

Some possible *indicators* of ending/transition anxieties

(Box 20 p.229)

1. Wanting to leave early – to avoid the ending
2. Wanting to stay on longer or have extra time or manipulate boundaries
3. Bravado – I don't need this time/you any more. I'm fine. Everything is fine
4. Difficulty coming to the last (few) days (not wishing to face the ending)
5. Rivalry with other children. (who may continue seeing the teacher or TA after they have gone)

This may only be hinted at - other children using the room or equipment, (who did that? etc.), or it may be expressed in the metaphor - lots of babies or children in stories, rivalry in stories.

6. Papering over the cracks – by saying nice things
7. Jolly along – even at the end precipitating hysterical behaviours and laughter
(I remember a whole class getting hysterical for half an hour once at the end of term!)
8. Finding it unusually hard to ask for or accept help when they are struggling. (I don't need you any more!) Avoidant children will tend to withdraw more.
9. Implying that the room/the equipment/the teacher are not good enough/useless etc.
Talk of things at home, things in the new situation or with the new person - being better
10. Being forgotten may come up in stories and play, or through direct comments.
11. Being rejected – this can show up in either direction. They can 'push' to be rejected through their acted out behaviour, or they can themselves reject (better to reject than to bear the pain of feeling rejected); or rejection can come up in stories or play.
12. Regression - It is quite normal for children to regress at home or at school when an ending is approaching. Regression may show in needy or infantile behaviours or in ways of talking. - in the class or in the playground, or in the finishing of small group sessions.

13. Doubts - regressed behaviour can evoke uncertainty on the part of the child, the teacher or the SENCO – or within parents, as to whether the right decision has been made - to finish a particular intervention for example. (This does not necessarily mean that a wrong decision has been made).
14. 'Acting-out the experience of breaking apart or chaos either within or outside the class.
Rubbishing or destroying work (or other children's - or even the teachers work)
15. Anger with the teacher or the TA - little hints of this can be picked up and empathised with, and linked in to you not being there for them any more soon.
16. Sometimes anger and hurt can be acted out dangerously against a significant adult who is leaving soon. This will need lots of resilience, understanding and support for the adult as well as the child. It is best **not to change the support person** or class at this ending time as that will exacerbate the long-term difficulties.
17. Expressions of sadness. For some children sadness may be easier to acknowledge. The child may wonder (privately) whether the teacher or learning support assistant may also be sad. It may be helpful to acknowledge that possibility, if an opportunity arises.

For other children sadness can be unbearable, because sad and hurting feelings in relation to previous losses and endings have not been supported and empathised with. It can even feel like a black hole. Culturally boys can feel encouraged to hide their sadness and vulnerability and act tough.
18. Taking things (stealing?) from the room or the teacher could be a way of concretely taking what they will no longer be allowed to have.
19. Wanting to take special things home and to give and receive presents can be a form of denial of the sadness, although it could also be an appropriate response to an acknowledgement of the loss of something good, and to a genuine feeling of gratitude.

20. Unacknowledged feelings that their teacher or LSA will be having a much nicer time/having much better presents, than them over the holiday - can lead to acted out envy or rage.