

TRANSITION: A POSITIVE START TO SCHOOL

Information sheet for families

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

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

WHY IS A POSITIVE START TO SCHOOL IMPORTANT?

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

ENROLLING YOUR CHILD IN SCHOOL

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

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

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

TRANSITION LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HOW INFORMATION IS SHARED

The Transition Statement will be completed, shared and stored using an online tool hosted on the *Insight Assessment Platform*. All information hosted on the *Insight Assessment Platform* is stored securely within Australia.

The *Insight Assessment Platform* is in use in all Victorian government schools and allows schools to create an enduring record of your child's learning and development. Some Catholic and Independent schools also receive your child's Transition Statement via the *Insight Assessment Platform* or they will receive a paper-based or electronic copy from your child's early childhood service.

The Department of Education and Training (the Department) contracts some of its functions to external service providers. Where this occurs, data security measures are required by the Department as part of the contracting process. The Department has conducted a privacy impact assessment of the *Insight Assessment Platform* to ensure compliance with the Department's Information Privacy Policy www.education.vic.gov.au/Pages/privacypolicy.

Information from the Transition Statement, and some school enrolment data may be used by the Department for monitoring and research purposes. This information would be presented in a statistical form (e.g. numbers and graphs) and would **not** name individual children.

For more information about the *Insight Assessment Platform*, contact the Department at psts@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Appropriate and safe information sharing ensures that Victorian education and care professionals have the knowledge and information needed to promote and respond to child wellbeing or safety needs and risks. Information about your child and family may be shared as required, including where sharing is necessary for the early childhood service to meet its duty of care, anti-discrimination, occupational health and safety and child wellbeing and safety obligations. For more information, visit <https://www.vic.gov.au/information-sharing-schemes-and-the-maram-framework>.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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

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