Making Transitions Visible and Meaningful

Angela Prodger
Joint Head of Centre
Pen Green Centre for Children and Families
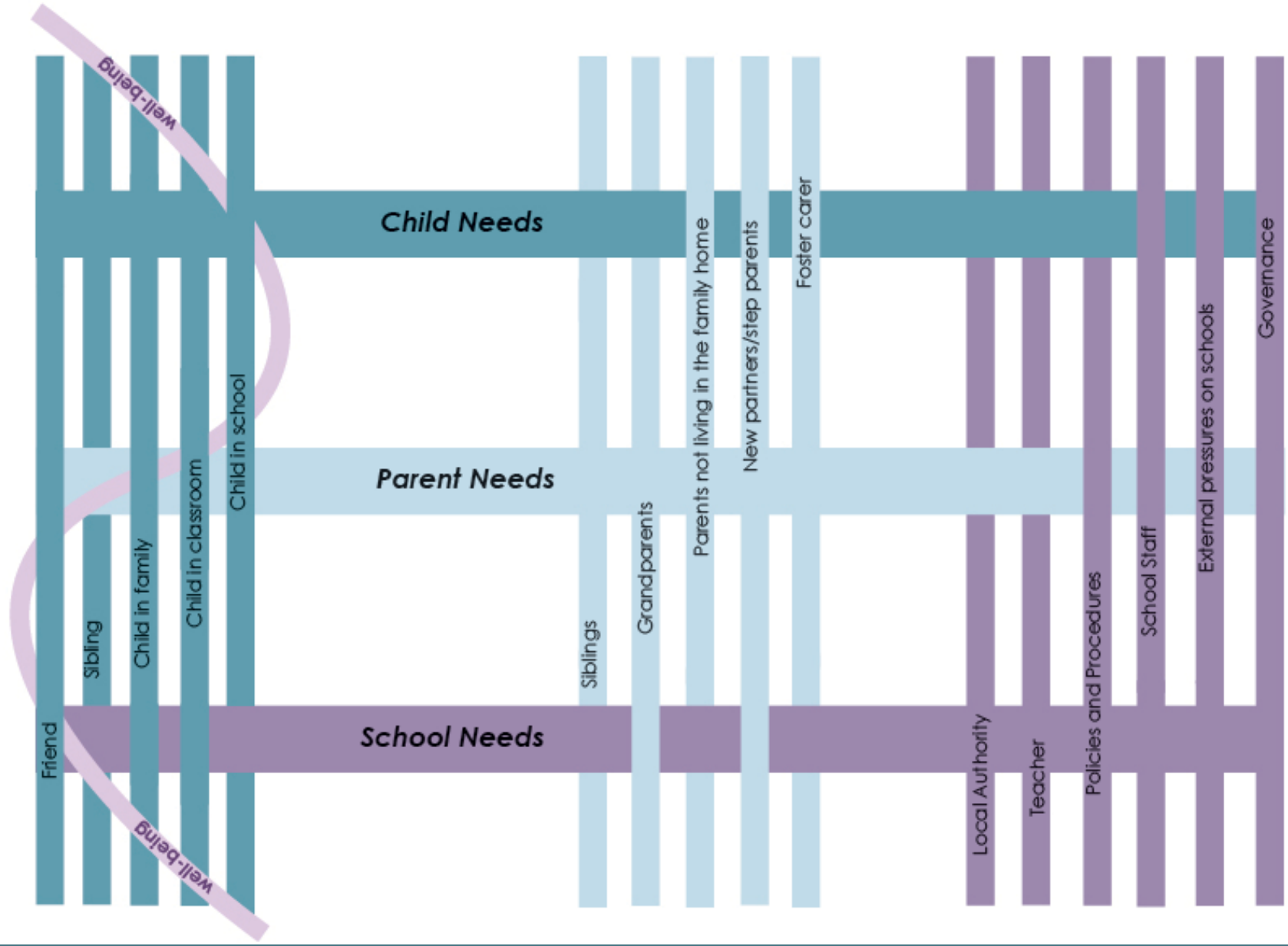
Transition

- Link
- Choose 3 words to describe the things that you believe are most important about transition.

Transitions

69

Transition

Oxford Dictionary definition:

The process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another.

Why transitions matter

- Children need time to make relationships

- Getting used to new or different surroundings

- Children need time to understand new and different routines

- Parents need to adjust to the same things

- Teachers and practitioners need to:
  - Get the know children as individuals
  - Understand the child's home context
  - Know how individuals like to learn
  - Engage parents in their children's learning

Reflection on own practice

- Supporting parents to make school applications
- Brokering role with the school admissions team
- Annual transition market place
- Visits to local feeder schools
- Class teachers visiting nursery
- Making relationships with class teachers
- Joint home-visits
- Joint projects
- Access to continuous professional development

Race to the Top

- Funding from the Local Authority to improve outcomes for identified vulnerable groups of children

- Focussed on 10 children and families at risk of social exclusion

- Worked with local primary schools

- Project with Our Lady's Primary school – focussed on 6 children transitioning from nursery

Erasmus project - START

- International project working with colleagues from Corby, Slovenia, Ghent and Bologna.

- Focus of the project - Improving transition in all four countries

- Shared Professional Development

- International visits to share practice and training

- Wider dissemination of work

- Developing a transition toolkit

A good start for all: Sustaining
Transitions across the Early Years

Who was involved in Corby

- Joint working with Rockingham Primary school and Our Lady's Primary school

- Each school including Pen Green had a specific focus group to work with (Children at Risk of Social Exclusion)

- Rockingham Primary focussed on the impact of parental mental health on children's transition and outcomes

- Our Lady's focussed on children with English as an additional language and travellers

- Pen Green focussed on 'children looked after', children living in complex family circumstances and children with SEND

What did we learn from the projects

- Regular face to face contact with family is essential to build up trust with children and parents

- Need to offer family support if we are to understand the child's home context

- Voluntary engagement in family enrichment days important – offers of help can be interpreted as a 'cry for help' which puts the parent in a vulnerable position, engagement in pro-active experiences to sustain contact and support transition is critical

- Children needed to stay in nursery over the summer break to offer some continuity and support children's PSED

What did we learn from the projects

- Role of the key worker is critical in offering support and being an advocate at transition

- Children with 1:1 in nursery having their worker follow them into school can ease transition

- Teachers, family workers and parents having time to discuss the child is beneficial

- Individual transition must be considered and put into place for our most vulnerable children

- Often the children at risk of social exclusion do not get their first choice school

- We have to break down the barriers of bureaucracy and find a way

- Brokering role with school admissions is essential

- The challenge of an on-line system for parents who are semi-literate or do not have access to the internet.