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For a parent, moving to Nepal can mean returning to familiar food, relatives and a language that needs no explanation. For a child raised elsewhere, the same flight can lead to a new school, unfamiliar routines and the loss of ordinary friendships. Both experiences can be true within one family.

The mistake is to treat the child's adjustment as an automatic extension of the parent's happiness. A homecoming works better when it is also planned as a move. That means giving practical questions and emotional questions equal space.

Let the child describe the move

Ask what the child expects to gain and what they are worried about losing. Listen for ordinary concerns: a sports team, a bedroom, a friend they see every day or the language used in lessons. Those concerns should not be dismissed as a failure to value Nepal.

Explain which parts of the decision are fixed and which are open to discussion. A child does not need responsibility for an adult's financial choices, but they can be included in decisions about routines, activities and ways to remain connected with friends.

Do not make the move a test of identity. A child can feel Nepali and still find a particular change difficult.

Compare schools as learning environments

A school's reputation or language label does not tell you how your child will experience the classroom. Ask how the school assesses a pupil arriving from another system, what records it needs and how it supports gaps in language or curriculum.

Talk about the transition with the people who will actually teach the child. Ask what the first weeks will look like, who will be the family's contact and how progress or concerns will be communicated. Request written information on fees, transport and

required materials rather than budgeting from a verbal headline figure.

A school visit during a holiday can help, but it is not the same as experiencing an ordinary term. Where possible, arrange a realistic introduction before committing.

Language is about participation

Conversational Nepali at home does not automatically prepare a child for reading, writing or subject vocabulary in a different classroom. Equally, familiarity with English does not guarantee that an English-medium label resolves every learning issue.

Research commissioned with UNICEF and Nepal's education partners examines how languages and language policies shape children's learning experiences. It supports taking the actual language environment seriously, rather than treating language as a badge of school quality.

Prepare without turning every family conversation into a lesson. Reading together, explaining unfamiliar words and allowing the child to ask questions can create a bridge. If additional support is needed, discuss a plan with the school rather than assuming the child should catch up silently.

Check each child's documents separately

Do not assume that a child's immigration position follows a parent's in every detail. Record the child's nationality, passport validity, relevant relationship documents and the purpose and likely length of the stay.

Use the Department of Immigration's current document guidance and obtain case-specific clarification where needed. School admission and immigration permission are separate matters. Confirmation from one institution should not be presented as an answer from the other.

Keep originals secure and make a record of which office has received copies. If documents contain different spellings or dates, ask how those differences should be resolved before an application becomes urgent.

Build an ordinary week

Family visits often involve special meals, outings and generous attention. A permanent move includes homework, commuting, tired evenings and parents working. Plan for that ordinary week as carefully as the welcome.

Map the school journey, study space, meals, extracurricular activities and who can collect the child when plans change. Check how the family will access routine healthcare and keep a portable

record of relevant medical history and prescriptions for the clinician.

Agree expectations with grandparents and other relatives. Help from family is valuable, but children need to know whose instructions apply and how disagreements between adults will be handled.

Keep connections without freezing the past

Make room for regular contact with friends abroad while encouraging opportunities to form new friendships. Neither should become a competition. A familiar friendship can provide stability while a new one develops.

Watch how the child is functioning rather than expecting a fixed timetable for feeling settled. A difficult week is not proof that the move has failed. Persistent difficulties at home or school deserve attention and, where appropriate, qualified support.

Parents also need to examine their expectations. Nepal may have changed during the years away, and relatives may not be available in the ways imagined. The family will be building a present-day life rather than recreating a remembered childhood.

The wider tensions of family life across borders do not end the moment everyone shares an address. Roles and relationships still

need time to adjust.

The most useful homecoming gives children permission to belong gradually. Prepare the records and school place, but also prepare to hear that the home you remember may be a new country to them.

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