A.14 The Welcome Checklist for Elementary Students With Autism Spectrum Disorders

Ottawa-Carleton Catholic DSB
The Welcome Checklist
for Elementary Students With Autism Spectrum Disorders

Creating a Successful Transition to School
2004

Getting to Know Your Student

- Identify a teacher or administrator who will act as the “case manager” or “navigator” who will be the home/school liaison. The teacher/administrator should also be the student’s key “Safe Person”.
- Identify the role of the “Safe Person” (social skills trainer/social skills interpreter/active listener/calming provider/sensory support teacher, etc.).
- Review the “All About Me” package with the pre-school and with the parents. Develop initial strategies to meet the unique needs (behavioural, academic, and emotional) of the student.
- Schedule dates for an ALL staff awareness session. Plan for early in the school year. Invite the “A” team. (See section: “Staff Awareness.”)
- Set dates for student orientation days for your student with ASD. Visits in June and in late August would be most beneficial. (Students with ASD require a more extensive orientation process than typical students.)
- Other

Planning for Your Student Using the Information from the “All About Me” Package

- Begin Transitional I.E.P. Use the “All About Me” Package to develop strategies to address challenges in: Communication/social/behaviour/academic/other.
- KNOW the anxiety triggers and develop strategies to provide calming.
- Identify area (room) that will be the student’s “safe place” (resource room/V.P. office/…).
- Develop schedules and timetables.
- Assure regular breaks are included in the timetable.
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- Develop a “Safety Alert Plan”. Use the “All About Me” Package to help
develop strategies to address the safety of the student with ASD and the
safety of others.
- Take pictures of all relevant staff
  (teachers/E.T.A’s/administrators/counsellors/librarians/secretarial/
cafeteria/custodial).
- Set up a “communication with home” plan.
- Other

**Student Orientation**

- Provide a map of the school.
- Videotape (digital camera) a walk-through of the school for the student to
  review at home. (Include key areas in the video:
  classrooms/library/gym/playground/bathrooms/resource room/office
  area/etc.).
- Provide pictorial social stories. *(See Visual Supports.)*
- Have student meet all teachers and relevant personnel. Provide pictures and
  names of all teachers, educational assistants and “safe person”.
- Provide the student with pictures and names of all other relevant personnel
  (principal, vice-principal, resource teacher, secretary, custodian, etc.).
- Show the student his/her assigned:
  - Seat in the classroom
  - Spot on the carpet for circle time
  - Coat hooks

- Share classroom routines:
  - Transition songs
  - Bathroom routines
  - Line up routines
  - Other

**Staff Awareness**

- Set date for general awareness session for ALL staff (administrators,
teachers, custodial/librarian/secretarial staff).
- Contact the Student Services OCCSB to help in developing awareness
  session.
**The Safe Place**

- Personalize the *safe place* to suit the student with:
  - Pictures of special interest
  - Music
  - Sensory items

- Identify when *safe place* will be used:
  - Before school or early morning
  - Following specific classes
  - At the end of the day
  - Extinction
  - Calming
  - Body breaks
  - Redirection
  - Other

- Determine cues to *safe place* base (READ THE SIGNS!).
- Identify activities (calming) that will occur during *safe place* times.
- Other

**Sensory Needs**

- In consultation with parents and Occupational Therapists determine how sensory needs will be met. (Read the "All About Me" Package to see what has been effective.)
- Obtain resources necessary to meet the sensory needs of the student.
- Create a sensory box.
- Determine where the sensory breaks will occur.
- Schedule frequent sensory breaks throughout the day.
- Other
Visual Supports

- Identify which supports are needed:
  - Map of school
  - Daily class schedule
  - Cloak room checklist
  - Toileting
  - OOPS card
  - Stop signs
  - Boundary lines
  - Individual work systems (as necessary)
  - Other

- Identify which social stories are necessary:
  - Going to school
  - Circle time
  - Riding the bus/taxi
  - Photo day
  - Fire drill
  - What "a day in a life" looks like
  - How to follow a visual schedule
  - Calm Down Time
  - Bathroom Time
  - Recess
  - Play Time
  - Other

Changes in Routine

- Inform the student of any changes in typical classroom procedures (assemblies, fire drills, guest speakers, seating changes, supply teacher). USE VISUALS.
- Determine what additional supports the student needs when changes occur.