

Transition to School: Sharing information

Frequently Asked Questions

From 2017, how consent is obtained to share information between early childhood services, Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services and schools to support effective transition has changed.

OBTAINING CONSENT

How has obtaining consent changed?

From 2017, consent to share information between early childhood services, OSHC services and schools to support a child's transition to school will be based on an 'opt-out' approach. Families will need to inform their child's early childhood educator and service that they do not want information about their child shared with their future school or OSHC service to support their child's transition to school.

If families do not inform their child's early childhood educator and service that they do not want any information shared with their child's future school or OSHC service (where applicable) the early childhood educator and early childhood service will assume consent has been given.

Prior to 2017, consent to share information to support a child's transition to school was based on an 'opt-in' approach.

Families are kept fully informed of information handling in this process. Notification is provided to families at the start of this process in the *Transition: A Positive Start to School – Information Sheet for Families*, the accompanying letter to families and in discussions with their early childhood educator.

Why has the way we obtain consent changed?

While the majority of Victorian children's Transition Learning and Development Statements (Transition Statements) are shared with their school, some children arrive at their first day of school without a Transition Statement.

A child's Transition Statement summarises their abilities and interests as they start school, identifies their individual

approaches to learning and provides possible teaching strategies to support their transition to school. This information is shared in order to continue to support a child's learning journey.

A positive start to school leads to better learning and wellbeing outcomes for children both during the transition period and beyond. Ensuring effective and positive transitions also supports the continuity of children's learning and development. Placing greater emphasis on the continuity of learning recognises that building on a child's prior and current experiences helps them to feel secure, confident and connected to people, places, events, routines and understandings. Having a positive start to school has a direct correlation in promoting resilience among young people.

How does the change fit within privacy legislation?

There is no loss of privacy with the change in how consent is obtained. The process for sharing information to support effective transition to school is outlined in the *Transition to School: Guide to information sharing* and adheres to current privacy legislation.

How does the change in obtaining consent affect my service?

Early childhood services will need to follow the new process for sharing information outlined in the *Transition to School: Guide to information sharing* (the Guide).

Early childhood services will also need to ensure their privacy and information sharing policies align with the changes described within the Guide.

Can parents opt out of sharing information about their child?

Yes, parents can opt out of having their child's information shared with their future school or OSHC service. However, families should be informed that research and feedback from schools has indicated that sharing the information contained within the Transition Statement supports a successful transition to school.

How does a parent opt out of having information about their child shared with their future school or OSHC service?

Parents can opt out of having information about their child shared with their future school or OSHC service by

advising their child's early childhood educator and service that they do not consent to having information about their child shared with these services.

What should I do if a family opts out of sharing information?

If families have any concerns about the information contained in the Transition Statement, early childhood educators should work collaboratively with them to ensure they understand the information and why it is important to share these valuable insights with the child's future school and OSHC service (where applicable). Families can then make informed decisions about this information being shared with their child's school and OSHC service (where applicable).

As part of this process, it is critical that families understand not only what is written, but also how the information will be used to support their child's learning and development at school and at the OSHC service (where applicable).

If a family wants to opt out of having any information to support their child's transition to school shared with their future school or OSHC service (where applicable), the early childhood educator should explain the benefits of sharing the Transition Statement and attempt to address any other concerns the family has about their child's Transition Statement.

After this discussion, if the family decides they do not want any information about their child shared with their child's new school and OSHC service (where applicable) the early childhood educator should:

- complete *Section 4* of the Transition Statement noting the family has opted out of sharing the Transition Statement
- provide the family with the completed sections of the Transition Statement
- offer a second copy of the Transition Statement in case the family decides to share the information with the school and OSHC service (where applicable) at a future point in time.

COLLECTING AND SHARING INFORMATION

How has the way information is collected and shared changed?

From 2017, the Transition Statement can be written and shared electronically. Early childhood services will be able to use an interactive Word document to write Transition

Statements. The Transition Statement can then be shared with families, schools and OSHC services (where applicable) via email. The Transition Statement should be password protected when sharing it via email.

Will there still be a paper-based Transition Statement that I can use?

Ideally, all early childhood services will use the electronic transition statement (interactive Word document) to create a Transition Statement from 2017. If the early childhood service does not have access to appropriate technology they can apply to the Department to use a paper-based version of the Transition Statement via psts@edumail.vic.gov.au. This will allow the Department to understand issues preventing completion of the Transition Statement electronically.

Hard copy versions of *Section 2: The child* and *Section 3: The family*, as well as the accompanying *Information Sheet for Families* and *Guidelines to help families complete the Transition Statement* are available for order via www.education.vic.gov.au/transitionstatement.

How do I password protect the Transition Statement so I can email it to a family, school or OSHC service?

Instruction on how to password protect the electronic Transition Statement are available in the Guide to Completing the Electronic Transition Statement at: [Transition Learning and Development Statement](#).

Additionally, State Library Victoria (SLV) are providing IT support for kindergartens using the electronic Transition Statement. SLV's website contains [IT Tips](#) where password protection instructions are accessible. Phone and email support is also available via:

State Library Victoria support@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Phone: 03 8664 7001 Toll free: 1800 629 835

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The *Transition: to School: Guide to information sharing* provides more information about sharing information to support effective transition and is available at: [Privacy and information sharing](#).

For more information about Transition to School please visit www.education.vic.gov.au/transitiontoschool.