

Transition to School Policy

Scope

This policy applies to management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, educators, children, visitors and families of the Service.

Statement

Starting school is a significant milestone in the life of any child and family. Our Service supports continuity of learning and transitions for each child by sharing relevant information, clarifying responsibilities and by developing strategies that support a positive transition to school (National Quality Standard 6.3). Furthermore, we are committed to engage children, families, professionals, educators, and community members in the transition to school process to ensure the implementation of this policy is meaningful, supportive and reflective of best practice. Transition is viewed as a collaborative and dynamic process occurring over time ensuring a sense of belonging in all environments (Transition to School: Position Statement, 2011).

Legislative Requirements

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in their service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
6.2.1	Transitions	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities

Related Policies

Educational Program Policy Educational Leader Policy	Interactions with Children Policy Privacy Policy
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Goal

Effective transition practices have as their base, a commitment to building secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships. One outcome of such relationships is that all participants regard themselves, and other participants, as valued members of the school community (Dockett & Perry, 2014).

Our Service aims to liaise with local schools to develop a smooth and comprehensive transition to school for all children. We will support children and families by strengthening the development and delivery of transition programs and provide a shared understanding between our Service and local primary schools about what is important for children and their families during the transition to school process.

We believe it is vital to enhance children's social and emotional development to ensure a successful transition to school. By developing these skills and abilities and promoting their creativity and individuality, we promote children's ability to become confident and successful learners.

Strategies

All strategies detailed below will be implemented to the extent reasonably practicable.

Implementation

Children are challenged with several transitional changes during early childhood. This includes orienting children into early childhood care and education services, transitioning between routines and rooms, and then transitioning into primary school. Children respond in different ways to transitions - some with confidence and others with hesitation. Children's confidence will be enhanced when changes happen gradually and when time is prioritised to support these transitions with sensitivity, planning, and preparation.

This first experience children have of school has a great impact on their progress and future schooling (Margetts, 2007). Transition to school should therefore be prepared for in an understanding, calm, organised, and knowledgeable manner. We acknowledge the critical role we as Educators have in providing an educational environment that supports children's wellbeing, promotes equity and celebrates diversity. Our transition to school program is developed in collaboration with all stakeholders and ensures children are active participants in their transition to school.

For children attending school the following year, our 'Transition to School Program' provides additional activities and experiences to help prepare them for a smooth transition to a primary school environment. This program refers to daily-programmed activities and experiences that are implemented throughout the year, encouraging the developmental skills that are optimal for children to develop before commencing school.

Transition to school program/Practices

As Early Childhood educators who are instrumental in influencing children's learning patterns for later life, it is our responsibility to set them on a course that will inspire investigation, exploration, problem solving, questioning, discovery, and the disposition to take on challenges.

To ensure the transition to school is a positive experience for children and families, we will implement a range of activities and experiences that may include, but is not limited to:

- visits from Primary school teachers and/or Principals to our Service
- exchanging information about a child's individual strengths and needs
- networking with educators, primary school teachers and Principals
- developing children's talking and listening skills
- early literacy- rhyme, chants, songs
- alphabet and number awareness
- shapes and colour recognition
- social and emotional enhancement
- pre-writing development
- name writing and recognition
- concentrating on the task at hand
- determination when faced with complications
- responding positively to new situations
- taking responsibility for their own behaviour
- developing the communication skills necessary for group or individual play
- developing positive feelings about themselves and others
- experiencing a sense of self-satisfaction resulting from achievement
- managing packing and unpacking of school bags with their personal belongings
- experiencing eating from lunch boxes, as we educate children about different foods eaten at recess and lunch and how to open different packaged foods.

Preparing Children as they Transition to School

There are many unique differences in the school environment which children should become familiar with as they prepare to transition to school. This includes:

- having one teacher for the majority of the day
- toileting without supervision
- wearing uniforms
- transport
- sitting at a desk
- responsibility for own belongings
- listening to instructions
- specific focused lessons
- a school bell or siren indicating set breaks
- negotiating a large playground
- homework
- the canteen or tuck shop
- before and after school care

The Approved Provider/ Nominated Supervisor/ Management will:

- establish strategies across our Service to ensure there is continuity of learning when children transition to school

- advocate for 'ready' by ensuring schools are ready for our children to transition into their environment
- discuss expectations with families for their child as they prepare to transition to school
- work in partnership with families to ensure children's transition to school is positive, informed, and enhances individual development
- be aware of critical cut off dates with various Education Departments to accommodate children with a disability or developmental delay into new educational settings and share this information with families
- support and advocate for enhanced transition programs for children with a disability or developmental delay with feeder primary schools
- be flexible and ensure transition programs are tailored to the specific needs of all children in our Service
- share information between our Service, schools and families to facilitate a successful transition. (This may be a Transition Statement or similar)

Educators will:

- incorporate transition to school into the daily program by encouraging children to think and talk about school by exploring various elements of primary school (This may include uniforms, eating packed lunches, talking about school and how a school environment is different).
- talk with children about starting school, respecting any concerns and communicating these to families
- ensure children are active participants in their transition to school
- communicate with families to ensure we meet the requirements of the individual strengths and needs of all children and families
- consider family priorities and any concerns about the transition process. Each family's cultural and linguistic needs will be respected, along with family diversity.
- develop a program to ensure a smooth transition for children from the education and care environment to the school environment. The program requires both parent and educator support for the child. This cooperation will ensure the best possible environment for children's transition.
- contemplate the individual rest or sleep needs of children in the months leading up to the transition to school and whether a reduction in sleep time may prepare some children for the longer school day routine. Children will continue to have rest periods with quiet activities during the day.
- discuss children's development, strengths, and competencies for transition to school with families
- support each family's decision about when to send children to school, acknowledging the NSW Department of Education policy that "children must turn five by July 31 in the year they start Kindergarten. All children in NSW must start school by their 6th birthday".
- develop an information package for families about transition to school. This will include information on how to support their child/children and what to expect with the transition process. This package will be reviewed annually to meet the needs of the families and to integrate current information from local schools.
- be supported to access and attend professional development opportunities to ensure current knowledge and practice regarding transition to school

- facilitate relationships and networking with local schools to support children and families with the transition process and to open lines of communication. The importance of school preparation through school visits, orientation days and meeting the Kindergarten teachers will be promoted
- facilitate each child's development as a capable learner through open ended learning experiences
- effectively evaluate our Preschool's transition program which is supported by our family's feedback at our annual School Leavers reunion
- be flexible and responsive to the needs of children and families
- take into account contextual aspects of community, and of individual families and children within that community.
- (Adapted from *Continuity of Learning*-Dockett & Perry, 2014.)

Transition Statements

Transition to School Statements have been introduced across some Australian states and territories. The aim is to improve information sharing and communication between Early Childcare Services and schools. The Transition to School Statement provides a snapshot of each child's strengths, interests, learning interests and background.

Transition to School Statements are mandatory as part of our NSW Start Strong Fee Relief Funding LDC Funding Agreement.

When a child may not be ready to transition to school

We understand that all children are unique and achieve milestones in their own time. Parents and carers know their child's strengths, interests and needs better than anyone and have expectations about what they think their child should be able to do. Parents may ask educators their opinion on specific skills such as pre-writing skills, numbers, social and emotional development to assist in making decisions about starting school. The decision for when their child starts school is an individual decision. For some children, starting school at age six rather than five may provide them with an additional year to mature and increase independence.

We believe that early childhood educators have professional insight to assist families in making the decision about a child's transition to school as they have developed trusting and supportive relationships over time. However, prior to speaking with families about their personal views, educators will discuss their thoughts with the Director about the child's individual strengths and needs and any recommendation about beginning school will be communicated with families during a scheduled meeting. We encourage parents/carers to discuss the timing of their child's school entry with other professionals who know their child well such as early intervention practitioners. Our educators will adhere to confidentiality at all times.

State-By-State Specifications

NEW SOUTH WALES (NSW)

- Children can begin compulsory Kindergarten at the beginning of the school year if they turn 5 on or before 31 July in that year. All children must be enrolled in school by the time they turn 6.
- Starting school: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/primary-schools/starting-school>
- **Transition to School Statement.** Use of the statement is *optional*. Parent written authorisation is required for the Department of Education to collect personal and health information about any child enrolled in our Service. Services may use the PDF Transition to School Statement or if provided access, use the Transition to [School Digital Statement](#).
- [Guide to the Transition to School Statement](#)
- [Getting ready for primary school](#)
- [Strong and successful start to school Transition guidelines \(2020\)](#).

Source

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (n.d.). *Developmental milestones and the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Standards*.

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Dockett, S., & Perry, B. (2007). *Transitions to school: Perceptions, expectations and experiences*. Sydney, Australia: UNSW Press.

Dockett, S., & Perry, B. (2014). *Continuity of learning: A resource to support effective transition to school and school age care*. Canberra, ACT: Australian Government Department of Education.

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Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Early Childhood Intervention Australia. (2019). Transition to School Resource: <https://re-imagine.com.au/practitioner/transition-to-school/>

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (Amended 2023).

Mielekamp, R. (2008). *Sharing our journey: School readiness*. Australia: Rachel Mielekamp.

NSW Department of Education. (2021). [Transition to school. Literature review. Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation](#).

moving up and moving on.

NSW Education Standards Authority <https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/parents/parent-guide/transitioning-to-school>

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne. (2008). Policy brief: Rethinking school readiness: https://www.rch.org.au/uploadedFiles/Main/Content/ccch/PB10_SchoolReadiness.pdf

Review

POLICY REVIEWED	JUNE 2023	NEXT REVIEW DATE	JUNE 2024
VERSION NUMBER	V9.6.23		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual policy review • Transition Statement section revised. State/Territory information updated to include Transition to School statement requirements • Sources checked and updated. Publications no longer valid deleted. • Continuous improvement/reflection section added • Title changed from <i>Transition to School and Other Organisations Policy</i> 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
JUNE 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy maintenance - no major changes to policy • minor formatting edits within text • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required 	JUNE 2023	
JUNE 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review or policy changed to align with transition to school organisation for ECE services and schools • small changes/additions in policy to reflect best current evidence (program/practices) • Sources and links checked for currency 	JUNE 2022	
OCTOBER 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition statement section amended for NSW, VIC • additional information regarding children who may not be ready to transition to school • State specific links checked and updated • sources checked for currency 	OCTOBER 2021	
OCTOBER 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor punctuation and wording editing. • Related policies added. • Review and update/correction of all sources and URLs throughout document. 	OCTOBER 2020	
OCTOBER 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • References corrected, added &/or updated. • Sources/references alphabetised. • Current best practice added. 	OCTOBER 2019	
OCTOBER 2017	Updated references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard	OCTOBER 2018	
AUGUST 2017	Major changes made to policy, identifying varying aspects of transitioning children to school and discussing with families if a child is not ready to start formal schooling.	AUGUST 2018	

Continued next page: Developmental Milestones

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

3-5 YEARS

Excerpt from Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. (n.d.). [Developmental milestones and the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Standards.](#)

CHILD'S NAME	AGE	DATE	
EDUCATOR'S NAME			
DEVELOPMENTAL AREA	OBSERVED	LINK TO EYLF & NQS	COMMENTS
PHYSICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dresses and undresses with little help • hops, jumps and runs with ease • climbs steps with alternating feet • gallops and skips by leading with one foot • transfers weight forward to throw ball • attempts to catch ball with hands • climbs playground equipment with increasing agility • holds crayon/pencil etc. between thumb and first two fingers • exhibits hand preference • imitates variety of shapes in drawing, e.g. circles • independently cuts paper with scissors • toilet themselves • feeds self with minimum spills • dresses/undresses with minimal assistance • walks and runs more smoothly • enjoys learning simple rhythm and movement routines • develops ability to toilet train at night 	<p>EYLF Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing - Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing. e.g. "Promote continuity of children's personal health and hygiene by sharing ownership of routines and schedules with children, families and the community." (p.32)</p> <p>NQS: Areas 1, 2, 3, 5, 6</p>	



<p style="text-align: center;">SOCIAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• enjoys playing with other children• may have a particular friend• shares, smiles and cooperates with peers• jointly manipulates objects with one or two other peers• develops independence and social skills they will use for learning and getting on with others at preschool and school	<p>EYLF Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity - Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect. E.g. "express a wide range of emotions, thoughts and views constructively." (p.24) NQS: Areas 1, 5, 6</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">EMOTIONAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understands when someone is hurt and comforts them• attains gender stability (sure she/he is a girl/boy)• may show stronger preference for same-sex playmates• may enforce gender-role norms with peers• may show bouts of aggression with peers• likes to give and receive affection from parents• may praise themselves and be boastful	<p>EYLF Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world - Children respond to diversity with respect. E.g. "plan experiences and provide resources that broaden children's perspectives and encourage appreciation of diversity." (p.27) NQS: Areas 1, 2, 5, 6</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">COGNITIVE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understands opposites (e.g. big/little) and positional words (middle, end)• uses objects and materials to build or construct things, e.g. block tower, puzzle, clay, sand and water• builds tower eight to ten blocks• answers simple questions• counts five to ten things• has a longer attention span• talks to self during play - to help guide what he/she does• follows simple instructions• follows simple rules and enjoys helping• may write some numbers and letters	<p>EYLF Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators - Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media. E.g. "use language and engage in play to imagine and create roles, scripts, and ideas." (p.42) NQS: Areas 1, 5</p>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">engages in dramatic play, taking on pretend character rolesrecalls events correctlycounts by rote, having memorised numberstouches objects to count - starting to understand relationship between numbers and objectscan recount a recent storycopies letters and may write some unpromptedcan match and name some colours		
LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">speaks in sentences and use many different wordsanswers simple questionsasks many questionstells storiestalks constantlyenjoys talking and may like to experiment with new wordsuses adult forms of speechtakes part in conversationsenjoys jokes, rhymes and storieswill assert self with words	EYLF Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators - Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking. E.g. "Provide children with access to a range of technologies." (p.44) NQS: Areas 1, 5, 6, 7	
SEEK ADVICE IF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">is not understood by othershas a speech fluency problem or stammeringis not playing with other childrenis not able to have a conversationis not able to go to the toilet or wash him/herself	NQS: Areas 1,5,6,7	