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## Ready for school: Ann Tayler Children's Centre Nursery

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**URN:** EY450428  
**Region:** London  
**Remit:** Early years

### Provider background

Ann Tayler Children's Centre Nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is part of the [children's centre](#) and is run by the [Hackney Learning Trust](#), a department of the London Borough of Hackney. Ann Tayler Children's Centre is the main strategic centre for the cluster providing oversight of health and family support services to children and families under five.

### Brief description

Ann Tayler Children's Centre Nursery follows a robust transition process which helps parents and carers to support their children as they move onto next stages in their learning – from home to nursery and from nursery to school. This approach, coupled with meticulous assessment of children, results in children being confident and independent learners who are well prepared to move on to school.

This example is part of a [set of six](#), published in conjunction with the survey report [Are you ready? Good practice in school readiness](#).

### The good practice in detail

'School readiness requires children to move between different learning environments smoothly and with confidence. Home to nursery is the first transition,' explains Kaushika Amin, Head of Ann Tayler Children's Centre.

Senior leaders emphasise the importance of supporting parents and carers, especially at these transition points, and how key workers play a vital role at every stage. The nursery's [last inspection report](#) confirmed that 'key persons support children exceptionally well to feel emotionally secure and develop high levels of self-esteem.'

## Home to nursery

Every child receives a home visit prior to starting at the nursery from key worker and a senior member of staff.

The key worker takes a book of photographs to show children the nursery room and a leaflet for parents and carers, '[Welcome to Sky room](#)', which includes strategies to support children's learning at home.

An '[All about my child](#)' record is completed during the visit. This record:

- enables the key worker to gather information about the child's development, interests and needs
- guides the key worker as to the child's stage of development
- leads to an initial settling-in plan.

Parents or carers and children are greeted by their key worker when they first arrive at nursery and a phased transition begins, according to children's individual needs. During the settling-in period, practitioners observe and assess children.

After six weeks, an '[on entry](#)' summary is completed by the key person and a meeting is held with parents and carers to discuss children's progress and whether they are working at age-expected levels. This ensures that next steps in planning are appropriate, suitably challenging for individual children and tailored to support any additional needs.



This assessment on entry, continuing at all ages, is precise and includes all of those who are involved in the child's learning. Staff can then plan carefully and adapt the curriculum for individual children.

## Time to move on: internal transitions

When it is time to move on from the nursery room to the pre-school room, a phased transition begins:

- A group meeting for parents and carers is held with the new room's leader and qualified teacher. In this meeting, families receive key information about children's development stages for example, what 'being two' looks like in the prime areas of learning. It is also an opportunity to find out about routines, the importance of being involved in children's observations and planning, and to meet new key workers.
- 'My passport' is completed when a child transfers to the next room. Key workers complete the passport in partnership with parents and carers and children. An in-depth meeting takes place between parents and carers and key workers to share children's learning and development.
- Children visit their new learning environment with their current key worker and a gradual handover to their new key worker begins.

All of this leads, as noted in the last inspection report, to children who 'are extremely well prepared for their next stages in learning.'

## 27 month review: 'Happy, healthy and ready to learn'

'My portrait at two' summarises children's progress in the prime areas of learning and demonstrates whether children are working at age expected levels – it records a variety of information.



Children receive an integrated health and early years review at 27 months of age, where the health visitor, the child's key worker, the child and parent/carer come together to jointly review the child's health, development and learning.

Where there are concerns about a child's progress, the integrated review

process ensures that concerns are quickly addressed through referrals to relevant agencies.

When children need additional help, the key worker liaises closely with parents and carers to develop shared strategies – for example, language interventions for children at risk of speech delay are very successful. Children work in small groups for a short period each day. Practitioners plan high-quality focused activities that are successful in promoting children’s communication and language skills.

## Getting ready for school

The nursery’s aims are clear and include the following:

- Implement strategies to improve children’s outcomes in communication and language, with a particular focus on speaking.
- Continue to develop activities to encourage parents and carers to be more involved in transition by developing their skills and understanding of how schools work so that they can fully participate in their children’s school.
- Raise achievement and outcomes in literacy for three-year-old children who may be at risk of delay (this relates to [Raising Early Achievement in Literacy](#) – the REAL project).

In the pre-school ‘Sunflower’ room, parents and carers attend a ‘playing with sounds’ workshop to help them understand how children learn.

Senior leaders explain how this is an opportunity to:

- manage parents and carers’ expectations about their child’s development
- provide information on how the nursery supports children’s language and communication skills (speaking and listening) and early literacy skills (reading and phonological awareness),
- play with activities from ‘[Letters and sounds](#)’
- find out how families can best support their children at home.

Provision in the ‘Sunflower’ room is adapted over the year to provide more adult-led activities. Secure assessments of children enable senior leaders to identify gaps so they can adapt provision to ensure that children have the skills they need for starting school. For example:

- In January 2013 analysis of the Early Years Foundation Stage tracker identified a gap for boys in ‘Moving and handling’ and a gap for a small group in ‘Managing feelings and behaviour’.
- This led to changes in provision and as a result the proportion of boys reaching the level expected for their age in ‘moving and handling’ went from 56% in January 2013 to 89% in July 2013.
- Activities such as ‘play dance’ were introduced to help children understand their feelings.
- As a result, children were better at negotiating and understanding others.

Practitioners skilfully plan activities based on 'Letters and sounds'. For example:

- A small group of children actively participate in a 'sound hunt'.
- They carefully listen to soft and loud sounds giving clues to help them search for a teddy who is lost.
- Adults support younger children and those who find it harder to concentrate, enabling all to join in.
- Children are delighted when their careful listening and problem solving leads them to successfully rescue the teddy.

In the summer term, the nursery invites parents and carers to a 'Prepare your child for school' workshop. The workshop covers topics including:

- 'Understanding the emotions of transitions' – led by [First Steps](#), the local authority's child psychology service
- 'How it felt for us' – led by parents and carers whose children started school last year
- 'Preparing your child and what to expect' – led by children's centre teachers
- 'How to help your child with language development' – led by the speech and language department.

Parents and carers receive a free book for attending and a guidance sheet with activities to support their children during the summer holidays, such as:

- sharing books
- practising speaking and listening and encouraging conversation
- encouraging recognition of numbers and counting in practical situations
- teaching self-help skills, including dressing and putting shoes on.

The nursery has strong links with local schools, so children are supported in the transition to school. Children make visits to their new school with their parents and carers and key workers. They take photographs of their school and share these with their friends.

Activities are focused on starting school, the changes ahead and how this feels, helping children to feel confident and secure.

Children complete their own [transition documents](#), recording their voice and feelings about the change ahead. These records are shared with the school.



At the end of September, the nursery sends questionnaires to parents and carers to find out if transition activities were effective and to evaluate what else it can do to support transitions.

Comments from parents and carers include: 'My child had been learning phonics and numeracy since before she started school, which reinforced her excitement about learning. Her confidence was built up so she was excited about making new friends and learning to read and write. The nursery is very good at celebrating the achievements of children and making each child feel special.'



The centre is continually looking for ways to improve and has recently introduced a new project called Raising Early Achievement in Literacy Project (REAL), based on a [project in Sheffield](#).

### **Raising Early Achievement in Literacy Project (REAL)**

REAL is a 12-month targeted early literacy support programme which aims to:

- raise early achievement in literacy for three and four-year-olds, particularly those who are likely to have difficulties in the early years of school
- develop ways of working with parents and carers in their homes to build their confidence in supporting their child's literacy development.

The project is well underway with highly qualified and experienced practitioners working with individual targeted families in their own homes. Parents and carers develop an understanding of the benefits of supporting their children to recognise print when out and about in the environment and how this contributes to literacy skills.

### **Other good practice examples in this set**

[Ann Tayler Children's Centre Nursery](#)  
[Little Stars Childcare Centre](#)  
[Mayflower Primary School](#)

St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School  
Stanton Bridge Primary School  
The Village Nursery

The good practice case studies that Ofsted publishes highlight specific examples of practice that providers of education, learning and children's services have used to achieve successful outcomes.

For education, the case studies do not recommend a single particular approach to teaching and learning. Ofsted has no preferred lesson structure or teaching style. We showcase and share a wide range of approaches that providers have found work well for them in achieving good outcomes for children, young people and learners.

Are you thinking of putting these ideas into practice; or already doing something similar that could help other providers; or just interested? We'd welcome your views and ideas. Get in touch [here](#).

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