Tips for Moving to a New School

- **Wherever possible involve your child/young person in the process:** it may be that you can take them to visit when choosing a new school to gain their thoughts or to observe their behaviour.

- **Arrange a meeting with the new school's SENCO:** it is important you feel comfortable about the support they'll be getting in the new school. It's equally important the new school has time to prepare, to put in any additional support. You should also discuss who the key people are that will be working alongside your child or young person. Ask for photographs of key staff to share ahead of school starting.

- **Create a communication passport:** if communication is difficult make a list of key phrases or behaviours and what those mean and will look like. Not being understood can cause a meltdown.

- **Create an 'all about me' profile:** this can be helpful for the new school. Some things you could include might be helpful adjustments e.g., using a computer instead of writing, special interests, anxieties they have about the school day e.g., unstructured break times

- **Create predictability:** before starting, meet and take photos of the new staff, particularly key people, who will be involved with your child. You could also take photos of the different classrooms and halls.

- **Ask for things to take from the old school:** these can be kept as memories and may bring some comfort.

- **Create opportunities for them to keep in touch with friends from their previous school if they want to.**

- **Preparation should start in the current school:** the current school should help prepare for the transition with a detailed transition plan. All Information should also be passed onto the new school about specific needs and desires.

- **Be positive about the move:** negative thoughts or feelings will be picked up and may even be mirrored.

- **Check in:** There are most likely going to be feelings of anxiety about the move. Create opportunities to talk about the change and how they're feeling about, or if there are any concerns. You could make a worry box if writing their concerns down would help.

- **Keep the rest of the routine consistent and the same:** keeping everything else as familiar as possible will promote feelings of safety.

- **Ensure you are prepared:** is there any new equipment needed, for PE for example? If a situation arises where the right equipment isn't there to take part in a school activity or task, it could make them feel like the 'odd one out' in their peer group.