

Preparation for Transition and Starting School

School preparation and transition are the next steps after readiness for school has been determined.

There are a number of strategies to help you, the parent/carer, provide a positive start to school for your child in the lead up to school commencement.

School preparation does not require a major effort and in fact the simpler and more relaxed the whole process is, the easier and more relaxed it will be for your child.

So avoid doing the big count down from 100 sleeps to school starts!!
You'll all be over it by then.

Preparation for transition and starting school happens more through the incidental and the everyday experiences that we give children practice in, rather than commencing a rigid set of strategies that actually detract from where they are currently.

In the year before a child is due to start school, providing additional opportunities for children to practice some "independent and self help skills" is a useful and reasonably easy process to introduce at home.

Strategies that can promote independence and self help skills:

- Prompt children to carry their own kindergarten or child care bag
- Encourage children to dress themselves
- Encourage a child to express what it is they are wanting or needing
- Let children answer questions from others without the adult intervening or answering for the child because it is quicker
- Give children practice in conversation and thinking about things
- Give children practice at making some choices and following through with their decision
- Specific strategies in the lead up to commencing school
- Driving past on weekends and walking around the grounds helps children to see buildings and grounds, toilets and play equipment.
- Talk about school in a matter of fact way, not making it too much of a huge thing but being positive.
- Avoid saying " when you go to school you will learn to read". Children are often disappointed after day one, when that doesn't happen!!

Transition is the term for the familiarisation process as children move from their early childhood program to school. This is conducted differently in all schools but there are some common aspects that are worth noting and looking out for or asking about.

- Some examples of transition programs include:
- Children attending for a half day once a week from term 3 (they may visit the prep

- Children attend a one hour story time session at the school all year in the library
- Children attend between 2-5 visits to the school during term 3 and 4 or during term 4 where they visit different parts of the school. Parents are included in these although may not be with the child for the entire time.
- Information evenings or sessions are held for parents regarding practical arrangements

Starting school is a big step for all children and their families. Good luck with this major transition in your young child's life.