



# BOURKE AND DISTRICT CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

### POLICY NAME: TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

#### POLICY STATEMENT

Our service recognises that starting school is a significant milestone in the life of any child and family. During this time we endeavour to support 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.

#### BACKGROUND

In NSW, children can begin compulsory Kindergarten at the beginning of the school year if they turn 5 on or before 31<sup>st</sup> July in that year. All children must be enrolled in school by the time they turn 6. The first experience children have of school has a great impact on their progress and future schooling. 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. We therefore ensure that transition to school is prepared for in an understanding, calm, organised, and knowledgeable manner.

#### OVERALL STRATEGIES / HOW WILL IT BE DONE?

##### TRANSITION TO SCHOOL PROGRAM/PRACTICES

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.

Some of the activities that we will implement to ensure that transition to school is a positive experience include, but are not limited to:

- Visits from primary school teachers and/or principals to our service.
- Exchanging information about a child's individual strengths and needs with their future school.
- Developing children's talking and listening skills.
- Phonemic and phonological awareness as part of our Heggerty's program.
- Counting and number awareness.
- Pre-writing development.
- Name writing and recognition.
- Shapes and colour recognition.
- Developing self-help skills.
- Supporting to building resilience and determination.
- Supporting children to take responsibility for their own behavior and to understand the potential consequences of their behavior.
- Developing children's communication skills necessary for group or individual play.
- Supporting children to be able to recognise different emotions and empathise with others.

##### PREPARING CHILDREN AS THEY TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

There are many unique differences in the school environment which we will support children to become familiar with as part of the transition process. We encourage parents/guardians to continue these conversations at home with their children to further support their understanding. Some key differences are:

- Wearing a uniform.
- The way in which they travel to school.
- Spending periods of time engaging in an activity while sitting at a table/desk.
- Taking responsibility for their own belongings.
- An increased requirement to follow instructions.
- Specific focused lessons.
- A school bell indicating set breaks.
- The school canteen.
- Homework.

#### TRANSITION TO SCHOOL STATEMENTS



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During term 3 and 4, teachers at our Preschool service will begin to complete individual Transition to School Statements for each child who is starting Kindergarten the following year. These statements will be sent directly to the child's school (provided written consent has been received from the child's parent/guardian). The purpose of this statement is to improve information sharing and communication between early childcare services and schools and support continuity of learning. The Transition to School Statement provides a snapshot of each child's strengths, interests, ways of learning best, their background and any other information that the early childcare service believes would be useful for the school to know.

#### 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/guardians 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/guardians 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 our 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. Prior to speaking with families about their personal views regarding the child, educators will first discuss these views with their Nominated Supervisor and any recommendation regarding starting school will then be communicated with parents/guardians during a scheduled meeting. We encourage parents/guardians to discuss the timing of their child's school entry with other professionals who know their child well such as early intervention practitioners.

#### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

##### THE APPROVED PROVIDER AND NOMINATED SUPERVISORS WILL:

- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Ensure educators (including casual staff) receive information and induction training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of the Transition to School Policy, their responsibilities in implementing it, and any changes that are made over time.
- Ensure students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy.
- Establish strategies to ensure there is continuity of learning when children transition to school.
- Share information between our service, schools and families to facilitate a successful transition.
- Be flexible and ensure transition programs are tailored to the specific needs of all children in our service.
- Support and advocate for enhanced transition programs for children with a disability or developmental delay with their future school.
- 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.

##### 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.
- Consider family priorities and any concerns about the transition process.
- Ensure each family's cultural and linguistic needs are respected, along with family diversity.
- 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 and beds will still be available for any child who requires to lay and rest or sleep).
- 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 policy of when children must begin formal schooling



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- Facilitate relationships and networking with local schools to support children and families with the transition process and to open lines of communication.
- Promote the importance of school preparation through school visits, orientation days and meeting the kindergarten teachers.
- Be flexible and responsive to the needs of children and families.
- Consider contextual aspects of community, and of individual families and children within that community.

#### FAMILIES WILL:

- Be responsible for completing all documentation required to enrol their child into school.
- Be encouraged to discuss any concerns they have regarding their child starting school with educators at the Preschool service.
- Understand that regardless of any professional opinions, it is for them to decide when their child is to start school (provided they start by the time they turn 6).

#### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our Transition to School Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators, and management.

#### CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Standard 1	Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture
Standard 2	Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
Standard 3	Families and communities are informed and involved
Standard 4	Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account
Standard 10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

#### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

#### QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

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 the 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.

#### EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS AND NATIONAL LAW

Sec. 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Sec. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Sec. 175	Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents
92	Medication record
93	Administration of medication record
94	Exception to authorisation requirement- anaphylaxis or asthma emergency
99	Children leaving the education and care service
102	Authorisations for excursions
102(c)	Conduct a risk assessment for transporting children by the education and care service
102(d)	Authorisation for service to transport children
157	Access for parents
160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider
161	Authorisation to be kept in enrolment record

