**Reading Portage Service Review**

**Supporting Transitions for Children with SEND and Addressing the Cliff Edge Effect”**

**Introduction**

The following email from **Tanya Lacey-Froude**, Acting Senior Portage Home Visitor in Reading describes how they have reviewed their Portage service to address the break or “cliff edge” many families feel as they leave the early years and start school. This work has been supported by conversations generated at the Action Learning Sets facilitated by Dingley’s Promise during 2021 and 22. Reading have created a comprehensive action plan linking the work around transitions to the overall inclusion strategy, and in turn the overall Early Years Strategy.

Hi Ann

Thank you for hosting the meeting this afternoon, it is always jam packed with ideas and really makes you think about what we can do as a service to improve transitions for children and also for schools.

Portage will be starting transition work earlier with the families and settings. Historically we carried out transition meetings with the schools and the parents in June before the child went to school. Now we will be setting up those meetings after the announcement of school places in April. We will also liaise with the schools for those children that will need extra transition visits in June and July to help them feel safe and confident when they attend in September and for the class teachers to get to know more about the child and their needs.

Portage historically stopped home visits and working with the families when the child entered school. Now Portage will be setting up a Post Portage Group from September when intervention ends. This means that the parents of the children can access the group up until the October half term to seek support and advice. Children that are given a longer transitions into school will also attend group with their parent.

I will be talking to the schools in May about Portage Workers attending transition visits to support the children whilst they are settling in and whilst the parents are forming relationships with the school, having that hand over period rather than an immediate stop will be so helpful for the parents and school alike. Portage Workers can then give advice and strategies to the class teacher that have been successful in Portage Sessions and in the nursery that they attended. Long Term Goals can be shared where the child does not have an EHCP but will have an individual action plan in school.

I will also talk to the schools where we have children transitioning to ask if they will record a class teacher reading a story so that it can be shared with the families (great idea Jenny!)

In the summer we will be hosting picnics and park days for the families that will be attending school in September for parent peer support and parent networking.

I think that is everything but I am sure that there will always be more!

Kind regards

Tanya

**Tanya Lacey-Froude**

Acting Senior Portage Home Visitor

My normal working hours are Monday – Thursday 8am – 4pm and Friday 8am – 3.30pm some days I will be agile working so hours may vary

**Brighter Futures for Children**

1st Floor

Whitley Health & Social Services Building, 268 Northumberland Avenue, Reading. RG2 7PJ

T 0118 937 6883 (76883)

M 07515 629094

Email: tanya.lacey-froude@brighterfuturesforchildren.org