



VIBERTS
PROPERTY

Your family

When is the best time to tell the children that you're moving? Property transfers in Jersey can happen much quicker than in other jurisdictions. Generally, the sooner you tell your children about a house move the more time they will have to get used to the idea. You will of course worry about them being unsettled or even disappointed if your move doesn't go to plan, and you may consider that they will have less time to worry if you don't tell them until the process is well advanced and looking likely to complete.

Children benefit from having time to acclimatise themselves to any major changes in their lives. On balance, it is probably better to include them throughout the moving process. Reassurance is the key and all parents know what best motivates their children. Help them to focus on the points which will appeal most to them about the move, be it; a bigger garden with room for toys, living nearer to friends or family, being closer to favourite parks or beaches, even new rooms which they can personally benefit from. Children are inquisitive so try to turn the experience into an adventure.

If your children have moved house before, you will know if they have had bad experiences; try to anticipate these and prevent them from being repeated.

Moving house is likely to be stressful for you, but you must try not to communicate your own anxiety to your children. We realise that this is easier said than done, but try your best to remain as positive as you can.

With younger children, reassure them that their toys and pets will be coming with them and explain how they will be able to keep in contact with friends in your current neighbourhood. Take time to carefully explain to them what will happen on moving day. Saying goodbye to an old home can be hard for children; allow them the opportunity to do so properly.

Give them some responsibility in packing their own belongings and suggest that they mark up their own boxes so that they are reassured that nothing is being left behind. If you are moving things into storage, keep reminding them that they will soon be reunited with their toys. Allow them to make some decisions about where

to put things in their new room. Ask your removal company to put the box containing your child's most precious possession in the van last, so that it is unloaded first when you arrive at the new house.

If you think that it is appropriate, involve your children in planning the decoration or theme for their new bedroom. Provide them with a limited choice of wallpaper samples or colour cards to keep their choices within acceptable limits. Help them to plan the position of furniture, perhaps by sketching the new layout and allowing them to make some decisions about where to put their things in their new room.

Moving house is a great opportunity to de-clutter. Help your children to decide which toys and clothes they no longer need and encourage them to donate items to charity to benefit children who are less fortunate. This is not the time to get rid of important familiar items or toys; this will just unsettle or upset them.

You might like to create a moving box containing keepsakes: fill this with photos of their old house, garden and anything that creates a lasting memory of things which are important to them.

Think about finding books or websites to help your children understand about moving house in a fun or amusing way.

If you are moving into temporary accommodation between selling and buying, make some effort to make it look homely by keeping some familiar items and family photographs. Be very careful not to pack away favourite toys or belongings which your children rely on, especially at bedtime.

Moving house can be stressful and the ideal scenario is to have relatives or friends to babysit and entertain your children for most of the day, if possible. If you have to look after them yourself, explain exactly what is happening. If they are old enough, try to give them specific jobs to do. For really young children a playpen might be a good idea (even if you don't usually use one) so you can immediately surround them with their favourite toys. Keep changing equipment to hand.

Make the first night special for the children; have a favourite meal or takeaway. Stop the process of unpacking early and spend time with them. Prioritise their rooms so that they feel settled. Ensure that their pyjamas, bedtime toys and favourite books are all to hand for their first night.

Be prepared for your child's behaviour to change slightly for a short period after moving to a new home; this is normal. Keep to usual routines for bedtime and meals. It may take a day or so before the permanency of a move sinks in and then you can expect a few tears, so be prepared for this.

For expert legal advice or more information on any of our legal services, please contact us:

Contact us:

 **Viberts**
Viberts House, PO Box 737,
Don Street, St. Helier,
Jersey JE4 8ZQ
 +44 (0) 1534 888666
 +44 (0) 1534 888555
 info@viberts.com

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 www.viberts.com

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