

# Developing Transition Programmes for Your School

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International mobility affects everyone, and provides both significant challenges and tremendous benefits for the entire school community. International schools recognise the need to support all members of their school community and are developing a range of transition programmes to address the challenges and maximise the benefits of international mobility and the transition experience.

## **Transition Programmes**

Transition programmes support those who are:

**Arriving** (orientating them)

**Staying** (integrating them into the life of the school and the host culture)

(This also includes programmes that address those who are left behind and long-term members of the community.)

**Departing** (leaving well)

## **Transition programmes are most effective if they:**

Engage all members of the school community in a spirit of mutual support

Are formalised and consistent, and have administrative support and commitment

Are embedded in all aspects of the life of the school

Include both transition activities and transition education which are equally important

## **Transition Team**

Some schools establish a Transition Team to coordinate and provide transition support within the school. It is usually composed of teachers, administrators, parents and students. The team oversees the development and implementation of a range of programmes, activities and resources to support students, parents, faculty and staff. This includes individuals and committees across the school.

## **THE FOLLOWING ARE IDEAS FROM SOME INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS:**

### Transition Programming for STUDENTS

Assign a Buddy/Student Ambassador

New Student Orientation

Assemblies to recognise students, share cultures, languages, learning experiences

Orientation Week Trip in September

Moving Plan

'Let's Talk' Board

Transition Education

Study of the host country and culture

Goodbye videos, memory books, leaving books

Mother Tongue Lunches and After School Activities

## Transition Programming for PARENTS

Welcome Families (mother tongue speakers when possible)  
Welcome and Class Coffees  
PTA Information Pack  
IB Programmes/Curriculum Information Sessions  
Relocation Seminars  
Transition Workshops (TCKs, Transition Experience, Education, Repatriation)  
English and/or Host Country Language Lessons  
Everyday Life and Cultural Outings, 'Discover London' Club  
Welcome Guides to the host country/city  
Transition addressed in the Admissions Process

## Transition Programming for STAFF

Assign a Mentor Teacher  
Orientation, Local Tours, New Faculty Lunch  
Relocation Seminars  
Host Country Language Lessons  
Transition Workshops (TCKs, Transition Experience, Education, Repatriation)  
Assist with logistics of the move; housing, documents, banking, Internet etc  
Departing Staff Recognition and Leaving Activities (memory books)

## Transition Programming for ALL

Library Resources for transition, travel, host country, mother tongue literature  
Transition Activities for children, parents and staff who are arriving, staying and leaving  
Websites to share information  
School website includes transition information and resources  
Friends Around the World Bulletin Board  
International Day/Week Celebrations  
Multicultural and Host Country Celebrations  
Newsletter Articles  
Counseling

The American School of The Hague has an exemplary transition programme, A Safe Harbour, founded by Carol Mecklenberg and Doug Ota. Visit [www.ash.nl](http://www.ash.nl)

## **Plan for Your School**

Customise transition programming for your school.  
Consider: population, school size, location, host country culture and language  
What are you already doing? What comes next?  
Consider surveys to gather information: Areas of Expertise, Transition Questionnaire,  
and Suggestions to create and update Welcome Guides

**Remember, developing Transition Programmes takes commitment and time!**