

TRANSITION: A POSITIVE START TO SCHOOL

Information sheet for families – 2017

As you and your child settle into this year, starting school seems a long way off. Starting school can be both challenging and exciting, and this information sheet offers some information on how your child's early childhood program will support you and your child's to transition to school as the year progresses.

Your child has already experienced many small and large transitions in life. How your child reacts to new/less familiar environments (for example, when you go on holiday, starting child care or kindergarten, going on playdates, even transitioning from one activity or routine to the next) provides a picture of how your child reacts to new situations and how best to support them.

WHY IS A POSITIVE START TO SCHOOL IMPORTANT?

A positive start to school leads to better learning and wellbeing outcomes for your child both during the transition and beyond. It helps to support your child's continuity of learning and development and supports them to feel secure, confident and connected to new people and places.

ENROLLING YOUR CHILD IN SCHOOL

Most primary schools begin their enrolment processes in May, the year before children start school. When you enrol your child in school, you can maximise the opportunities to get to know the school through transition to school programs and activities. The most effective transitions start well before the end of the year and extend well beyond the first few days of school.

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Participating in transition to school programs and activities will help you and your child get a better understanding of what school will be like and to establish friendships with other children and families who will be attending the school.

TRANSITION LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT

Your child's early childhood teacher will write a Transition Learning and Development Statement (Transition Statement). This Transition Statement will summarise your child's interests, skills and abilities. It will also identify individual approaches and teaching strategies so that your child's school and prep teacher can quickly get to know your child and plan appropriate learning and teaching programs.

If you are planning to send your child to an Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) service, the Transition Statement can be shared with the OSHC service too. The Transition Statement helps OSHC educators plan for your child's interests and support the continuity between early childhood, school and OSHC.

The Transition Statement can help you to understand, support, communicate about and advocate for your child's learning as they transition to school. You will be provided with a copy of your child's completed Transition Statement.

Your child's Transition Statement contains some personal information about your child, including your child's name, date of birth and photo, plus your name and contact details. When it is relevant, it will also contain the name and contact details of other early childhood professionals who are supporting your child.

Transition Statements are usually written in Term 4, but if your child has a disability or developmental delay, your child's early childhood educator may write an early Transition Statement around June/July as a conversation starter with you and your child's chosen school about required inclusion supports.

Because you know so much about your child, your contribution to the Transition Statement is valuable. You will be invited to fill in a section of the Transition Statement. Filling in this section of the Transition Statement will help the school get to know how they can help you and your child so you can both have a great start to school.

There is also a section for your child to fill in (with the help of an adult, which could be you or the early childhood teacher). This section usually includes a drawing and records what your child is curious about school and what they think about starting school.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit www.education.vic.gov.au/transitiontoschool

This document has been translated into a range of languages which are available at www.education.vic.gov.au/transitiontoschool.