

## Using a PATH with a pre-school child to inform setting based provision

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### Context

Early Years Planning & Review Meetings (EY PARM) are held each term to bring together a wide range of professionals from the area. The professionals discuss children with identified needs to ensure they are receiving the appropriate support and provision. To help identify the support a child needs the Panel may recommend that an Educational Psychologist visits the child, their family and setting to conduct a professional assessment.

The Educational Psychologist used a graphic based person centred planning tool, called a PATH to undertake the professional assessment. This report aims to capture the views and benefits of using the PATH from the perspective of the Educational Psychologist and Parent.

### Educational Psychologist View:

"The child I was assessing regularly attends a pre-school and is due to transition to primary school in September. I was asked to meet with the parent, child and pre-school setting to identify the support required for a successful transition to primary school. As the child is only 3 years old, it was important to find a tool that enabled her to engage in the process.

The PATH is a visual and personal representation of the child's and families dreams for their future and sets out the support they need to achieve these outcomes. The PATH can be used for all ages and abilities and ensures the child remains the focus of the discussion. Although due to her young age the child wasn't present when developing the PATH, using photos made it accessible to her. After the session the family put the PATH up on their wall, when I visited the child at home she showed me all the photos of herself and commented on them.

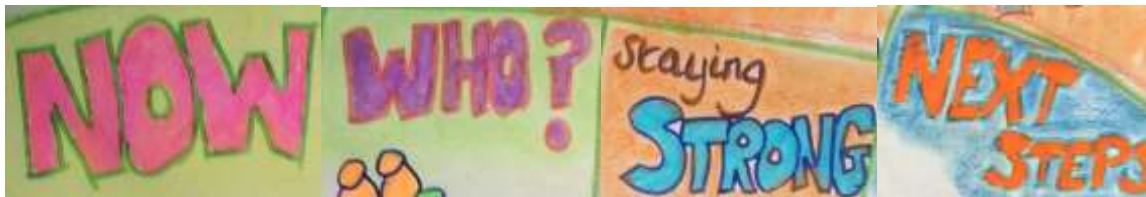


The meeting was so powerful that parent didn't want to leave room after the meeting, he helped with colouring the PATH and wanted to look and talk about the graphics, his hopes and dreams for this daughter and all the things she could do."

### Parent View

"You start with your dreams and think about what you want to happen this time next year and then it helps you, as the picture is in front of you, to think you can actually do this and how to do it. You can take part in it and see you can do it. It's a very different approach to what has been done before as you only used to talk about the things she can't do.

The fact that everyone was there was useful, as we all have different opinions, those from nursery school, me as I know her at home. Everything was together; if I talked to you on my own I wouldn't have thought of all the things I thought of. Having the views of how people see her in different situations jogs your memory."



### Top Tips for making a PATH work

- Ask the child's school to explain about the PATH to parents before the meeting so they know who to invite and what to bring – for examples photos of what the child likes doing / is good at.
- Include photos in the PATH - this really helps if the child finds it a challenge to verbally express themselves because of their age, developmental delay or if English is an additional language.
- Provide refreshments during the meeting, this helps to get a positive and relaxed atmosphere.
- Always use props during the session, even with small number of people. They are a way of facilitating the meeting and ensuring ground rules are in place.
- Use music for each section of the session – downloading the track beforehand and using a small mobile speaker helps so you aren't reliant on the venue's facilities. Find out about favourite.
- Photograph the PATH after the session and use the information within report writing. It's easy to crop the relevant part of a photo straight into a document.
- If used for transition, invite a member of staff from the both feeder and transitioning schools to the meeting. Although this wasn't possible on this occasion, the PATH will be taken to the transition meeting at the primary school and used it as a key discussion tool for discussions.
- Ensure staff are released to attend the sessions – especially those that will be involved in supporting child into the future.
- Two people within the meeting needs to act as facilitator: one to facilitate discussions and one to capture this in graphics.

