
SCHOOL TRANSITION PROTOCOL

Children Entering School September

For Preschool Children who are mutual clients of the:
Chatham Kent Children's Services (CKCS) and
the Children's Treatment Centre of Chatham-Kent (CTC-CK)

Transitioning to:
Lambton Kent District School Board (LKDSB) *or*
St. Clair Catholic District School Board (SCCDSB) *or*
Conseil Scolaire Catholique Providence

In early October, Chatham-Kent Children's Services (CKCS) and the Children's Treatment Centre of Chatham-Kent (CTC-CK) will create a list of all children on their respective caseloads eligible for school entry the following year.

In mid October, the CKCS and the CTC-CK will distribute an information package to the family of each child on their caseloads who are eligible to enter school **for the first time** in junior kindergarten, senior kindergarten, or grade one the following September. This package will be distributed as follows:

- CTC-CK will distribute package to their caseload as well as any joint clients shared with CKCS;
- CKCS will distribute to clients only on their caseload.

The package will contain:

- a combined letter from the school boards briefly outlining the process;
- an invitation to attend 'Path to School Entry – Parent Information Night';
- 'Tell Us About Your Child' form to be completed by parents to describe their child's needs.

Parents/caregivers will be asked to complete the 'Tell Us About Your Child' form and return it to the CTC-CK/CTC. The CTC-CK will forward the completed form to the appropriate school board.

In November, parents will attend a presentation, 'Path to School Entry – Parent Information Night'. Parents will have the opportunity to meet with representatives from the local school boards, located at the Chatham-Kent Children's Services. All representatives will explain the current school transition process in place. Representatives from local school boards will present their philosophy and service delivery models. Breakout sessions will provide parents with the opportunity to meet separately with the representative from the board to which they intend to enroll their child. Parents will have the opportunity to submit a copy of the completed 'Tell Us About Your Child' form to the appropriate school board representative.

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In January, the boards will provide the CTC-CK and CKCS with lists of completed 'Tell Us About Your Child' forms they have received for children planning to enter school for the first time in September. The list will identify the children/families for whom the school boards are planning to schedule transition meetings on, which usually occur the beginning of March.

In February, the school boards will forward a schedule of transition meetings to be held with parents in late February and early March to both CTC-CK and CKCS. The school boards will contact the parent/guardian to extend an invitation to attend this transition meeting. At the transition meeting, representatives from the CTC-CK and CKCS will share updated information related to the child's current therapy status, equipment needs, development, and behaviour concerns (as appropriate).

Determining if a child on your caseload has high or moderate needs for school transition planning:

A child's diagnosis, or developmental delay, does not determine if a child has high or moderate needs in the classroom or school. A designation of "High" or "Moderate" is¹ based on the level of supports the child will require in the classroom/school. For example, a child may have a diagnosis of CP but only require moderate supports in the classroom. A child who is nonverbal and uses PECS may only require moderate supports in the classroom. A child who is nonverbal but also is a flight risk, aggressive, and requires constant supervision, would be considered to have "high" needs based on the behavior challenges.

**PROCEDURE FOR CHILDREN WITH CENTRAL-BASED
(HIGH NEEDS) MEETINGS**

Children with High Needs: **High Needs** are those clients who have significant behavioral, mental health, developmental and/or physical needs and will require **extensive supports** in the classroom/school due to:

- Equipment needs, (stander, walker, lift, accessible bathroom...)
- Personal care assistance (dependant for toileting, dressing, feeding; tube feeding..)
- Aggressive behavior (danger to themselves and/or others)
- Constant supervision/redirection (flight risk....)
- Difficulties with transitions (changing expectations or task result in escalation, outburst, shutdown, flight, aggression.....)

These designated clients will require additional support in the classroom. Additional support could include special equipment, staffing and/or specialized transportation. This is determined by school board personnel based on the completed 'Tell Us About Your Child' form (with Central Team Meeting identified on the front cover) completed by the parent and returned to the appropriate school board.

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In early February a list of children identified by each school board will be formulated by the school boards and forwarded to the CTC-CK and CKCS. A representative from the CTC-CK Children's Treatment Centre and CKCS will be invited to attend a school transition planning meeting which will be held with parents/guardians of these children.

Transition Meetings: The parents, representatives from the appropriate school board, CTC-CK, CKCS, Community Care Access School Health Support Services Program (SHSS) and school administrators/resource teachers will be invited to attend this meeting. Information about the child and the appropriate placement will be discussed. Based on the parent's permission indicated on the completed 'Tell Us About Your Child' form, school board staff may wish to contact the parent and the childcare to arrange for an observation visit prior to the scheduled February/March meeting.

Registration: The parents will register the child at the appropriate home school during board-wide designated registration. Once the child's placement has been agreed upon at the transition meeting for high needs children, the board will forward a copy of the 'Tell Us About Your Child' form to the school administrator of the receiving school.

Observation: The Board of Education personnel and/or the school administrator and/or the resource teacher are encouraged to arrange for an on-site observation of the child following the transition meeting for high needs children. Verbal consent for this visit will be discussed with the parent at the transition meeting.

Transition Review: The school administrator/school personnel will schedule a home-school based conference to review the transition plan and actions agreed upon by the participants for children with high needs. The appropriate schedule for this meeting in May and/or early September will be determined at the Transition Meeting, with consideration given to the individual needs of the child. Any parents or school personnel who wish to make changes to these scheduled meeting dates/times should contact the school board representatives identified at the February/March school transition meeting. At the home-school based meeting, personnel from CKCS (consultants) and the CTC-CK (therapists) will share the most current verbal and written information. Transitional support from the CTC-CK may be requested at this time. The CTC-CK and Community Care Access Centre will liaise for high needs children and their therapy needs.

SCDSB – Minutes will be provided to all parties present (and parent, if absent).

LDKSB – The LKDSB school administrator/school personnel will complete the 'Summary of School-Based Pre-School Intake Meeting' form during this meeting which outlines actions/responsibilities agreed upon. Minutes will be provided to involved service provider and school personnel.

**PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN WITH SCHOOL-BASED
(MODERATE NEEDS) MEETINGS**

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Children with **Moderate Needs: Moderate Needs** are those clients who will require moderate supports in the classroom such as

- Staff awareness (unintelligible speech, moderate fine motor delay, dysfluency, poor motor coordination, moderate receptive language delay....)
- Frequent supervision/redirection, (active, impulsive, behaviors, self-regulation...)
- Moderate amount of support (communication device, picture schedule, If/Then board....)
- May require on-going intervention (SLP, OT, PT ...)
- May require specialized equipment (PECS, Boardmaker, footstool...)

In early March, CKCS and the CTC-CK will distribute a 'Tell Us About Your Child' form ('School Based' meeting identified on the front cover) to be completed by parents to describe their child's needs. Parents will be asked to forward the completed form to the appropriate school board office representative identified on the form. The school board will forward the completed 'Tell Us About Your Child' form to the appropriate home-school administrators. School administrators may wish to arrange an observation meeting (at the childcare) following receipt of this information. School board staff will contact the parent to obtain verbal consent prior to scheduling an observation visit to the childcare.

Registration: For moderate needs children, registration will occur at the usual registration time.

School Based Meetings: The school administrators at the students home school may schedule a meeting in May or September with the parents and service providers, CTC-CK, CKCS, etc., as identified in the 'Tell Us About Your Child' form. Copies of the most recent assessments and service plans completed by the CTC-CK and CKCS will be shared at this time or forwarded to the schools by the end of May. Transition support can be requested at this time.

SCDSB – Minutes will be provided to all parties present (and parent, if absent).

LDKSB – The LKDSB school administrator/school personnel will complete the school board 'Summary of School-Based Pre-School Intake Meeting' form during this meeting, which outlines actions/responsibilities agreed upon. Minutes will be provided to involved service provider and school personnel.

PROCEDURES FOR ALL CHILDREN

Late Registrations: For a high or moderate needs child coming into service with CKCS and/or the CTC-CK after the transition meetings:

- A copy of the 'Tell Us About Your Child' form will be distributed to the family by personnel from either CKCS or the CTC-CK. Once the completed form is received by the appropriate designated board personnel, the board representative will contact CKCS and the CTC-CK representatives as appropriate to request updated reports. Board representatives will indicate the appropriate site (board office, home school) to which they wish these reports (informal assessment

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summaries, therapy reports) sent. It will be the responsibility of CKCS and/or CTC-CK staff to obtain the appropriate consents prior to forwarding these reports.

Sharing of Reports: The CKCS and the CTC-CK will forward additional reports regarding the child to the school board and the child's receiving school as they become available.

For children who enter the school system, but for various reasons were unable to complete their transition to school, there will be a resubmission of information for the following school year.

Collaboration with Board Representatives: In order to provide the most desirable placement for children and to make the beginning school experience a positive one for the parents, collaboration and information sharing with legal guardian's consent is crucial. Only the appropriate school personnel can make the final decision that the child will have Educational Assistant (EA) support. In cases where the therapists/consultants recommend to the legal guardian that the child attend/not attends a Kindergarten program, the parents' wishes must be taken into consideration and those wishes communicated to the appropriate board personnel prior to the transition/school based meeting. If in doubt about the services that can be offered at the school, advice can be sought from the appropriate school board representative.