

Transitions are times when children move between and adapt to different spaces or places and with different people, experiences, expectations and routines. The term encompasses regular transitions across a day and those that occur at significant times in children's lives such as starting in an education and care service or starting full-time school (EYLF, p. 16).

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, 2001).

Transition from early childhood to primary school is an important milestone for children. A positive experience that has long term benefits for future learning and relationships. Our Centre aims to support children and families by strengthening the development and delivery of transition programs, providing a shared understanding between our Centre and local primary schools about what is important for children and their families during the transition to school progression. We believe it is vital to enhance children's social and emotional development to ensure a successful transition to school by developing their skills, abilities and individuality which promote children's ability to become prosperous learners.

Children are faced with several transitional changes during early childhood. This includes orientating children into early childhood, transitioning between routines and rooms, and then to 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, K. 2007). For many children the change of setting and sense of moving on acts as a stimulus for development but if they find this change too abrupt there is a risk that the child will regress (Bennett, J 2007).

## Transition to School Program

Our Kindergarten program refers to daily-programmed activities and experiences that are implemented throughout the year, encouraging the developmental skills that are optimal for children to retain before commencing school.

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:

- Family information sessions
- Visits from Primary School Teachers
- Exchanging information about a child's learning and development
- Networking with Educators, Primary School Teacher and Principals.
- Alphabet and Number recognition
- 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 behaviour as it impacts on others in the group
- 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.



### *Management will:*

Establish methods across our Centre to ensure there is continuity of learning when children transition to school.

### *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.
- Communicate with families to ensure we meet the individual strengths and needs of the children and families.
- Consider family priorities and any concerns about the transition process. Each families 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 transitioning to school and whether a reduction in sleep times may prepare some children for the longer school day routine. Children will continue to have rest periods and quiet activities during the day. Beds will be available for any child who requires rest or sleep.
- Emphasis school readiness across each developmental area throughout the day. Children will be encouraged to extend their knowledge through their interests in which educators will assist children to challenge their skills regularly.
- Repeatedly discuss children's development and readiness for school with families
- Support each family's decision about when to send children to school, acknowledging the Department of Education and Training's policy that "children must turn five by 30<sup>th</sup> April to attend school that year.
- 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 regularly promoted.
- Facilitate each child's development as a capable learner
- Be well planned and effectively evaluated
- Be flexible and responsive
- Take into account contextual aspects of community, and of individual families and children within that community.

(Adapted from *Transitions to School: Perceptions, Expectations and Experiences* by Sue Dockett and Bob Perry)

### **Transition to School Statement**

The VIC Transition to School Statement is a practical and simple tool designed to enable information to be shared between families, early childhood services and schools.

The Statement is completed by the child's Early Childhood Teacher in cooperation with the family. All information is provided voluntarily. The Statement is communicated to the child's intended school where it provides the school and teachers with information they can use in planning and preparing for the child's arrival and transition into the new learning environment.

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**Source:** National Quality Standard, Early Years Learning Framework, Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014), Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2015, ECA Code of Ethics, National Quality Standard Professional Learning Program Newsletter No.70 – Transitions: Moving in, moving up and moving on, Transition to School Resource <http://www.transitiontoschoolresource.org.au/tts/content/considering-when-to-start-school>, Victoria State Government Education and Training <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/learning/Pages/transition.aspx> <http://www.liveinvictoria.vic.gov.au/living-in-victoria/education-and-childcare/primaryschools#.V8gSQ5h97IV>

**Date Implemented:** 16/04/2012



National Quality Standard – NQS		
Quality Area 6: Partnership with Families		
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.
Education and Care Service National Regulations		
73	Educational programs	
74	Information about the educational program to be kept available	
75	Information about educational program to be given to parents	
76	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program	
Early Years Learning Framework		
Learning Outcome 1-5		
1-5	All Learning Outcomes under the Early Years Learning Framework will be addressed through our Policy and practices.	