

Supporting Your Child's Transition to School

Starting school is a big step for you and your child. It can be both challenging and exciting. As families, the support you give your child is important because you are your child's first and most important teacher.

Tips for transition

Below are some tips on how you can help your child have a positive start to school.

The year before school

- Ask your child what they think about starting school.
- Encourage your child to ask questions about going to school.
- Help your child stay healthy. Make sure they have regular health and dental checks and keep immunisations up to date.
- Encourage your child to try to do things on their own such as dressing, going to the toilet, washing their hands, unwrapping their food and opening and closing their drink bottle.
- Talk to friends and other families about what school is like.
- Attend transition-to-school programs and activities at your child's early years service and school.
- Talk to your child's early childhood educator about things you can do at home to help your child's learning and development.
- Talk to the school about how you can engage in your child's learning and development at school.
- Ask the school what time your child starts on the first day and where to take them.

During the summer holidays

- Show your child where the school is and talk about how you will get there.
- Arrange play-times with other families whose children will be going to the same school as your child. It helps if your child knows another child at their school at the start of prep.
- Practise the things your child will need to do to get ready for school (e.g. putting things in their bag, remembering to take a hat).
- Confirm your before or after school care arrangements. Show your child where the outside school hours care facilities are and talk about how they will get there.
- Be positive about starting school and enjoy your child's excitement.
- Visit your local library and read books with your child about starting school.

The first day of school

- Make sure your child knows who will take them to school and pick them up on the first day.
- Help your child to organise their clothes, hat, shoes and socks the night before.
- Help your child to pack their school bag with a snack, drink, lunch and a hat.
- Place a spare pair of underpants and a change of clothes in a plastic bag. Let your child know these clothes are in their bag in case of any accidents at school.
- Put sunscreen on your child in the morning if it is needed.
- Show your child where you will meet them at the end of the school day.
- At the end of the day talk to your child about what happened at school.

The first year of school

- Find out about what your child is learning at school. By doing this, you can support your child's learning and find out how your child is adjusting to school.

- If your child is having difficulty at school, talk to their teacher. Your child can also say what they think might help them.
- Keep talking to your child about school. Ask them about their new experiences, what they like and what they find hard.
- If your child attends an outside school hours care service, find a way of sharing your child's school progress with the staff.
- Share feedback about your child's experience of starting school with the school and early childhood service.
- Organise time for your child and their new friends to play together outside of school