How well do children adjust to primary school?

The vast majority of five year olds are positive about school. Most children look forward to going to school and say good things about school.

Children start school with different skills and capacities. Some groups of children face greater challenges when starting school.

Boys

Children with disabilities and special educational needs

Children from disadvantaged backgrounds

These groups are more likely to experience challenges:

- Poorer academic skills
  - Early vocabulary, literacy and numeracy abilities

- Poorer socio-emotional skills
  - Ability to concentrate in class, communicate needs and take turns/share with other children

- More negative attitudes towards school
  - Complain or are upset about going to school

- Poorer quality of relationships with teachers
  - Less close and more conflictual

What could help children to adjust?

- TRANSFER DOCUMENTATION
  - Transfer information about a child’s strengths and needs from early years practitioners to primary school teachers

- URBAN DEIS SCHOOLS
  - Significant skills gap between urban DEIS and non-DEIS schools
  - More resources needed to target disadvantaged children in urban areas

- POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE
  - Build positive student-teacher relationships
  - Support teachers to implement positive behaviour management

- MORE PLAY-BASED ACTIVITIES
  - to enhance learning and engagement
  - Promote continued use in senior infants
  - Promote increased use among younger children in multi-grade classes

- PROMOTE HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES
  - Reading and creative play help children prepare for school life

Evidence for Policy esri.ie