

**INTRODUCTION**

*BDCS recognises that the early years of school, both pre-school and the first years of primary school, are critical for later school success. Here children establish the attitudes, behaviours and competencies crucial to ongoing educational achievement.*

**OVERALL GOALS – What are we going to do?**

- Establish and maintain positive relationships with children, families, educators, and primary schools that will support children's transition.
- Provide a transition process that is responsive to the needs of the children and their families.
- Provide a comprehensive program that encompasses all learning opportunities and reflects continuous development for each child.
- Support educators understanding of successful transition processes for children through ongoing training, participation in networking opportunities, providing current research journals, and attendance at conferences.

**OVERALL STRATEGIES – How will it be done?****Connecting with Children**

- BDCS will include children in discussions about their new schools and involve these children in group games and activities to help them to build relationships with those moving to the same school.
- Children are encouraged to share their expectations and experiences of school.
- BDCS respects children's knowledge of school and educators take part in conversations with the children to reflect on their knowledge and perceptions of primary school.
- BDCS will continue to support our children and families after they have transitioned to primary school by contacting the schools at the beginning of the school year to offer any further support that may be of benefit.

**Connecting with families**

- We welcome families from our community and begin to build trusting, genuine relationships with them before they begin attending our service. This forms the foundation to then work collaboratively with children, families and local school communities. This collaboration will include exploring any anxieties, unpacking myths and setting goals for a smooth transition.
- Our preschool shares information about schools, open days and community events to encourage families to become familiar with local educational services.
- Educators refer families to appropriate support services when applicable to aid the transition process.
- BDCS supports families to connect with each other leading up to their transition to school.
- Educators seek and listen to advice from families to provide the best support for the child.
- Our connection with families continues after they leave the service, with invitations to come back and visit and share new knowledge and skills.

**Connecting with professionals**

- Educators collaborate and reflect on each child’s learning journey to provide individualised and effective support.
- Educators collaborate across services to support children’s transition, within our privacy guidelines.

### **Connecting with Communities**

- Our presence in the community has forged relationships with local schools that assist collaboration and support for children moving into formal schooling.
- As children from our service transition to school, Transition to School Statements will be completed so as they can be provided to new teachers.

### **Recognising Strengths**

- When children start at our service, educators respond to children’s strengths and interests with a comprehensive, high quality program, in recognition that their learning journey is a continuous one.
- Educators support children to have a positive start to their learning journey by supporting their health and wellbeing. This includes supporting their development of empathy, so they can be understanding of others, guiding their conflict resolution strategies, and building a sense of agency and responsibility in decision making within their environments.
- BDCS will recognise, support and plan for the transition to school with experiences that “involve negotiating and adjusting to a number of changes including the physical environment, learning expectations, rules and routines, social status and identity, and relationships for children and families” (Kids Matter).
- Play based learning is the foundation of the BDCS program and is used to build children’s resilience and self-help skills, develop their confidence and respect, as well as their relationship and communication skills. This is embedded in BDCS “everyday” program and not viewed as a separate part for transition purposes.
- Children’s participation in group games and experiences will be planned for and encouraged through both intentional and spontaneous moments.
- Literacy, scientific concepts and numeracy are included in play and interest-based activities for all children to participate in.
- BDCS recognises and values family knowledge about their children and uses this to guide family-centred practice.
- Children learn about diverse cultures, people and ways of being in order to develop tolerance and acceptance of others.

### **Reflective Practice**

- Learning is visible to families through reflection that links activities to theories and follow up actions.
- Established networks between the service, support services and local schools, aids reflection on the best ways to support children as they transition.
- Educators reflect on assumptions around transition as they participate in team meetings, whole staff meetings and training.
- BDCS places priority on the support needs of the child and family and will advocate for them to aid change when necessary.
- Educators will acknowledge child and family reflections and make appropriate changes to practices and programming as a result.

### **Children with Additional Needs**

- Families of children with additional needs are encouraged to talk to prospective schools as early as possible to discuss the interests, abilities and additional needs of their child and how these may be accommodated at school.
- BDCS will support this process with clear and meaningful communication with relevant schools, support programs and Aboriginal Liaison officers where appropriate.
- We will help families make informed decisions to find the best possible school to support their child's learning journey.

### **Transition to School Statement**

- Documentation throughout the child's time with BDCS will be used to inform the Transition to School Statement.
- Our service will complete a transition to school statement for each child departing for primary school.
- The NSW Department of Education format for the Transition to School Statement will be used by all educators.
- All stakeholders will be consulted throughout this process, including children, families and relevant schools, within our privacy guidelines.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **DIRECTORS AND NOMINATED SUPERVISORS WILL:**

- Develop an information package for families about the transition to school. This will include information on school readiness skills, how to support children and what to expect with the transition process. As well as additional information that will go out in the newsletter. This package will be reviewed each year to meet the needs of the families and update information provided from local schools
- Establish systems and programming across the education and care service to ensure there is continuity of learning when children transition to school. e.g. use of the "Jolly Phonics" program in preschool and Childcare, which is also used in local schools.
- Work with local schools in the provision and facilitation of transition. E.g. organising visits to local schools, inviting schools to come and talk to the children in the service about school
- Consider the individual rest or sleep needs of children in the months leading up to the transition 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.
- Regularly discuss children's development and readiness for school with families.
- Introduce an "Education and Care Program" which covers the following skills
  - Concentrating on the task at hand
  - Persevering when faced with difficulties
  - Responding positively to new situations
  - Taking some responsibility for their behaviour as it impinges 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

#### **EDUCATORS WILL:**

- Encourage children to start thinking and talking about school by exploring various elements of the school experience for e.g. lining up, getting the roll marked, recess and lunch breaks as well as reading and writing activities.
  - Talk with children about starting school, respecting any concerns and communicating these to families.
  - Consider family priorities and any concerns about the transition process. Each families cultural and linguistic needs will be respected, along with family diversity.
  - Support the decision of families as to where & when their child will attend school
- “Children must turn five by July 31 in the year they start kindergarten. All children in NSW must start school by their sixth birthday”**
- Focus on School readiness in all areas of development throughout the day. Children will be encouraged to extend their knowledge via their interests and educators will assist children to challenge their skills regularly

#### **MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

*This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every 18 months. Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.*

*In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family’s ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.*

#### **RELATED LEGISLATION**

- Education and Care Services National Regulations: 118. 148

#### **LINKS TO:**

- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: 6.2.1
- Early Years Learning Framework Principles: Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships; Partnerships; High expectations and equity; Respect for diversity; Ongoing learning and reflective practice.

## SOURCES

- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): Transition to School– [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Department of Education “Continuity of Learning: A resource to support effective transition to school and school aged care.”
- Kids Matter

## Policy Revision History

<i>Date</i>	<i>Authorised By</i>	<i>Description of Amendments</i>	<i>Sections affected</i>
Jan 2021	P. Ritchie – GM		

**Review Date: Jan 2022**