between the two sectors over and above the creation of the transfer documentation. Indeed, the importance of cross-sectoral dialogue and co-operation as part of the development process is stressed in many of the project reports. However, as many of them have now ceased, it is unclear if this communication or coordination continues after the life of the individual projects. Nonetheless, there is a clear emphasis in these transitions research projects on the importance of transferring information on children's learning and development as they move to primary school.

The ten templates identified are examined below under the following three headings:

- development process
- skill sets covered
- transfer process.

Comparisons between documents in terms of skill sets and transfer process are then made under a number of thematic headings. Finally, conclusions are drawn about the impact of such transfer documentation.

## Ten transfer templates developed in Ireland

### 1. *The Child Snapshot*

**Development process:** *The Child Snapshot* for transfer of information between preschools and primary schools was the earliest template that was formally identified in the audit of transfer documentation. It was developed as part of a research project carried out in Ballymun, Dublin by the Centre for Social and Educational Research in the Dublin Institute of Technology (O’Kane and Hayes, 2010). *The Child Snapshot* was developed by a cross-sectoral group. The document was positive in approach, focusing on the achievements of the child rather than working from a deficit model. It was designed to capture the rich knowledge base developed at preschool level, and to facilitate the efficient transfer of this information to the primary school. The development process began with an investigation by questionnaire followed by focus groups from both preschools and primary schools which focused on language usage/terminology. Skill sets were discussed, broken down, and definitions agreed. Surprisingly high levels of agreement emerged. Subsequent evaluation of the *Child Snapshot* was overwhelmingly positive, both in terms of the process of development, and in terms of the transfer of information (O’Kane and Hayes, 2010). *The Child Snapshot* was recommended for wider use as a template to improve coordination and consistency in terms of passing information from the preschool to the primary school.

**Skill sets covered:** The template documents the following skill sets: language and communication skills; social and emotional skills; independence and self-help skills; thinking skills (cognitive development); fine and gross motor skills.

**Transfer process:** The templates are completed on two occasions by the preschool practitioner, importantly with the prior consent and involvement of the parents. First, the templates are completed early in Spring to assess progress at that point in time. This provides an opportunity for practitioners to highlight concerns about a child early in the year, ensuring that there is time to work on individual skill sets to help prepare the children for primary school. The templates are completed again towards the end of the last term in preschool. They are transferred by the Preschool Manager to each primary school, personally to the Infant Teacher or Principal, in June. This personal contact is very important in terms of communication and coordination. The information included in the completed templates can be useful for the Principal with regard to planning in June prior to school start, but is most important for the junior infant teacher in September.

## 1a. Adaptations of *The Child Snapshot*

**Development process:** *The Child Snapshot* was then used by the Northside Partnership Preparing for Life Group, Darndale, Dublin. This new version, also called the *Child Snapshot*, was an adaptation of the original template with minor amendments made by the stakeholders working on this new project.

*The Child Snapshot* was also used by Dublin North West Childcare Resource Service (DNWCRC) linked to Dublin City Childcare Committee and the Ballymun Whitehall Area Partnership, Dublin who worked with childcare providers in Ballymun, Finglas, Whitehall, Santry and Glasnevin.

Both of these projects used a very similar approach to that outlined in the original *Child Snapshot*.

**Skill sets covered:** The template documents the following skill sets: language and communication skills; social and emotional skills; independence and self-help skills; thinking skills (cognitive development); fine and gross motor skills.

**Transfer process:** The transfer process for these versions of the *Child Snapshot* is very similar to that outlined in the original. However, unlike the original project, these projects do not specify that the transfer of the template to the school setting should take place in person. This indicates a lack of consistency in the transfer process; some settings report posting the templates to schools, others report leaving the form with parents to transfer to the school settings (Personal Correspondence, November 2015).

## 2. *An Traein*

**Development process:** Stiúrthoirí naíonraí (practitioners in Irish-medium preschools) and muinteoirí gaelscoileanna (teachers in Irish-medium primary schools) attended research seminars hosted by Gaelscoileanna Teoranta, Na Naíonraí Gaelacha and Forbairt Naíonraí Teoranta (Irish language organisations) to consider the transition process from the naíonra (Irish-medium preschool) to the gaelscoil (Irish-medium primary school). The aim was to develop guidelines on the best way to help the child make the transition to primary school. This was the first piece of research in Ireland on this transitional process within gaelscoileanna. Both preschools and primary schools stressed the importance of continuity between the two settings, so that the gaelscoil could build on the foundations laid in the naíonra. One aspect which would be helpful, as noted by the participants, was the transfer of information on the child from the naíonra to the gaelscoil, with the consent of the parents/guardians. *The Child Snapshot* (O’Kane and Hayes, 2010) was used as a basis for this.

A booklet called ‘*An Traein: ag Aistriú ón Naíonra go dtí an Bhunscoil. Eolas agus Moltaí do Stiúrthoirí Naíonraí agus do Mhúinteoirí Gaelscoileanna*’ was published in 2011 by *Gaelscoileanna Teoranta* (Mhic Mhathúna, 2011). An Irish-medium transition process was outlined in the booklet which was in Irish except for the *Child Snapshot* Template which was in English. In 2015, a bilingual version of *An Traein* was made available and included the *Child Snapshot* in both English and Irish.

**Skill sets covered:** The template documents the following skill sets: language and communication skills; social and emotional skills; independence and self-help skills; thinking skills (cognitive development); fine and gross motor skills, in the same format as the *Child Snapshot*. However, the template is extended to include information on the child’s abilities with the Irish language. An optional section for the child to include information on him/herself is also included.

**Transfer process:** The stiúrthoirí naíonraí are advised on how to complete the transfer template and can adapt the *Snapshot* to suit their own context. As part of the transfer process it is suggested that (with prior consent of the parents/guardians) a meeting be held between the stiúrthoirí naíonraí and the muinteoirí to discuss the children’s strengths and interests. The naíonra is also encouraged to invite the infant teacher to visit during a preschool session to see the children in their setting.

### 3. *All About Me*

**Development process:** In 2008 Sligo Social Services in conjunction with Sligo County Childcare Committee and three other agencies undertook a pilot initiative in relation to the transition of children from preschool to primary school. As part of this initiative, Sligo County Childcare Committee developed the *All About Me* workbook (Sligo CCC, 2010/2015). This was designed as a template to assist in recording the development and unique abilities and needs of the child. It is 35-pages long and includes a number of different templates. The workbook has recently been revised and the updated version (2015) includes a colour-coded box for practitioners to indicate the relevant *Aistear* theme the page of the workbook relates to. Practitioners can also add the *Aistear* aim and learning goal if they so wish.

The workbook, which is to be introduced by the practitioner/s during the child's first term in preschool, focuses on all aspects of the child's development through the activities on offer within the preschool. However, it is recommended that most of the workbook be completed in the second half of the year. The workbook is kept in the preschool and passed on to the primary school which the child will be attending. The publication is aimed at supporting communication between preschools and primary schools. It can also be used as a book of memories for parents, the intention being that the workbook would be returned to parents after initial use by the primary school.

**Skill sets covered:** The workbook starts with a section where the child can tell the reader a little about themselves, their feelings and their family. The preschool practitioner completes information on skill sets under different headings including: gross motor skills; independence skills; things the child likes; language skills. There are also sections covering colours, shapes, body parts (in English and Irish), stories (in English and Irish), nursery rhymes, and matching skills. In addition, there is space for the practitioners and parents/carers to include other information that they want to share.

**Transfer process:** Before they start working with the template practitioners attend a training course on the importance of transitions, and on how to complete the workbook. The recommended procedure for transfer to the primary school is included. The Final Report of the Transition Project advises

*With the parent's permission, this will then be passed on with the child to primary school where it can be used by the infant teacher as a communication tool to ease the transition for the child. This will then be passed back to the parent before the end of the child's first year in Primary School – and will be signed off by the teacher (Sligo County Childcare Committee, n.d., p.5).*

#### 4. *Supporting Transitions for School Success: Personal Education Plan*

**Development process:** In 2011, Dublin North City Children's Services Committee (D.N.C.C.S.C.) conducted a pilot research project called *Supporting Transitions for School Success*. This was an interagency collaboration led by the Health Service Executive (HSE) focused on the need to identify and meet the needs of all children at key developmental points. One of the aims of the project was to assess children leaving preschool and making the transition to primary, in order to identify any concerning behaviours before they develop into more serious difficulties during the point of transition. For this reason, the template focused on children who might be at risk of experiencing a difficult transition. Parental consent forms, audit templates and referral forms were developed and completed by preschools and parents, and an appropriate *Personal Education Plan* (PEP) was developed for each child.

**Skill sets covered:** The project used a 'Personal Education Planning' approach with the aim of enhancing: language and communication skills; social and emotional skills; independence and self-help skills; thinking skills; fine and gross motor skills; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; creative development. For each of the above areas space for any general comments was available on the template. In addition, practitioners were asked to identify any specific areas of concern.

**Transfer process:** As the project had a focus on children who might be at risk of experiencing a difficult transition, and the transfer of information for those children, the focus was on children identified as presenting with behaviours of concern. The small scale study featured children having high-end needs. Children's identified needs, strengths and difficulties were discussed and prioritised, and actions undertaken or services provided to meet these needs. Although it was focused on the needs of children who might be at risk, the preschools, schools and HSE professionals who took part in the project reported that the template was suitable for a wider audience (Dublin North City Children's Services Committee, 2011).

## 5. *Happy Talk Transition Flower*

**Development process:** Cork City Partnership Limited managed *Happy Talk*, one of eleven National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI) projects. *Happy Talk* was designed to improve the language and learning skills of children aged from birth to 6 years in the Glen and Mayfield areas of Cork City (Kenny and Thorne, 2012). One aspect of the project was a focus on the transition from preschool to primary school. *Happy Talk* produced a transition template, the *Transition Flower*, which was used by preschool staff to share information on the child with the parents and junior infant teacher.

**Skill sets covered:** The template documents individual children's achievements across a range of areas: self-help skills; motor skills; thinking skills; social and emotional skills; language and communication skills. The language and communication skills relate specifically to the areas supported by the *Happy Talk* Project. The *Transition Flower* also highlights areas for the child to develop, and provides preschool staff and parents with an opportunity to identify concerns, which would be helpful for the junior infant teacher to know. The Second Interim Project Report noted some issues regarding completion of the *Transition Flower*. Firstly, preschool practitioners reported being *concerned about recording anything that could be perceived as negative by the parents* (Cork City Partnership Ltd, 2012, p.28). These concerns were echoed by the junior infant teachers who highlighted a concern that the documentation was presenting an exaggerated picture of the children's ability. In order to address this issue, support was provided to preschool staff to clarify the purpose of the template and the *Transition Flower* was amended to include a section highlighting areas that the child had yet to develop. The Final Evaluation Report noted that feedback on the *Transition Flower* in the final round of consultations was that it is working very well (Cork City Partnership, 2014).

**Transfer process:** Preschool practitioners complete the *Transition Flower* for each individual child moving to junior infants. The *Transition Flower* is based on what practitioners observe of the child during the year. Cork City Partnership report that the completed *Transition Flowers* are transferred in different ways by different preschools. Some fill out the template and give it to parents. Some get consent from parents and send a copy home and to the school the child will attend. Others arrange a meeting with the school and/or parents to talk about the children and support the transition process. The Partnership is promoting the latter two options (Personal Correspondence, 2016).

## 6. *Parent Child Hub Transition Template*

**Development process:** In 2011, the Dublin South West Inner City consortium, another of the National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI) projects, considered the area of transitions under the Parent and Child Hub Stepping Stones Transitions Programme. This was part of the *Dublin South West Inner City Integration of Service and Continuum of Care Demonstration Model for children birth to six years* (Dublin South West Inner City NEYAI, n.d.). One of the objectives of that project was to support transitions from preschool to primary school. A transition working group was formed, which consisted of preschool practitioners and primary school teachers. The aim of the group was to facilitate smooth transitions for children using an interagency model. It was decided at the consortium that staff, rather than managers would sit on the working group to try ensure that the transitions programme would become embedded in services, as staff would take ownership of it. The project involved resources for preschools to use to support children prior to transition, school visits and parent talks. Another aspect of the project was the use of a *Parent Child Hub Transition Template* which was used to transfer information on children's learning and development from the preschool to the primary school.

**Skill sets covered:** The template covered the following areas: language, literacy and communication; social and emotional skills; independence and self-help skills; thinking skills; fine and gross motor skills. Any other relevant information which might help support the child's transition to primary school was also included, for example, speech and language referrals, under 5's needs assessment, dietary requirements, and details of other siblings/family in school.

**Transfer process:** No formal process for transfer of the template is outlined. The final review of the Parent and Child Hub Model (Kelleher, 2014) notes a recommendation that the template be forwarded to the school in June/July in order to help the teacher to best support the child with his or her transition (p.21). Although it is difficult to assess engagement with the process following completion of the project, it is clear that the project did establish a transfer process from the preschool service to the primary school during the project.

## 7. *Little Steps to Big School – Preschool to Primary Transfer Document*

**Development process:** Louth County Childcare Committee (2012) worked with students of Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT) on a programme called *Little Steps to Big School*, a collaborative action between Louth County Childcare Committee, DKIT and Louth Leader Partnership. This project produced, a range of resources to be used in preschools and primary schools to support children making the transition. These included, dolls dressed in school uniforms, jigsaws, snap cards, and a DVD. Training on the use of the resources was provided to preschools. A guidance toolkit on developing customised resources was also produced and preschools received a small bursary to support this.

The project also involved the development of a transfer template called, the *Preschool to Primary Transfer Document*. *The Little Steps to Big School – How to Booklet* (Louth County Childcare Committee, 2012b) notes that the template is used to provide valuable information about the child, which might otherwise take some months to be noticed or picked up by the teacher in a large classroom situation. The transfer document is available at no charge to preschool providers via Louth County Childcare Committee.

**Skill sets covered:** The template covers the following areas: speech and language skills; social skills; social and emotional development, classroom skills (self-help and independence skills); pre-academic skills.

**Transfer process:** The template is signed by the parent and passed on to the school with the consent of the parent. No formal recommendation is made as to how the transfer should take place – whether it should be handed over personally or posted, nor is a specific point in time for transfer recommended.

## 8. *Child Snapshot with Developmental Outcomes*

**Development process:** Kilkenny County Childcare Committee and Kilkenny Education Centre together started a transitions project during 2013-14, with the aim of smoothing the transition between preschool and primary school. Specifically, the project hoped to support and facilitate preschool practitioners and infant class teachers, while also involving parents in a meaningful way in the transition process. Building closer links between preschools and primary schools to ensure the continuation of holistic experiences for children was identified as being important to the process. During the course of the project some challenges in the transition process were identified. These included the fact that there was no obligatory collaboration between preschools and primary schools; poor communication existed between preschools and schools; there are no institutional or standardised frameworks/guidelines for the transfer process (Ruth and Murphy, 2013). The project noted the importance of a smooth transition plan in terms of improving a child's engagement as an active learner in the new environment (Ruth and Murphy, 2014). The project began with a questionnaire as part of a data gathering process aimed at researching school readiness and current transition practices from preschool to primary school. Following that, the design of a workshop and resource pack involving preschool practitioners, infant teachers and parents commenced. The pack included a transfer template based on the *Child Snapshot* (O'Kane and Hayes, 2010).

**Skill sets covered:** As part of the process the project adapted a version of the *Child Snapshot* (O'Kane and Hayes, 2010) and added new sections to be completed by the family and the child. The template also includes a section identifying three developmental outcomes for each child. The preschool practitioners are advised to gain consent for the transfer of the templates early in the year, and to conduct observations to help in completing the template.

**Transfer process:** Practitioners initially work on the template and then meet with parents to finalise it. They are encouraged to meet with the primary schools and to personally hand over the information. No specific timeline is proposed for handover. This project is on-going.

## 9. *Moving On Transition Statement*

**Development process:** Donegal County Childcare Committee (DCCC, 2014) developed a Transition Statement as part of the Professional Pedagogy Project, another of the National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI) projects. The template called *Moving On Preschool to Primary School Transition Statement* aimed to summarise information gathered about the child's learning through day-to-day activities, conversations, observations and interactions.

Development of the *Statement* was informed by practitioners, parents, and the children themselves. The aim was to build on the relationship between preschools and primary schools by supporting the consistent transfer of information.

A pilot Transitions CPD programme was rolled out to NEYAI participants during 2014/15. Following this, DCCC secured additional funding to extend the training to other preschools across Donegal. As a result 70% of all preschools in the county participated in transitions CPD. Each CPD programme consisted of 2 x 2.5 hour CPD sessions with a follow-up practical implementation visit carried out by a member of the DCCC Team. The *Educators Guide* publication was used to shape the content of the CPD sessions where participants learned about strengths-based writing techniques and framing learning progress under the four themes of *Aistear*.

The *Moving On Transitions* element has now been embedded in DCCC's 10 week *Building Pictures of Learning* training programme aimed at supporting meaningful assessment for early learning and development. The *Moving On Transitions Statement* is only one component of the completed *Learning Journey Portfolio* compiled for each child over the preschool period.

**Skill sets covered:** The *Transition Statement* is intended to focus on the children's unique motivations, strengths, attitudes, skills, knowledge and understanding, and learning dispositions linked to *Aistear's* four themes. A summary of the information contained within a child's Individual Education Plan should also be included, if applicable.

Sections are included for the voice of the family, and the voice of the child. The parent section includes general questions plus a section for any additional supports the child is getting. A *Child* section is included where the adult can scribe for the child regarding what he/she likes best in preschool and what he/she is looking forward to. It is also possible to attach the child's drawing.

**Transfer process:** The Educator's Handbook for *Moving On* does not provide an outline of the process or timeline for physically transferring the document to the primary school system.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that some transition statements are handed on from parents to the primary school, and it should be noted that transfer of information happens only at the discretion of the parent.

## 10. The *I Can Book*

**Development process:** In 2014, Kildare Children’s Services Committee in conjunction with Kildare County Childcare Committee undertook the *Newbridge Junior Transition Pilot Project* (Berney, 2014a, 2014b). The aims of the project included strengthening the relationship and enhancing communication between preschools and primary schools. In order to do this the *I Can Book* was developed to provide a standardised way of transferring information about children at the point of transition. The purpose of the book was to capture and document the skills the child has gained by the final term of preschool. Feedback received as part of the evaluation process was overwhelmingly positive, both in terms of the book itself, and participation in the development process (Berney, 2014a). The book was updated in 2015 following consultation and one of the changes involved a regrouping of skill sets under *Aistear’s* themes. The guidance document for the book was also updated at this point.

**Skill sets covered:** The *I Can Book* commences by identifying three positive things about the child (*The three positive words that best describe me are...*). It then outlines the three things the child likes to do most at preschool. As noted above, the original book, updated in 2015, now links the skill sets to *Aistear’s* themes of *Well-being* (emotional development; self-help skills; fine and gross motor skills); *Identify and Belonging* (social development); *Communicating* (speech and language development) and *Exploring and Thinking* (cognitive development). Space has also now been included for parents to add their comments.

The book includes an *Overall Comment* section, which is intended to be a brief narrative summary based on the picture of the child that emerges when the areas of development are viewed as a whole. *This is an opportunity to highlight the positive areas of achievement for the child and suggest areas where there is still room for learning* (Berney, 2016, p.2).

**Transfer process:** The *I Can Book* is completed in June in order to highlight the skills that the child has gained by the final term of preschool (Berney, 2016). With the consent of the parent, it is shared with the primary school to support the child’s transition into junior infants. The original *I Can Book* is sent home, and it is suggested that the preschool either posts or hand-delivers a copy of the completed and signed *I Can Book* to the primary school. It can also be scanned and emailed to the school (as a password-protected document) or saved on a memory stick (USB) that is given to the school.

Table 2: Overview of information in the templates

Name of template	Language and communication skills	Social and emotional skills	Independence skills	Thinking skills	Fine and gross motor skills	Opportunity for child to contribute	Opportunity for parent to contribute	Linked to Aistear	Space for additional notes
1. Child Snapshot	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓
2. An Traein	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
3. All About Me	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Supporting Transitions for School Success: Personal Education Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓
5. Happy Talk Transition Flower	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓
6. Parent Child Hub Transition Form	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓
7. Little Steps to Big School	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
8. Child Snapshot with Developmental Outcomes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
9. Moving On Statement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
10. I Can Book	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓

## Comparison and analysis of transfer documentation

In the following section comparisons between the templates are made in terms of skill sets and the transfer process under a number of thematic headings. These headings are aspects of children's learning and development recorded, interpretation of terminology, visibility of *Aistear*, parental and child involvement, when and how information travels.

### Aspects of children's learning and development recorded in the documents

Generally speaking, an emphasis was noted in the documents on the following categories:

- language and communication skills
- social and emotional skills
- independence and self-help skills
- thinking skills (cognitive development)
- fine and gross motor skills.

This is not surprising as both international research (Brooker, 2008, Hatcher, Nuner and Paulsel, 2012) and research within the Irish context (O'Kane, 2007; O'Kane and Hayes, 2010; UCD Geary Institute, 2012) have identified these general areas as ones that are particularly important to children's success during the transition to primary school. Some of the documentation moved beyond these areas to consider aspects such as knowledge of the world; creative development; left/right-handedness. Some of the more recent documents link to *Aistear* and refer to things like learning dispositions.

### Interpretation of terminology

The interpretation of terminology or skill categories is important to consider in the transition process. *The Child Snapshot* was one of the few projects to mention a consideration of the difference in terminology, and possible different meanings used by the preschools

and primary schools, during the development process.

During the audit of the skill sets covered in the documents, it was noted that differing judgements were made at times as to the area of development to which particular skills would be classified. For example, skills such as 'express my wishes' and 'follow one step directions' were classified either as social skills or as communication skills. Again, skills such as 'naming objects' or 'information recall' were classified either as communication skills or as cognitive skills. Clearly, a transfer document should build on the understanding between preschools and primary schools by supporting the consistent transfer and interpretation of information. A full consideration of definitions of, and within skill sets needs to be undertaken, and agreed by both sectors in order for that to happen.

### *Aistear's* visibility in the templates

When some of the early templates were developed, settings were just beginning to become familiar with *Aistear* and did not make links with the framework. However, links to *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009) are becoming more visible in some of the recently produced transfer documents, for example the *Moving On Transition Statement* (2014) produced by Donegal County Childcare Committee and the *I Can Book* (2014) produced by Kildare County Childcare Committee and the Kildare Children and Young People's Services Committee. The *All About Me* booklet (2010/2015) developed by Sligo County Childcare Committee has also recently been updated to include spaces for connecting to *Aistear's* themes on each page of the workbook.

Building links with *Aistear* in transfer documentation is critical as *Aistear* (2009) has the potential to support greater coordination and consistency between the preschool and primary sectors for children making the transition from one sector to the next (O'Kane, 2015).



### Parental and child involvement

An important aspect of the audit was to discover the extent to which parents and children were involved in the transfer of documentation. The audit reveals that parents were asked to contribute formally to four of the ten documents. These four were:

- *Child Snapshot with Developmental Outcomes*
- *Moving On Statement*
- *All About Me*
- *I Can Book*.

Information requested covered questions such as: *What is your child's attitude to starting school? How do you think your child will adjust to the primary school? Is there anything that might help your child settle? Any changes to family circumstances that might affect your child's transition?* An option to share whether the child has had an assessment or received intervention from an Occupational Therapist; Psychologist; Speech and Language Therapist was also included in some. The *All About Me*

and the *I Can Book* left space for an optional general comment from parents. However, in some of the other documents it was noted that parents should be involved in the process of completing the documentation. So, although the practitioners were primarily responsible for outlining the strengths and capabilities of the child, often this was completed in collaboration with the parent. If they were not directly involved in completing the documentation, it was recommended that the information was discussed with parents. Also, as most parents were asked to sign a consent form for the transfer of the information they may have viewed the information at that point in time.

Children were involved in four of the ten documents. These four were:

- *An Traein*
- *All About Me*
- *Child Snapshot with Developmental Outcomes*
- *Moving on Statement*.

This involvement often included attaching a photograph of the child, drawing a picture, or providing information such as the things they liked best about preschool, or the reasons they were looking forward to school. It can be questioned whether the input of the child in these ways really gives the child the opportunity to have their voice heard. Indeed, during the O'Kane and Hayes (2010) project it was decided that such inclusion would merely pay lip service to real child involvement and so a space for the child's input was not included. Instead, something like a Child Portfolio might be a more worthwhile tool to transfer information highlighting the voice of the child. Internationally, the use of portfolios has been identified as an empowering tool for teachers to access children's funds of knowledge, whether in conjunction with, or in place of, a transfer document compiled by preschool practitioners and parents. The use of such Child Portfolios has been suggested as an approach in which the voice of the child can be fully heard (Peters, Hartley, Rogers, Smith and Carr, 2009). (See O'Kane, 2016 for more information.)

## When and how information transfers

Another aim of the audit was to consider if and when the information transfers from the preschool to the primary school, and if formal recommendations were made as to when and how the information should be transferred. Some of the transfer documentation recommends procedures to be followed during the transfer, although it is not clear if these recommendations are being followed. The intended time point for transfer is not specified in most of the documents reviewed. Generally speaking, the final term of preschool is mentioned in recommendations. The *Child Snapshot*, suggests completing the document in the Spring term with a view to considering the areas that might need support during the final term of preschool and then completing the document again in May/June to provide an updated picture of the child's skills at that point (O'Kane and Hayes, 2010). The *I Can Book* specifies that the document should be completed in June, but a specific date for transfer of the information is not included (Berney, 2016). The final report of the Parent and Child Hub project, recommends that the transition form should be forwarded to the school in June/July although a process for transfer is not outlined (Kelleher, 2014).

In terms of how the information is transferred, the *Child Snapshot* is intended to be passed directly by the preschool manager to the infant teacher or principal of the primary school. This template has been used in many areas during recent years, and has been adapted to reflect the individual values of different preschools. It is not clear that the original aim of personal transfer of the documentation is being followed in other projects and areas. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is not happening in many cases. Correspondence with preschools involved in some of the above research projects indicates that they no longer meet with schools, but instead simply post the transfer documentation to the principal of the school. Preschools also have little opportunity to learn how the information is used in the primary school. Other settings report not only posting the forms to local schools, but also emailing the forms, or

passing them to parents in June and asking that they transfer them to the school (Personal Correspondence, 2015). Users of the *I Can Book* are encouraged to either hand copies of the document directly to the school, to securely email it, or to pass the information to the school on a memory stick (Berney, 2016). Currently it is not clear how the transfer of information is taking place, although evaluation of that project is ongoing.

Other projects encourage postal transfer of information. For example, the *Happy Talk Transition Flower* has a cover letter attached, which practitioners can use to post the forms to local schools. So although personal transfer is encouraged in many of the documents, formal data on whether this happens in practice is not available. It is also important to note that there is little, if any, information available on what happens to these forms when they reach the primary school.



## Conclusion

In Ireland, in the absence of policy direction regarding nationally agreed transition templates (or indeed a policy focus on this important educational transition) research and development projects have produced a number of transfer documents to support children making the transition from preschool to primary school. While it is accepted that individual preschools and primary schools have developed their own transfer documentation, this audit considered ten specific templates developed to support the transition. Importantly, the development of each of these templates involved a process of consultation and cross-sectoral cooperation.

The templates examined in the audit aim to provide a practical way of making the reporting and transfer of information on children leaving the preschool, manageable and supportive for all stakeholders. Although a dedication to improve the transfer of documentation between preschools and primary schools is apparent through many of these local initiatives, it is clear that the fragmented nature of this development has seen a duplication of effort by stakeholders. The development of a national template would be helpful in this regard.

Generally speaking, a good level of consistency was identified in terms of the skill sets identified in the transfer templates, with varying levels of detail, and varying emphasis on specific skill sets noted. Links to *Aistear* (NCCA, 2009) are becoming visible in some, though not all, of the recently developed templates. Building links with *Aistear* (2009) in transfer documentation is critical.

The extent to which parents and children are involved in the transfer of information varies. Some, but not many, of the transfer documents offer parents the opportunity to be directly involved. Children's input was asked for in some of the transfer documents and while this is a positive move, it might not, on its own, be the most appropriate way to give children the opportunity to have their voice heard in the transition process. Additional documentation, for example, a portfolio may be a more appropriate format for this.

In terms of information transfer from the preschool to the primary school, formal instructions regarding the process are not readily available in all cases. It is also unclear whether recommendations made are being followed consistently when they are made. Although personal transfer is encouraged in many of the templates, this might not be taking place in practice. Very importantly, there is also little, if any, information available on what happens to these when they reach the primary school.

Templates that have been developed to date provide a good basis for the development of a national template as set out in *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020* (Department of Education and Skills, 2011). The transfer of information on children's learning and development is an important part of the transitions process and provides an opportunity for preschools and primary schools to build relationships. The importance of cross-sectoral dialogue and cooperation between the preschools and primary schools as part of the transitions process cannot be overstated, and is mentioned time and time again in these project reports, in their evaluation reports and in national and international research (see O'Kane, 2016). The development of a national template to transfer information on children's learning from preschools to primary schools is an important part, but only one part of what is needed to help children make a successful transition. In addition, it will be important for the NCCA to outline how such a national template is to be used in primary schools to support children's learning and to support cross-sectoral dialogue.

This audit along with *Transition from Preschool to Primary School*, Research Report No. 19 (O'Kane 2016) and *Transition from preschool to primary school: Audit of Policy in 14 Jurisdictions* (O'Kane and Murphy, 2016a) provide a strong foundation on which the NCCA can build when developing reporting templates for transferring information on children's learning and development as they make the important transition from preschool to primary school in Ireland.

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