

# Transitioning from Primary to Secondary School

Supporting students with  
additional or complex needs  
that arise from disability  
when moving from primary to  
secondary school.



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Image: Courtesy Victorian Deaf Education Institute

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Transition is defined as movement from one set of circumstances to another with changes to environments, relationships, behaviours, routines, roles and expectations.

## Introduction

Victoria has a strong, vibrant educational system that celebrates diversity and ensures all students have access to an inclusive, high quality education. All schools must ensure that students with disabilities can access and participate in education on the same basis as students without disabilities. This includes providing adjustments and support where needed.

For children and young people, the most significant transitions occur when they start school, move from primary school to secondary school, and from secondary schooling to adult life. It is a process of change that for some students may require substantial preparation, planning, adjustment and support.

This resource is designed to assist schools to support students with additional or complex needs that arise from disability or difficulties in learning, to transition from primary to secondary school, so that their experience is a positive one.

## The importance of transition

Supporting students with additional or complex needs to transition involves more than timing and monitoring the physical transfer from one educational setting to another; the endeavour is best described as building a strong, well-engineered bridge that the students can cross.

The principles and desired outcomes that guide effective transition planning for children and young people living with a disability are the same as those for children and young people who are not. What may be different is the need for transitions to be clear, of longer duration and for schools to recognise the impact that such changes may have, not just on the student, but also on their parent/guardian/carer(s), their siblings, their peers and their teachers.

So, when initiating transitions for students with disabilities, issues to be considered are:

- the nature and severity of the students' disabilities,
- the impact of a disability on the students' access to, and participation in, the educational setting and
- the extent to which existing transition programs take account of the individual needs of the student, their family and the receiving setting.

Best practice programs that support students with additional or complex needs that arise from disability and difficulties in learning to transition from primary to secondary school have a number of things in common. They:

- begin well in advance of the point of transition,
- are person-centred and tailored to the individual needs of the student,
- are collaborative and involve parent/guardian/carer(s) as vital partners,
- provide the student and parent/guardian/carer(s) with information to make an informed choice about future educational settings/options,
- are adequately resourced and
- are facilitated by a ‘transition coordinator’ who can communicate across sites, ensure that collaboration between the sites is effective and that all aspects of the transition planning process are addressed, and support the student and parent/guardian/carer(s).

## This resource

Schools and communities, in consultation with parent/guardian/carer(s), are in the best position to make decisions about their students and the support they require. This resource provides information and advice for schools in supporting them to implement positive and effective transitions for students with disabilities. In this resource you will find:

- a framework for transitioning students,
- a suggested timeline for key planning activities,
- templates that schools may use to strengthen their transition processes and
- links to additional information.

Many schools have excellent transition processes and programs that promote positive transition experiences. This resource has drawn upon existing practices of schools, as well as research by, and recommendations from, disability and educational experts. The processes and plans suggested are designed to align with existing practices in schools. The intention of this resource is to provide information and support documents in one accessible location.

Use of the words ‘additional or complex needs that arise from disability or difficulties in learning’ is deliberate. Disability exists on a continuum and young people with disabilities are not a single, easily identifiable group. As such, this resource has been designed to be sufficiently flexible for schools to adapt and augment to suit the needs of students with very different disabilities as needed. In this way, the transition program is responsive to the individual.

# Transition Framework

## Key elements of a successful transition process

General principles underlying successful transitions include:

- planning well in advance of the start of the transition process,
- providing the student and parent/guardian/carer(s) with sufficient information to make an informed choice about future settings, including specialist settings, and
- effective collaboration between transition settings that results in sharing of all relevant information.

Transitions are varied and complex. Children and young people undertake a number of important transitions at key points during their education: moving from preschool to school, primary school to secondary school, between mainstream and specialist school settings and finally from school to pursue post-school options.

Transition is a process, not a one-off event, which requires both time and commitment. It is a process of building relationships and understanding, with the aim of supporting students in their transition, identifying barriers to a student's learning and any adjustments that can be made. All students with additional or complex needs that arise from disability and difficulties in learning require support and/or services at transition points.

### Continuity of support

A trained and experienced Transition Coordinator or a teacher with whom the student is familiar can be a great resource for a student and their family when making transition decisions.

The Transition Coordinator is responsible for assisting the student and their family during the transition process.

### Communication and coordination of services

Successful transition relies on communication and information sharing between primary and secondary schools. If schools can consult with the people who have significant knowledge and understanding of the student – including the student and the student's family, Principal, class teachers, education support officers and professional therapists and other community service providers – this will go a long way towards ensuring a successful transition.

A Transition Statement is a tool for collecting and sharing information about a student: the student's profile of abilities, additional needs that require support, a summary of previous assessments and reports, and the student's current learning profile.

See Section 2 for the Transition Statement template.

“Some students with disability struggle to make friends at school.”

Inclusion and belonging are crucial elements to a successful transition.

“Students who are perceived as having made successful transition to secondary school describe themselves, and are described by others, as having friends and fitting into the school environment.”

## Student learning needs

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 legislation stipulates that:

*“[an] education provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the course or program is designed in such a way that the student with disability is able to participate in the learning experiences (including the assessment and certification requirements) of the course or program, and any relevant supplementary course or program, on the same basis as a student without a disability, and without experiencing discrimination.”*

An appropriate individual learning plan provides good advice to a receiving school and assists in a smooth transition to secondary school. Successful transition programs recognise that all students can learn.

## Student Support Group involvement

It is recommended that all students with a disability have a Student Support Group (SSG) and a quality individual learning plan. The SSG has a crucial role in mapping and monitoring a student’s transition from one school to another.

## Individual learning plans

An individual learning plan identifies a child’s learning and wellbeing needs and sets goals for meeting these needs. An individual learning plan is written by the student’s teacher/s in conjunction with parent/guardian/carer(s), education support officers and, where appropriate, therapists and allied health officers.

See Section 2 for individual learning plan templates.

## School organisation

Transition to secondary school is marked by several changes in educational expectations and practices.

The substantial differences between primary and secondary school settings relate to how each environment is structured and administered. These differences include the organisation and leadership of the school, the roles and responsibilities of the teaching staff, the location of classes and rooms, the length of lessons and organisation of additional curricula activities and day-to-day procedures.

Secondary schools are usually larger than primary schools. Transitioning to a school of greater size can be overwhelming for some students, especially those with a disability. Students and their families speak of being concerned that students will get lost when they start their new school. Students report being anxious about the size and complexity of their secondary school and of being late to classes and not being able to find their way around. Reading timetables and maps are challenging experiences for most new secondary school students. Students with physical and mobility difficulties also report having aching legs and backs because of stairs and/or distances they have to negotiate and some tend to carry their school bags throughout the day.

# Key considerations of a successful transition process

The principles and desired outcomes that guide effective transition planning for students without disabilities also apply to students living with them. Some students with a disability, however, may have more complex transition requirements than simply having adjustments made to the curriculum or their immediate environment.

A school may find that it needs to consider matters like:

- family engagement and liaison,
- communication between all parties (families and school),
- transport,
- building access,
- equipment for students with visual impairments,
- medical or personal care support,
- Student Support Service Officers, including Visiting Teacher Service, advice and engagement,
- additional resources available through the Program for Students with Disabilities,
- professional learning/training of staff,
- orientation programs and
- transition programs.

## Family engagement and liaison

Schools may need to consider that some families will have been actively involved in their child's intervention and education programs from infancy. Stepping back from a central role may require time, understanding and negotiation. In addition, some families may lose important supports they have relied upon as their child transitions into secondary school, so even very positive changes, like students gaining greater independence, can cause anxiety for some families.

When teachers and parent/guardian/carer(s) work together, combining their respective expertise and knowledge, positive outcomes can be realised.

Teachers can:

- spend time getting to know the student, and the parent/guardian/carer(s) and family,
- respect and value the parent/guardian/carer(s)' knowledge of their child,
- answer questions from parent/guardian/carer(s) promptly, clearly and openly,
- provide information in language that is accessible to parents and easy to understand,
- acknowledge or recognise the individual circumstances of each family and their efforts without comparisons,
- be mindful of the times during a child's life when parent/guardian/carer(s) may feel more vulnerable, for example, when a child is in hospital and during times of transition,
- accept the genuine frustration of a parent/guardian/carer(s) for what it is (potentially a legitimate response to an imperfect service system),

Students who are perceived as having made successful transition to secondary school describe themselves, and are described by others, as having friends and fitting into the school environment.

- adopt a flexible and creative approach and be open to the ideas and priorities of the family and
- be aware of the pressures that families face, including those that do not relate to having a child with a disability.

Developing a positive partnership with parents is the same as for any other relationship – it requires mutual respect, listening skills, empathy and communication and the time to develop trust and confidence.

## The student

Transition to secondary school usually occurs at a time when students are also experiencing changes associated with their development from childhood to adolescence.

Successful transition from primary to secondary schooling is linked with understanding and acknowledging the developmental needs facing young adolescents, including:

- Intellectual: young adolescents tend to be curious, motivated to achieve when challenged, capable of problem solving and complex thinking.
- Social: there is an intense need by young adolescents to belong and be accepted by their peers while finding their own place in the world. As a consequence, young adolescents can be engaged in forming and questioning their own identities.
- Physical: young adolescents mature at different rates and experience rapid and irregular growth, with bodily changes sometimes causing awkward and uncoordinated movements.
- Emotional and psychological: young adolescents can be vulnerable and self-conscious and exhibit unpredictable mood swings.
- Moral: young adolescents can be idealistic and want to have an impact on making the world a better place.

In transition, students face changing social contexts as they leave behind the known for the unknown. Their experience is likely to include moving from a smaller primary to a larger secondary school and from a system where they interacted with one teacher for several subjects with only a few room changes, to one where they learn from different teachers for each subject and often in different rooms.

To support students with this, transition programs need to promote:

- continuity, while also recognising change and the impact of change that occurs concurrently, and
- acknowledgment of each student's positive self-esteem, motivation and sense of belonging in the new environment.

## Communication between all parties: families and school

Parent/guardian/carer(s) may become anxious if they don't know what is happening with their child at school or how their child is feeling about the school experience. Some students with a disability cannot effectively communicate what they did at school or their feelings about their school experience. Parent/guardian/carer(s) anxiety can often be reduced by effective communication from the school.

At times of change, such as transition, time should be allocated for any additional school- parent/guardian/carer(s) communication. If a school can proactively keep parent/guardian/carer(s) informed, a family will feel supported by the school.

If regular contact with parent/guardian/carer(s) is difficult, a communication diary/book can be established to share information about such things as homework, class work, successes, forthcoming events and excursion money requirements. Family members should be encouraged to record information about the student's likes, dislikes and activities at home to build a strong link between the student's experiences at home and school. This communication tool can be particularly important during transitions to provide early indication of any issues arising.

Developing a positive partnership means that both teachers and parent/guardian/carer(s) will feel more comfortable with each other.

## Transport

Some transport support to get to and from school is available from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (the Department). Students with disabilities attending mainstream schools in rural and regional Victoria may be eligible for the Department's Conveyance Allowance to assist with travel costs or to access the school bus network administered by Public Transport Victoria. Students who attend a government specialist school and live within the school's designated transport area are eligible for travel support to that school, usually in the form of a school bus. In 2014, a number of specialist schools will also trial other forms of travel support including an independent travel education program.

## Building access

The Department provides facilities that enable students, parent/guardian/carer(s) and teachers with a disability access to school buildings. It provides funding for projects to:

- meet the needs of new students at a school,
- meet the needs of students that arise from a deterioration in their condition and
- expand existing facilities to cater for the curriculum requirements of the student.

Applications for this program may be submitted at any time throughout the year.

Priority will be provided in situations where:

- the student with a disability is a new enrolment and/or
- the school is unable to provide sufficient access to school facilities essential to the curriculum or toileting needs of the student.

Schools seeking support in completing applications are encouraged to contact the Department. See Section 2 for a website link.

## Equipment grants for students with visual impairments

Equipment Grants are available to assist schools to purchase major items of essential, specialised equipment for students with mild visual impairments who do not meet the eligibility requirements of the Program for Students with Disabilities. Applications must:

- demonstrate that the equipment is essential to enable the student to access the curriculum,
- include a report from the student's visiting teacher outlining the nature of the student's visual impairment and why the equipment is essential to support the student and
- include evidence of the student's visual condition.

See Section 2 for the Guidelines and Application Form.

## Personal care support

Personal care support is daily living support, usually provided by parents/guardians. Students may require the provision of assistance for:

- toileting and personal hygiene,
- eating and drinking and
- transfers and positioning.

Students may need personal care support due to their age, developmental delay or medical conditions: short or long term circumstances (such as complex medical care needs).

When a student with disabilities is transitioning between schools, their SSG must ensure that there are plans to address the student's personal care needs, including appropriate contingency plans for emergencies. Assistance and advice can be sought from specialists such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists or speech pathologists.

With careful planning, secondary schools are able to support the needs of all students.

See Section 2 for a website link.

## Medical intervention support

Medical Intervention Support is payable to schools to enable specially trained educational support officers to assist students at school with their regular, complex medical needs such as:

- maintenance of oxygen supply and tube patency,
- ensuring clear airway and using suction and saline as required,
- use of feeding pump as required and
- ileostomy and colostomy management.

Training is available through local health service providers, disability support organisations and the Schoolcare Program (see the following section for more information).

## Schoolcare Program

The Schoolcare Program is a service provided by the Department in partnership with the Royal Children's Hospital which gives Victorian government school staff the skills to support students who have complex medical needs.

The Schoolcare Program enables students with ongoing complex medical needs to have their health care requirements met safely at school by providing specialist training to school staff delivering interventional medical care. This program is available where the student would not be able to attend school without the procedure being performed and where training is required to perform the procedure.

See Section 2 for the Schoolcare Program Guidelines and referral form.

## Student Support Service Officers including Visiting Teacher Service

Student Support Service Officers are available to assist students in government schools and include a broad range of professionals including psychologists, speech pathologists, social workers and visiting teachers working with hearing, vision and physical impairments.

Student Support Services Officers work as part of an integrated health and wellbeing team within networks of schools, with a focus on individual and group based support, workforce capacity building and the provision of specialised services.

Schools work with parents/guardians and SSGs (if required) to obtain assistance from Student Support Services. Informed consent for the provision of Student Support Services must be obtained from parent/guardian/carer(s) as part of the case preparation process.

## Program for Students with Disabilities

The Program for Students with Disabilities is a targeted supplementary funding program for government schools. Under the program, resources are provided to schools for a defined number of students with moderate to severe needs arising from disabilities, as part of schools' Student Resource Package. Resources can be used in a number of ways to support students, including providing:

- teaching staff,
- specialist staff (such as occupational therapists, speech pathologists),
- teacher professional development,
- specialist equipment/materials and
- education support staff.

When a school is allocated resources to support more than one student, the Principal may choose to liaise with members of the Student Support Groups to discuss and evaluate any common requirements, for example, the funding of therapy services or special needs teacher positions.

## Professional learning/training of staff

When planning for an incoming group of students, a Principal may decide that some professional development is required to effectively respond to the needs of one or more students joining the student population. A range of online courses are available to government schools. In early 2014, for instance, courses are being offered in:

- Understanding Autistic Spectrum Disorders,
- Inclusion for learners with speech, language and communication needs,
- Understanding Dyslexia and significant difficulties in reading and
- Understanding Hearing Loss.

## Orientation programs

Orientation programs are designed to help students and parent/guardian/carer(s) become familiar with the school setting and can limit the anxieties of students and their families.

Orientation programs generally involve a tour of the school, meeting relevant people in the school, spending some time in a classroom and the provision of written and verbal information. Information packs can include maps of the school, details of the school leadership team, including staff and their responsibilities and student leaders' names (such as school captains). Schools can check their signage and school staff can wear name tags for a period of time to help students identify the teachers they need.

## Transition programs

Transition programs usually include orientation programs, but are longer in duration and are tailored to the individual needs of students and their families. Transition programs are responsive to individuals rather than reflective only of common elements. Transition programs are flexible in duration, depending on the particular student or parent/guardian/carer(s) needs, but begin well in advance of the point of transition and sometimes continue into the new school year. Transition programs also acknowledge that educational transitions are times of transition for all involved: student, family and educators.

Effective transition programs require a range of resources. These include people, time, materials and space in which to operate the program. Barriers to effective transition practices often involve the same things – lack of resources, time and the limited availability of people to coordinate and implement programs. Effective transition programs, by way of contrast, are based on detailed planning and have clearly defined objectives that are developed in collaboration with all stakeholders, particularly parent/guardian/carer(s), and against which the transition program is evaluated.

Providing additional opportunities for students with disability and their families to visit the school and meet teachers prior to the school year starting can contribute to a more successful transition. Advising teaching staff that new students with disabilities will be starting at their school and providing professional learning opportunities for them to understand any additional needs those students may have will benefit the school and all students.

# Transition Planning

Best practice programs that help with the transition of primary school students with complex needs (arising from disability or learning difficulties) to secondary school, function well because they:

- begin well in advance of the point of transition,
- are person centred and tailored to the individual needs of students,
- are collaborative and involve the student and parent/guardian/carer(s) as vital partners,
- provide the student and parent/guardian/carer(s) with information to make an informed choice about future educational settings/options,
- are adequately resourced and
- are facilitated by a Transition Coordinator who can communicate across all sites to ensure collaboration is effective and that all aspects of the transition planning process are addressed while supporting students and parent/guardian/carer(s).

Transition planning draws together information from a range of individuals and settings beyond the primary school, in order to plan coherently for a student's transition between settings.

Planning for transition for a student with a disability should begin in Year 5, to create an environment that promotes a confident transition from the primary school to the secondary school.

Liaison between primary and secondary schools to support transition should include:

- school leadership and teacher meetings to coordinate transition activities,
- the distribution of information to primary students about the nature of secondary schooling, the way secondary schools operate, the key features of their local secondary schools, and
- the transfer and exchange of information.

Within the final year/s of primary school, schools can provide information to students and parents about the nature of secondary education and the options available. To assist in the transition to secondary school a range of activities or experiences could be used, including:

- discussing with students the expectations of secondary school,
- organising short courses on time management and organisational skills and
- sharing information about the academic curriculum with students and families before the transition to secondary school.

During Year 6, the departing and receiving schools will have increasing contact – sharing information and the Transition Statement prepared by the primary school, student and their family – and the Student Support Groups including representation from both schools will meet. It is recommended that a Transition Coordinator manage the process. The student and family may also need such a support person to address their concerns, so time to communicate effectively with families and staff across both sites is important.

Students who are transitioning may have specific learning challenges. There may also be a need to provide training to all staff (teachers and education support officers) prior to a student's arrival at secondary school. Schools also need to develop some skills (or access expertise) in supporting parent/guardian/carer(s)

who find the process of moving their child into secondary school daunting and, in some cases, have difficulty adjusting their expectations to what is achievable in the new setting.

Orientation activities should be scheduled during this period. Some general starting points for transition programs include a focus on organisational issues such as:

- regular tours of the secondary school – for students and parent/guardian/carer(s) – starting while students are in Year 6,
- providing a transition and school specific information in appropriate verbal and written formats,
- activities to promote familiarity with the new school environment, such as scavenger hunts and walk-throughs and
- creating awareness of typical school timetables and visiting classrooms.

Recognising and responding to the social adjustments required during the transition to secondary school is an important element of any transition program.

The anxieties of students and their families about changing schools and developing social relationships within the student group also need to be considered.

Promoting positive social interactions between and among families, students and teachers will require different strategies in different contexts, but could include:

- promoting contact between students who will attend the same secondary school,
- facilitating contact between parents and teachers,
- discussing the move to secondary school with students,
- fostering parental engagement with the transition process and
- developing mentoring programs to promote students helping other students.

Once a student commences Year 7, the secondary school should provide a variety of programs to explain the expectations of school leadership and the operation of the school. Programs should also provide support for learning and the social and personal aspects of transition. Many schools have strategies to support Year 7 students and families, including:

- starting Year 7 students the day before other students to allow some settling-in time,
- arranging the timetable to minimise Year 7 students moving rooms between classes. (Some schools have Year 7 teachers move rooms rather than the students),
- facilitating ‘Getting to know each other’ sessions for students,
- holding school camps early in the year so students can get to know each other,
- establishing a mentoring system where student mentors (usually experienced leaders or student volunteers) take part in Orientation Day and follow up activities when Year 7 students start the school year, and
- Year 7 Parent Information Evenings and welcome activities to meet the teachers and other parents.

Transition support should continue for a time once the student has commenced secondary school and is preferable to requesting the support of the primary school if the transition is proving to be difficult.

Parent/guardian/carer(s) and the student should be consulted about all transition program decisions.

## Section 2: Appendices

Transition Planning Timeline

Transition Planning Checklist - Primary school

Transition Planning Checklist - Secondary school

Key people involved in the transition process

Transition Statement template

# Transition Planning Timeline

The departing and receiving schools should make contact with each other as soon as possible. The receiving school should read all documents provided (assessment and other). Support services and health personnel should plan what equipment is needed and discuss mobility issues for those with physical and sensory disabilities.

	Janu	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug
2014	Term 1: 28 January to 4 April			Term 2: 22 April to 27 June			Term 3: 14 July to 19 September	
2015	Term 1: 28 January to 27 March			Term 2: 13 April to 26 June			Term 3: 13 July to 18 September	
2016	Term 1: 27 January to 24 March			Term 2: 11 April to 24 June			Term 3: 11 July to 16 September	
<b>PARENT/GUARDIAN/CARER(S)</b>	<p><b>Grade 5 and before</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start talking to friends, neighbours and other networks about school options.</li> <li>Go to secondary school information evenings, open days, tours and meet with principals.</li> <li>Look at school websites and find out about different schools.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Grade 6 - Term 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revisit the schools you are interested in and meet with principals again if necessary.</li> <li>Once you have narrowed down your choices, take your child for a visit to the school.</li> <li>Make a final decision on your preferred secondary school.</li> <li>Your child's primary school will commence the Year 6-7 Review for students on Levels 1-4 of the Program for Students with Disabilities (students on Levels 5 and 6 are exempt from the Year 6-7 Review). Find out if any specialist appointments or assessments need to be booked for the Year 6-7 Review. Although the Year 6-7 Review is not required for students on Levels 5 and 6, detailed transition planning should still occur.</li> <li>Commence transition discussions at the Student Support Group meeting.</li> </ul>			<p><b>Grade 6 - Term 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fill in the preference form provided by the primary school (for enrolment into government mainstream secondary schools).</li> <li>Your child's primary school will complete the Year 6-7 Review for students on Levels 1-4 of the Program for Students with Disabilities. Relevant staff from the secondary school should be invited to the applicant's Student Support Group meeting.</li> <li>New applications for the Program for Students with Disabilities must be submitted in July.</li> </ul>			<p>Begin collating information to be given to the secondary school to assist them in supporting the student (diagnostic, assessment reports).</p>

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June
2014	Term 1: 28 January to 4 April			Term 2: 22 April to 27 June		
2015	Term 1: 28 January to 27 March			Term 2: 13 April to 26 June		
2016	Term 1: 27 January to 24 March			Term 2: 11 April to 24 June		
<b>PRIMARY</b>	<p>Transition guidelines for families, early childhood services and schools recommend discussions with parents about the transition to school of young children with special learning needs take place up to two years before it is to occur.</p>		<p>At the Student Support Group meeting, invite appropriate staff from potential secondary school options (mainstream and/or specialist) to attend. If these Student Support Group meetings are scheduled once a term, the first meeting could begin to identify potential secondary school options for participation within future Application/ Review Student Support Group meetings.</p>	<p>During the Year 6-7 Review process, the secondary/ specialist school in which the student anticipates enrolling could be invited to attend the Year 6-7 Review Student Support Group meeting.</p>	<p>Application/Review Student Support Group. Submit Program for Students with Disabilities Year 6-7 Review application as part of the Annual Round if applicable.</p>	<p>Parent/guardian/carer(s) and student to nominate the secondary school closest to their home and complete an enrolment form for the school. Information to be provided includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evidence of the child's date of birth,</li> <li>family contact, phone and address details, and that of any other parent, guardian and/or carer names and contact details of emergency contacts</li> </ul> <p>health and welfare information, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>information about the language/s the child speaks and hears at home.</li> </ul> <p>Residential boundaries affect which schools a student can attend but parent/guardian/carer(s) and students can choose a different school with a particular focus (science, art, sport etc.). Parents can seek interim enrolment/admission request at a specialist school.</p>

Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
	Term 4: 6 October to 19 December					
	Term 4: 5 October to 18 December					
	Term 4: 3 October to 20 December					
<b>Grade 6 - Term 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you submitted preference forms for government mainstream secondary schools, you will be advised by the primary school which government secondary school has offered a place to your child.</li> <li>• Your child's primary school should convene a Student Support Group meeting with relevant staff from the secondary school to plan for the transition and other needs.</li> <li>• Your child's primary school may consider preparing a transition statement, a summary of important information about your child that can be given to the secondary school to assist them in planning appropriate supports for your child.</li> <li>• Your primary school should be notified of the outcome of the Year 6-7 Review.</li> </ul>	Students to be enrolled into secondary school/specialist school and to be provided with an enrolment kit. Parent/guardian/carer(s) to begin receiving school newsletters and invites to events.	<b>Grade 6 - Term 4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrol your child into secondary school.</li> <li>• Plan and prepare for orientation day.</li> <li>• Request an extended orientation for your child and meet teachers.</li> <li>• Request a Student Support Group meeting for Term 1 of Year 7.</li> <li>• The primary school should work with your child on the transition program activities.</li> <li>• The primary school may consider additional strategies to prepare your child for transition, such as social stories, if this is known to be helpful.</li> <li>• Practice the transport route during the school holidays if your child will be taking public transport.</li> <li>• Together with your child, consider other strategies to prepare for secondary school, such as becoming familiar with the school timetable and map of classrooms.</li> </ul>		<b>Year 7 - Term 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If attending a mainstream school, consider asking for your child to attend school for a short time the day before other Year 7 students start, to bring books, locate their locker, bathrooms, Home room, and to meet teachers.</li> <li>• Confirm the date for the Student Support Group meeting to be held in Term 1.</li> <li>• Participate in the Student Support Group meeting to develop an Individual Learning Plan and monitor how your child is settling in.</li> </ul>		

July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Term 3: 14 July to 19 September			Term 4: 6 October to 19 December						
Term 3: 13 July to 18 September			Term 4: 5 October to 18 December						
Term 3: 11 July to 16 September			Term 4: 3 October to 20 December						
New applications for the Program for Students with Disabilities to be submitted for students already enrolled in the Victorian government system	School to identify a Transition Coordinator. School to consider strategies to prepare the student for transition, such as social stories. Student to develop a "personal snapshot". Transition Statement to be developed.	Convene a Student Support Group with staff from the receiving secondary school to plan for the transition and needs of the student. Begin collating information to be provided to the secondary school to assist them in supporting the student (disability and adjustments/support required, level of funding, assessment reports etc.). Work with health and allied health staff to prepare and compile reports for school 'Consent to transfer file'.			When a student transfers from one school to another, the school being left will provide the principal of the new school with a transfer note. This note includes information about the student like name, address, emergency contact details, any medical conditions the student may have as well as their academic records. Schools to update student details in CASES21, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the transfer date as the last date the student attended classes</li> <li>• transfer notes that have been reviewed by the transferring principal</li> <li>• immunisation status for primary students.</li> <li>• Schools to cease student enrolment on the school records/database.</li> <li>• School to send the receiving school the: transfer note and any relevant information including any foreseeable risk and the immunisation certificate for the primary student</li> <li>• signed parent/guardian/carer(s) consent form for the provision of information if the student is transferring interstate.</li> </ul>	Confirm dates for the Student Support Group to meet in Term 1 at the secondary school.			

## Transition Planning Timeline

The departing and receiving schools should make contact with each other as soon as possible. The receiving school should read all documents provided (assessment and other). Support services and health personnel should plan what equipment is needed and discuss mobility issues for those with physical and sensory disabilities.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug
2014	Term 1: 28 January to 4 April			Term 2: 22 April to 27 June			Term 3: 14 July to 19 September	
2015	Term 1: 28 January to 27 March			Term 2: 13 April to 26 June			Term 3: 13 July to 18 September	
2016	Term 1: 27 January to 24 March			Term 2: 11 April to 24 June			Term 3: 11 July to 16 September	
<b>SECONDARY</b>	Provide information to parent/guardian/carer(s) about the school and meet with parent/guardian/carer(s) as needed. Before admitting a student, schools must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collect relevant admission information,</li> <li>• obtain a completed enrolment form and</li> <li>• provide a privacy notice to the enrolling parent/guardian/carer(s) explaining the use to be made of admission information.</li> </ul> For admission, all applicants must be an Australian citizen, or a student with relevant specified visas deemed eligible and approved for enrolment by the principal or relevant regional director.	School to update CASES21 enrolment data when students transfer into Year 7. Schools to register and review student information in Program for Students with Disabilities Management System.	Schedule Student Support Group meetings. Determine if meetings need to be scheduled more than once a term.	Most government schools hold school open days, information evenings and tours in April or May for students enrolling in the following year.			New applications for the Program for Students with Disabilities to be submitted for students already enrolled in the Victorian government system.	

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug
2014	Term 1: 28 January to 4 April			Term 2: 22 April to 27 June			Term 3: 14 July to 19 September	
2015	Term 1: 28 January to 27 March			Term 2: 13 April to 26 June			Term 3: 13 July to 18 September	
2016	Term 1: 27 January to 24 March			Term 2: 11 April to 24 June			Term 3: 11 July to 16 September	
<b>HEALTH/ALLIED HEALTH/STUDENT SUPPORT STAFF</b>	The transferring school should provide a transfer note including information on any foreseeable risks (if applicable), to the receiving school.						Work with parent/guardian/carer(s) student and primary school to prepare and compile reports for school 'Consent to transfer file'.	

Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
	Term 4: 6 October to 19 December						
	Term 4: 5 October to 18 December						
	Term 4: 3 October to 20 December						
Secondary school to identify staff professional development training requirements and assess the needs of the new student, including such things as access.	Student to be enrolled into secondary school. Specialists to be consulted.	Begin school familiarisation and orientation. Plan for transition visits/orientation day/tour of school or program of activities for the student (participation in classes, visit with mentors etc.). Secondary school to consider strategies for preparing student for timetables, larger school campuses and facilities such as lockers and bathrooms. Secondary school to consider plans to support families/guardians/carers. Secondary school to consider plans for workforce support for teaching staff and additional assisting members such as Student Support Service Officers and Visiting Teachers.	As part of the transition from Year 6 to Year 7, students in government secondary schools are likely to participate in an orientation day. All government schools hold Orientation Day on the same day - often the second Tuesday of December. The day may include a school tour, meeting fellow students and teachers, and taking part in special lessons and activities.	Engage parent/guardian/carer(s) in the Student Support Group and developing an Individual Learning Plan for the student. Develop Individual Learning Plan. Secondary school to consider storage of medication, a private area for personal care, planning for Year 7 camp and anything else required to meet the student's needs.			

Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
	Term 4: 6 October to 19 December						
	Term 4: 5 October to 18 December						
	Term 4: 3 October to 20 December						

## Transition Planning Checklist – Primary school

Action	Yes	No
Discuss transition to secondary school with parents up to two years before it is to occur.		
Gather diagnostic and assessment reports, health and medical reports for the Program for Students with Disabilities Year 6-7 Review and for new applications.		
Invite staff from potential secondary school options (mainstream and/or specialist) to attend Student Support Group (SSG) meetings.		
Parent/guardian/carer(s) and student to complete an enrolment form for secondary school.		
Identify a Transition Coordinator.		
Convene a SSG with staff from the receiving secondary school to plan for the transition and needs of the student.		
Submit Program for Students with Disabilities Year 6-7 Review application as part of the annual round or a new application if applicable.		
Confirm dates for the SSG to meet in Term 1 at the secondary school.		
Consider strategies to prepare the student for transition.		
Develop a Transition Statement.		
Cease student enrolment on the school records/database.		
Update student details in CASES21.		

## Transition Planning Checklist – Secondary school

Action	Yes	No
Plan for transition visits such as Orientation Day, school tours or a student program involving participation in classes and time with student mentors.		
Assist families with management of organisational changes by providing written and verbal information packages.		
Consider strategies for preparing student for timetables, larger school campuses, lockers, bathrooms. Consider access needs of new student, including storage of medication, a private area for personal care, planning for Year 7 camp and anything else required to meet the student's needs.		
The transferring school should provide a transfer note including information on any foreseeable risks (if applicable) to the receiving school.		
Update CASES21 enrolment data when student transfers into Year 7.		
Review the Transition Statement and schedule Student Support Group (SSG) meetings.		
Consult specialists if appropriate and approved by the family.		
Develop individual learning plan.		
Submit new applications for the Program for Students with Disabilities if applicable.		
Consider plans to support parent/guardian/carer(s) and school communication with parent/guardian/carer(s).		
Consider plans to support teaching staff/team, professional development requirements, and additional workforce support that might be needed (such as Education Support Officers, Student Support Service Officers and Visiting Teachers).		

## Key people involved in the transition process

<b>The student</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s parent/guardian/carer(s)</li> </ul>
<b>The departing school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 6 teacher</li> <li>• Assistant Principal and/or Principal</li> <li>• Transition Coordinator</li> <li>• Education Support Officer</li> <li>• Student Support Service Officers (psychologists, guidance officers, speech pathologists, social workers)</li> <li>• Visiting Teacher</li> </ul>
<b>The receiving school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 7 teacher</li> <li>• Year level coordinator</li> <li>• Assistant Principal and/or Principal</li> <li>• Transition Coordinator</li> <li>• Education Support Officer</li> <li>• Student Support Service Officers (psychologists, guidance officers, speech pathologists, social workers)</li> <li>• Visiting Teacher</li> <li>• Therapists (if appropriate)</li> </ul>

# Transition Statement template

A Transition Statement is a tool for collecting and sharing information about a student. The information gathered will assist parent/guardian/carer(s) and school staff to have a shared understanding of the student's profile of abilities, disability and how these impact upon him/her. This statement could include a summary of previous assessments and reports and the student's current learning profile. A student snapshot may also be part of this statement.

1. Collate information to be provided to the secondary school to assist the school in supporting the student.
2. Student to develop a 'personal snapshot'.
3. Work with health and allied health staff to prepare and compile reports for school 'Consent to transfer file'.
4. The student's parent/guardian/carer(s) to sign the consent form allowing the information gathered within the Transition Statement to be shared with professionals supporting their child during the transition to and enrolment at their nominated secondary school.

## Transition Statement: Schedule 1 – Privacy and Transition Consent Form for Parent/guardian/carer(s) and school staff

### What is a Transition Statement?

All schools collect information from new students during times of transition. Gathering information provides schools with the opportunity to:

- provide tailored support for each child and
- effectively plan and prepare a successful transition to secondary school.

A Transition Statement is a tool for collecting and sharing information about a student. It is developed through a collaboration between key school staff from a student's primary and secondary schools and parent/guardian/carer(s). The student should also have an opportunity to contribute and shape their transition journey.

The material gathered will provide the parent/guardian/carer(s) and school staff with a shared understanding of the student's abilities and disabilities and how they impact on the student, as well as information to support the continuity of the student's learning.

This Transition Statement should also include a summary of previous assessments and reports and the student's current learning profile. The Transition Statement might include information on some or all of the following:

- Diagnosis
- Current presentation
- Cognitive profile – thinking and learning
- Health/associated features
- Description of the student's current emotional and behavioural profile.

The student's Transition Statement will be confidential. All staff in Victorian government schools and staff employed by the Department are required by law to protect the personal and health information collected and held by a school and it is the responsibility of the secondary school to ensure that the student's Transition Statement is stored securely and safely.

## Who can access the Transition Statement?

Access to the student's Transition Statement will only be granted to Department staff whose need to view the information is in line with the purpose of the statement – that is, to support the student's transition, learning and development. 'Department professionals' may include, but are not limited to:

- learning area (subject) teacher/s,
- homeroom teacher/s,
- leadership staff,
- staff with responsibilities for wellbeing and
- Student Support Service Officers.

As parent/guardian/carer(s), you may, at any time, request access to the personal information that the school holds about your family and your child and/or request that it be corrected or removed. Should you wish to access, remove or modify any information you should contact the school in the first instance. If you wish to make a complaint or require further information about the privacy of personal information, you should contact the Principal of the school in the first instance or the Region's Privacy Officer.

If you as parent/guardian/carer(s) choose not to provide some or all of the information requested, or allow limited information from the Transition Statement to be shared with relevant school staff and other Department professionals working to support your child, it may affect the quality of support the school can offer.

In exceptional circumstances it may be deemed beneficial that your child's secondary school share the Transition Statement with external professionals (in addition to those listed above) to further support your child's learning, growth and development. If this is the case, the school must seek written consent from you as the parent/guardian/carer(s) and may not pass on any part of the statement without explicit consent.

# Consent Form

Do you consent to your child's Transition Statement being shared with professionals supporting your child during their time at [insert secondary school name]?

Yes

No

Signature of Parent/guardian/carer(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:     /     /

Print Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Enrolment Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## School acknowledgement

I acknowledge the responsibilities of the school in the appropriate use, storage and maintenance of this information.

Yes

No

Signature of Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:     /     /

## Transition Statement: Schedule 2 – Information for school staff

### Privacy and consent when sharing information

Privacy laws provide a guide to information handling. Schools must be reasonable and fair in their treatment of personal and health information, not only for the benefit of staff and students but also to maintain the Department's reputation.

Victorian privacy legislation includes the *Information Privacy Act 2000*, the *Health Records Act 2001* and the *Public Records Act 2002*. As well, the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 applies in Victoria. These laws regulate the way schools can collect, use, retain, secure and dispose of personal and health information. This includes information or opinion about an individual whose identity is apparent or can be reasonably ascertained from the information.

Privacy legislation requires, among other things, that organisations that collect personal information about individuals advise those individuals of:

- the purpose of collecting the information,
- whom the information would normally be disclosed to,
- how individuals may access information the organisation holds about them and
- any consequences for not providing some or all of the information requested.

It is for these reasons that the Privacy and Transition Parent/School Consent Form is included within the Transition Statement.

When working with privacy issues, it is important for schools to consider the following requirements:

- **Collecting:** collect only the information that is needed and be clear about the purpose for which it is being collected.
- **Informing:** tell the student and/or the student's parent/guardian/carer(s) why the information is needed and how it will be handled.
- **Disclosing:** disclose the information only as necessary for the primary purpose of collection.
- **Accessing:** provide the student and/or the student's parent/guardian/carer(s) with access to their information on request, unless there are concerns that information contained in the files may cause harm to the individual or others.
- **Security:** keep personal information secure and safe from unauthorised access.

## Personal information

The collection, use, disclosure and management of personal information is governed by the *Information Privacy Act 2000* (Vic) and the Information Privacy Principles contained within it. Personal information is “information or an opinion (including information or an opinion which is on a database), whether true or not, and whether recorded in a material form or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion” Staff who are collecting, using, disclosing or managing the personal information of a student must comply with this Act and the Information Privacy Principles contained within it.

The collection, use, disclosure and management of health information is governed by the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic) and the Health Privacy Principles contained within it. Health information is “information or an opinion about: the physical, mental or psychological health of an individual, the disability of an individual, an individual’s expressed wishes about the provision of services to him or her, which is also personal information”. Staff who are collecting, using, disclosing or managing the health information of a student must comply with this Act and the Health Privacy Principles contained within it.

Further information on the information privacy principles in the Act is available at: [www.privacy.gov.au/materials/types/law/view/6892](http://www.privacy.gov.au/materials/types/law/view/6892).

# Transition Statement: Schedule 3

## Student's personal details

### Student's details

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

### Family details

Name(s) of Parent/Guardian/Carer(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Siblings \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary school contacts

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## Other professionals involved

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## Transition Coordinator – Primary School

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## Transition Coordinator – Secondary School

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

# Diagnosis and assessment information

## Diagnosis

Diagnosed by

Date of Diagnosis

*(Please attach a copy of relevant reports.)*

## Cognitive assessment

Date of assessment    /    /

Results summary/or attach a copy of relevant reports

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## Communication assessment

Date of assessment    /    /

Results summary/or attach a copy of relevant reports

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## Adaptive behaviour/skill development

Date of assessment    /    /

Results summary/or attach a copy of relevant reports

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## Other

Date of assessment    /    /

Results summary/or attach a copy of relevant reports

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## Current presentation

### Social/emotional

Results summary/or attach a copy of relevant reports

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## Behaviour, interests and activities

Results summary/or attach a copy of relevant reports

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## Communication

Results summary/or attach a copy of relevant reports

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## Health and associated features

*(Please attach a Health Support Plan if appropriate.)*

Detailed advice and disability-specific Student Health Support Plan templates for a range of conditions, including epilepsy, asthma, cystic fibrosis, anaphylaxis and diabetes, are available to schools in the School Policy and Advisory Guide.

### Health

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### Diet/eating

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## Sleep

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## Fine and gross motor coordination

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## Sensory disturbance

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## Self-care

*(Please provide details if applicable and attach a Medical Plan if appropriate.)*

## Impact of disability on learning and/or accessing educational programs

*(Please attach Abilities Based Learning and Education Support (ABLES) assessment, individual learning plan, behaviour plan and a safety plan if appropriate.)*

## Physical

Cognitive considerations such as:

- What are the student's strengths?
- What are the student's particular areas of interest or talent? What motivates him/her?
- Is the student easily distracted?
- How does the student cope with change?
- Does the student persist with difficult tasks?
- What does the student do when confused or anxious?
- Can the student organise and sequence information?

## Current successful strategies

Please provide a summary/or attach a copy of relevant individual learning plan, student management plan and/or behaviour plan.

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## Other

Additional relevant material such as recommendations from diagnostic reports.

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## Transition Statement: Schedule 4 – Student Snapshot template

### About Me

These questions are a guide. You don't need to answer all of them if you don't want to. If it is easier to answer the questions with a drawing, you can do this instead of writing your answers.

My favourite subject is

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My least favourite subject is

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My favourite possession is

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My favourite book is

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My favourite clothes are

---

---

My favourite food is

---

---

My favourite music is

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---

My favourite film is

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---

My favourite game is

---

---

My favourite sport is

---

---

My favourite picture is

---

---

The person I admire most is

---

---

This year's most memorable event was

---

---

People would describe me as

---

---

I would describe myself as

---

---

The thing I do at home the most is

---

---

I would like to join a club that

---

---

In three years I will

---

---

If I could choose a career, I would choose

---

---

I would like to learn more about

---

---

Feel free to add a drawing

# About school

My primary school is

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My Year 6 teacher is

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---

The teachers at primary school have helped me with my work by

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The one thing I will miss about my primary school is

---

---

The things I like about primary school are

---

---

The nicest/kindest thing that anyone at school did for me was

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The nicest/kindest thing that I did for someone at school was

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---

I am looking forward to secondary school because

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---

I am worried about going to a new school because

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I think some things could help me settle into my new school, like

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When I am in high school I will be able to

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The things I want my new teachers to know about me are that I am

## Expectations

I'd like my new school to be

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Mum and Dad expect me to

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## Transition Statement: Schedule 5 – Other attachments

Please attach any additional documents relevant to supporting the student's successful transition to secondary school and learning. It may be important, for instance, to consider the cultural background of the student.

# Legislative requirements and transition

Schools are bound by a range of legislative and regulatory requirements. When considering and planning for the transition of students, schools need to be mindful of the following:

## The Disability Standards for Education 2005

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 were formulated by the Commonwealth Attorney-General under the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (the Act). The Act seeks to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against people with disabilities. The Standards constitute subordinate legislation to the Act and are subject to the objects of the Act. They clarify and elaborate legal obligations in relation to education.

The Standards stipulate schools have an obligation to ensure that students with disabilities can participate in educational courses or programs that develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, including relevant supplementary programs, on the same basis as students without disabilities – that is, students with disabilities should have access to the same opportunities and choices in their education that are available to students without disability.

Sometimes to achieve this aim the Education Standards require an education provider – a school – to make adjustments to allow people with disability to take part in education. For example, a hearing loop may need to be installed in a class room to allow a student with a hearing impairment to access classes. However, adjustments must be reasonable; the Education Standards help to determine whether adjustments can be reasonably achieved or too onerous for schools to carry out.

See: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/pages/legislation.aspx>

## Anti-discrimination and equal opportunity

The *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Victoria) and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Commonwealth) make it unlawful for an educational authority to discriminate against a student on the basis of a disability such as total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions. Discrimination in this context means being treated unfairly and being disadvantaged because of a disability. Schools are required to make reasonable adjustments for a person with a disability.

## Human rights

The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Victoria) protects the human rights of all people in Victoria. Employees of the Department have legal responsibilities to ensure that their decision making is consistent with promoting and respecting rights in the Charter.

Students have the right to

- enjoy their human rights without discrimination,
- not have their privacy unlawfully and arbitrarily interfered with and
- such protection as is in their best interests and needed by them by reason of being children.

In making a decision to infringe on any of these rights, it is important to be able to establish that the limitation or restriction is reasonable and demonstrably justified.

## Privacy: Personal and health information

The collection, use, disclosure and management of personal information is governed by the *Information Privacy Act 2000* (Victoria) and the Information Privacy Principles contained within it. Personal information is defined as information or an opinion that is recorded in any form whether true or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion, but does not include health information. Staff who are collecting, using, disclosing or managing the personal information of a student must comply with this Act and the Information Privacy Principles contained within it.

The collection, use, disclosure and management of health information is governed by the *Health Records Act 2001* (Victoria) and the Health Privacy Principles contained within it. Health information is defined to include information or an opinion about:

- the physical, mental or psychological health of an individual,
- a disability of an individual,
- an individual's expressed wishes about the future provision of health services and
- a health service provided, or to be provided, to an individual.

Staff who are collecting, using, disclosing or managing the health information of a student must comply with this Act and the Health Privacy Principles contained within it.

# Guide to Privacy and Transfer of Student Information between Victorian Government Schools and Schools Interstate

*S616-2010 Privacy and Transfer of Student Information*

*DEECD MAIL Schools Bulletin - week ending 10 December 2010*

## Transition – Primary to Secondary School

After a primary school student has enrolled in a secondary school, the secondary school can request provision of CASES21 enrolment information electronically as long as the data is up-to-date and the electronic transfer is secure. Prior to the transfer of information, parents should be advised that the relevant data will be transferred and be given an opportunity to update the enrolment information (see template at appendix 1). This approach is accepted when records are being transferred to government schools in Victoria only – see below for information on interstate student transfers. Information on CASES21 guidelines can be found in CASES21 Admin Quick Guides.

After a transferring student has enrolled and attended the new school, the school can request information about the student's educational progress from the previous school.

## Transferring Student Confidential Files

A new school may request additional information, for example, about the social and emotional needs of the student. This information may have been generated as part of a Confidential Student File (CSF) and should therefore be transferred in accordance with the Public Records Act 1973 and the Department's policy.

In brief, a copy of relevant information attached to a CSF can only be transferred between Student Support Services Officers after the student has enrolled in the new school. Parents and students need to be informed that relevant, current information from the CSF will be disclosed to the receiving school, and the receiving school must inform the parent when the information from the CSF has been requested.

## Transferring Student Information for Duty of Care Purposes

Additional information, necessary for principals and teachers to protect the welfare of students, staff and the school community in accordance with their duty of care, may be provided by the student's previous school. The privacy laws are consistent with a principal's or a teacher's duty of care and recognise and permit the collection, use or disclosure of information that supports this function. When a school needs to transfer information to fulfil their duty of care, the parent and student need to be informed.

Under the *Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, teachers are required to disclose information about a student if there is a risk or perceived risk to the safety of the school community. Schools have a duty to ensure the information they disclose is accurate and current. Parents and secondary school students need to be informed that the student's personal information is being sent to the receiving school. Records transferred under the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 must be clearly labelled, indicating that they are being disclosed for this purpose, and contain a Record of Disclosure Authorisation cover sheet (see appendix 2). Information that is not relevant must not be forwarded.

## Transferring of Student Information between Government and Non-government Schools

The exchange of information between government and non-government schools requires the specific consent of the parent and, at secondary school level, the affected student. It is the responsibility of the receiving school to obtain the consent from the parent and/or student for the disclosure of this information. Alternatively, the parent can collect copies of the information requested directly from the previous school to provide to the receiving school.

Additional information on the transferring of student information can be found at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/transfers.aspx>

For more information on appropriate transferring of student information, see the Department's Privacy Unit webpage at:

<https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/Services/privacy/Pages/default.aspx>

Further information on interstate student transfers, including downloadable forms, protocols and fact sheets, is available from the website of the Ministerial Council on Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) at:

[http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/mceecdya/isdtn\\_interstate\\_student\\_data\\_transfer\\_note,12095.html](http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/mceecdya/isdtn_interstate_student_data_transfer_note,12095.html)

# Appendix 1

## Transferring Student Files Including Confidential Student Files between Victorian Government Schools

[SAMPLE ADVICE FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS – to be sent on school letterhead]

[Letter to parent/guardian advising that relevant information from their child's Confidential Student File will be transferred between schools.]

Dear Parent/Guardian

On enrolling/transferring your child in a Victorian government school, the [new school name] has requested administrative information as well as any relevant additional information about your child's educational progress.

[Use the following paragraph if student confidential file has been requested.]

A request has also been made to transfer information from your child's Confidential Student File. I intend releasing relevant information from this file. This information will be transferred to the Student Support Services Officer at [insert new school name].

[Insert school name] will be working to make the transition between schools as smooth as possible for you and your child.

If you have any queries about the transfer of information relating to your child and how the school manages this process, please contact our [Transition Coordinator] on [insert phone number].

Yours sincerely

Principal

[insert school name]

\_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

# Appendix 2

[To be sent on school letterhead]

## Record of Disclosure Authorisation

As Principal of [insert school name], I have authorised the attached information about [insert student name] being disclosed under the *Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* to [insert new school name]. To my knowledge only accurate and relevant information about the student is being transferred.

I have informed the parent/guardian of this disclosure. If you have any queries about the attached information, please contact me at [insert school name] on [insert school phone number].

[Signature of Principal from the school releasing the records]

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Date: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Principal

[insert school name]

[Signature of Principal from the school receiving the records]

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Date: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Principal

[insert school name]

Do not detach the Record of Disclosure Authorisation from the student's records.

# Definitions

## Adjustment

An ‘adjustment’ is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it achieves this purpose while taking into account the student’s learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the staff, and other students. A process of consultation is an integral part of ensuring that schools are meeting their obligations in relation to reasonable adjustments. Before any adjustments are made, consultation should take place between the school, student and parent/guardian/carer(s).

When making adjustments it is important to keep in mind that:

- many students with a disability are able to achieve educational standards commensurate with their peers,
- not all students with a disability will require adjustments to the curriculum, instruction or environment.
- not all students requiring adjustments to the curriculum, instruction or environment will have a disability,
- students with a disability requiring adjustments to one aspect of their learning may not require the same adjustment, if any, to another,
- before making an adjustment, the student and parent/guardian/carer(s) must be consulted,
- students with the same disability may not require equivalent adjustments,
- not every student with a disability will require ongoing adjustments,
- students with a disability may also be gifted and talented,
- students with a disability may have English as an additional language and
- adjustments must be reviewed regularly and changed or withdrawn where necessary.

### Examples of curriculum adjustments include:

- drawing from learning area content at different levels along the Foundation to Year 10 sequence to adjust age-equivalent content and
- drawing from, and emphasising, specific aspects of one or more of the cross-curriculum priorities to adjust the learning focus of a particular learning area.

### Examples of instructional adjustments include:

- providing alternative representations of teaching and learning materials (for example, using multimedia, Braille, illustrated texts, simplified texts or captioned videos) –

*“For students with visual impairments, large black text on a white background is easier to read than white text on a blackboard and handouts need to meet certain font size and colour requirements.”*

- levels of prompting,
- organising and connecting knowledge, skills and values to promote generalisation and
- providing alternative opportunities for students to display their learning (such as using technology and augmentative and alternative communication systems).

Examples of environmental adjustments include:

- alternative equipment/furnishings –

*“Instead of sidelining students in wheelchairs during Physical Education classes, provide another wheelchair and wheelchair hockey sticks so that the wheelchair bound student can be active with his/her peers: “Wheelchair hockey sticks are a great leveller of kids.”*

- assistive technology and alternative and augmentative communication systems,
- peer assistance and
- use of support personnel.

## Asperger’s Disorder (Asperger’s Syndrome)

Asperger’s syndrome is a developmental disorder that affects social interaction. The disorder is defined by restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behaviour, interests and activities. Asperger’s syndrome is one of the autism spectrum disorders (ASD).

## Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

A syndrome with core symptoms including difficulty maintaining attention, cognitive disorganisation, distractibility, impulsivity and hyperactivity. These symptoms may vary between children and across different situations and times. Common primary symptoms include perceptual and emotional immaturity, poor social skills, disruptive behaviours and academic problems.

## Autistic Disorder (Autism)

A disorder consisting of a set of developmental and behavioural features that affects social interaction and communication and manifests in restricted, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behaviour, interests and activities.

Cerebral palsy (CP) is an umbrella term that refers to a group of disorders affecting a person’s ability to move. Cerebral palsy affects people in different ways, including body movement, muscle control, muscle coordination, muscle tone, reflex, posture and balance. People who have cerebral palsy may be affected by epilepsy and may also have visual, learning, hearing, speech, and intellectual impairments.

## Co-morbid Condition

Having more than one concurrent diagnosis. Another term for this would be ‘dual diagnosis’. Many people with ASD have one or more additional diagnoses, such as ADHD, Tourette’s Syndrome or epilepsy.

## Down syndrome

People with Down syndrome have 47 chromosomes in their cells instead of 46. People with Down syndrome have some characteristic physical features, some health and development challenges and some level of intellectual disability.

## Epilepsy

A brain disorder in which clusters of nerve cells, or neurons, in the brain sometimes signal abnormally. In epilepsy, the normal pattern of neuronal activity becomes disturbed, causing strange sensations, emotions, and behaviour, or sometimes convulsions, muscle spasms and loss of consciousness.

## Fragile X Syndrome

A genetic disorder which can cause cognitive impairment and carries a number of other physical and behavioural characteristics. Some of these behaviours, such as poor eye contact, hand flapping, and poor social skills, also occur in children with autism. While most children with Fragile X Syndrome do not have all the characteristics of autism, around 15 - 33 per cent are diagnosed as autistic.

## Hearing loss

Hearing loss is measured as the increase in decibels (dB) of a person's hearing thresholds (the softest sounds that can be detected) relative to normal hearing levels (0 - 20 dB). Thresholds are tested across the frequencies of speech. Hearing loss is described as mild, moderate, severe and profound.

## Intellectual Disability (ID)

In Victoria, three main factors are used to define an intellectual disability. The first is a significantly-below-average score on an intelligence test (that is, an IQ of 70 or less where the IQ score is obtained from a standardised intelligence test). The second is difficulties with everyday life skills (such as the ability to dress or bathe without help, or express thoughts clearly). Tests of adaptive behaviour may be used to measure these skills. The third is that the above factors must be present before the individual turns 18 years of age. More than three quarters of people with an intellectual disability have a mild intellectual disability. The remainder have either a moderate, severe or profound intellectual disability.

## Muscular dystrophy

Muscular dystrophy is the name applied to a group of diseases that are, for the most part, genetically determined and that cause gradual wasting of muscle with accompanying weakness and deformity.

## Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

A disorder characterised by obsessions (recurrent persistent thoughts, impulses or images) and/or compulsions (repetitive behaviours such as checking or mental acts such as counting). The obsessions are distressing to the individual and often the aim of the compulsion is to reduce this distress. For example, if the obsession is a fear of germs, a person may frequently wash their hands.

## Regressive autism

Regression in autism spectrum disorders is well documented. Approximately 25 - 30 per cent of children with autism stop speaking after beginning to say words. Most examples of autistic regression concern loss of words at about 18 months of age. Some children lose social development instead of language; some lose both. After the regression, the child follows the standard pattern of autistic neurological development.

## Rett's Disorder

A disintegrative disorder where after a period of normal development, between the ages of five and 48 months, head growth decelerates and there is a loss of previously acquired skills. Other symptoms include stereotyped hand movements, uncoordinated movement and language difficulties. Only reported in females.

## Tourette's Syndrome

An inherited, neurological disorder characterised by repeated and involuntary body movements (tics) and uncontrollable vocal sounds. Involuntary symptoms can include eye blinking, repeated throat clearing or sniffing, arm thrusting, kicking movements, shoulder shrugging or jumping. In a minority of cases, the vocalisations include socially inappropriate words and phrases – called coprolalia. These outbursts are neither intentional nor purposeful. Onset occurs before the age of 18. The condition occurs in all ethnic groups with males affected three to four times more often than females.

## Tuberous Sclerosis

A complex genetic disorder affecting individuals with different degrees of severity. It derives its name from the tuber-like growths on the brain which calcify with age and become hard or 'sclerotic'. Tuberous Sclerosis growths can also affect other organs of the body (including the skin, eyes, heart, kidneys and lungs) but they rarely cause problems. Common symptoms include skin problems (white patches on skin or rash), developmental delay, epilepsy and hyperactivity. It occurs in one in 8000 births.

## Vision impairment

Vision impairment (often referred to as visual impairment) is any diagnosed condition of the eye or visual system that cannot be corrected to within normal limits. Disease, damage or injury causing vision impairment can occur to any part of the visual system – the eye, the visual pathways to the brain or the visual centre of the brain.

# Further Information: Contact details and links to organisations

## Student Inclusion & Engagement Division

Level 1, 33 St Andrews Place

East Melbourne 3002

Telephone: (03) 9637 2032

Email: [disability.services@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:disability.services@edumail.vic.gov.au)

Department regional offices: [www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/pages/regions.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/pages/regions.aspx)

## Assessments:

Lewis & Lewis

Telephone: (03) 9380 5742

Email: [lewis@mira.net](mailto:lewis@mira.net)

[www.lewisandlewis.com.au](http://www.lewisandlewis.com.au)

All Victorian Government Specialist Schools are listed under 'further information' on the following website:  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/Pages/disabilities.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/Pages/disabilities.aspx)

All Early Childhood Services and schools are listed on the following website:  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/findaservice/Home.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/findaservice/Home.aspx)

Ability Based Learning and Education Support (ABLES):  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/Pages/ables.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/Pages/ables.aspx)

Action on Disability within Ethnic Communities Inc (ADEC) (03) 9480 1666:  
[www.adecc.org.au](http://www.adecc.org.au)

Amaze (Autism Victoria) 1300 308 699: [www.amaze.org.au](http://www.amaze.org.au)

Assistance for Isolated Children: [www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/assistance-for-isolated-children](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/assistance-for-isolated-children)

Association for Children with a Disability (03) 9818 2000 (or for rural callers) 1800 654 013: [www.acd.org.au](http://www.acd.org.au)

Association of Independent Schools: [www.independentschools.vic.edu.au](http://www.independentschools.vic.edu.au)

Australasian Tuberous Sclerosis Society: [www.atss.org.au](http://www.atss.org.au)

Autism Friendly Learning: [www.education.vic.gov.au/autismfriendlylearning](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/autismfriendlylearning)

Autism Teaching Institute: [www.autismteachinginstitute.org.au/](http://www.autismteachinginstitute.org.au/)

Better Health Channel: [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)

Blind Citizens Australia (03) 9372 6400 (03) 9654 1400 or, Toll Free Number: 1800 033 660, or [www.bca.org.au](http://www.bca.org.au)

Catholic Education Office: [www.ceomelb.catholic.edu.au](http://www.ceomelb.catholic.edu.au)

Centre for Community Child Health: [www.rch.org.au/ccch/policybriefs.cfm](http://www.rch.org.au/ccch/policybriefs.cfm)

Children's Mobility Service: [www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au/our-services/children-s-mobility-services/](http://www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au/our-services/children-s-mobility-services/)

Communication Resource Centre: [www.scopevic.org.au](http://www.scopevic.org.au)

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development: [www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)

Distance Education Centre Victoria: [www.distance.vic.edu.au](http://www.distance.vic.edu.au)

Down Syndrome Victoria: [www.downsyndromevictoria.org.au/](http://www.downsyndromevictoria.org.au/)

Epilepsy Foundation of Australia: [www.epinet.org.au](http://www.epinet.org.au)

Fragile X Association of Australia: [www.fragilex.org.au](http://www.fragilex.org.au)

Home Schooling: [www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/primary/Pages/homeschool.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/primary/Pages/homeschool.aspx)

Home-Based Educational Support program: [www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/needs/Pages/homebased.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/needs/Pages/homebased.aspx)

Interpreting and translating: [www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/community/pages/interpreting.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/community/pages/interpreting.aspx)

Muscular Dystrophy Association Inc. (03) 9320 9555 or, for country callers, 1800 656 632

My School website: [www.myschool.com.au](http://www.myschool.com.au)

National Autistic Society (UK): [www.autism.org.uk/](http://www.autism.org.uk/)

Parents Victoria (03) 9380 2158 or, for country callers, 1800 032 023: [www.parentsvictoria.asn.au](http://www.parentsvictoria.asn.au)

Positive Partnerships: [www.autismspectrum.org.au](http://www.autismspectrum.org.au)

Program for Students with Disabilities: [www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/needs/pages/disabilityprogram.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/needs/pages/disabilityprogram.aspx)

Raising Children Network: [www.raisingchildren.net.au/children\\_with\\_autism/children\\_with\\_autism\\_landing.html](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au/children_with_autism/children_with_autism_landing.html)

Spina Bifida Foundation (03) 9663 0075: [www.sbfv.org.au](http://www.sbfv.org.au)

STAR Victoria Inc. – Acting for those with Intellectual Disability and Families (03) 9650 2730: [www.starvictoria.org.au](http://www.starvictoria.org.au)

Statewide Vision Resource Centre: [www.svrc.vic.edu.au](http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au)

Student Support Services: [www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/studentsupport.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/studentsupport.aspx)

Tourette Syndrome Association of Victoria (02) 9382 3726: [www.tsavic.org.au](http://www.tsavic.org.au)

Victorian Council of School Organisations (03) 9429 5900: [www.viccso.org.au](http://www.viccso.org.au)

Victorian Deaf Institute: [www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/needs/pages/vdei.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/needs/pages/vdei.aspx)

# Other resources relating to transitions

Association for Children with a Disability 2011, Transition to Secondary School: Supporting students with a disability in the transition to Victorian government secondary schools (1st ed.).

The Victorian Careers Curriculum Framework – an online resource based on a developmental continuum of learning that supports the work of teachers, trainers and careers practitioners in preparing young people for a successful transition into further education, training or employment:

[www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/careers/carframe/Pages/framework.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/careers/carframe/Pages/framework.aspx)

Brereton, AV, Bull, KJ 2012, Autism Spectrum Disorders: Planning a successful transition to secondary school, The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Art Resistance Video 2007, Critical Bridges: Meeting Challenges at Points of Transition in Education by Working Together (DVD), NSW Department of Education and Training and Disability Council of NSW.

The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) 2010, Sharing Our Journey – The transition from kindergarten to school, online resource:

[www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/healthwellbeing/sharingourjourneykit.pdf](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/healthwellbeing/sharingourjourneykit.pdf)

DEECD, Starting Secondary School, online resource:

[www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/secondary/Pages/starting.aspx?Redirect=1](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/secondary/Pages/starting.aspx?Redirect=1)

Queensland Government Department of Education, Training and Employment, Starting secondary school, online resource:

<http://education.qld.gov.au/student-services/learning/disability/parent-guide/phases-of-learning/high-school.html>

Adreon, D, Stella, J 2001, 'Transition to Middle to High School: Increasing the Success of Students with Aspergers Syndrome', Intervention in School & Clinic, vol. 36, no.5. Retrieved online:

[www.tonyattwood.com.au/index.php/component/djcatalog2/item/32-adolescents/204-transition-to-middle-to-high-school-increasing-the-success-of-students-with-aspergers-syndrome-intervention-in-school-clinic](http://www.tonyattwood.com.au/index.php/component/djcatalog2/item/32-adolescents/204-transition-to-middle-to-high-school-increasing-the-success-of-students-with-aspergers-syndrome-intervention-in-school-clinic)

Curriculumpress online resources for teachers: <http://www.curriculumpress.edu.au/main/goproduct/12288>

## Supplementary program guidelines and application links:

### Individual learning plan template links:

[Blank template for primary students with Individual Learning Plans \(Word - 60Kb\)](#)

[Blank template for secondary students with Individual Learning Plan \(Word - 64Kb\)](#)

[Sample report using an Individual Learning Plan for some domains \(Word - 157Kb\)](#)

[Sample report using an Individual Learning Plan for all domains \(PDF - 144Kb\)](#)

### Accessible Building Program Guidelines link:

[Accessible Building Program Guidelines \(Word - 432Kb\)](#)

### Equipment Grant Guidelines and Application Form links:

[Equipment Grants Guidelines](#)

[Equipment Grants Application Form](#)

### Medical Intervention Support Guidelines and Application Form links:

[Medical Intervention Support Guidelines](#)

[Medical Intervention Support Application Form](#)

### Personal Care Support link:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/personalcare.aspx>

### Schoolcare Program Guidelines and Referral Form links:

[2014 Schoolcare Program Guidelines \(pdf - 3.42mb\)](#)

[2014 Schoolcare Program - Referral Form \(pdf - 81.34kb\)](#)