

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

Position Statement

A successful start to school is linked to later positive educational and social outcomes. We know that the transition to school has been successful when children and families report a sense of belonging and engagement at school. Children, families, educators, other professionals and communities have important roles in supporting positive transitions to school. We all benefit when children and families view school as a positive place to be and when education is regarded as valuable, relevant and attainable.

This position statement is an aspirational document, based on national and international understandings of the importance of the transition to school. It reconceptualises transition to school in the context of social justice, human rights (including children's rights), educational reform and ethical agendas, and the established impact of transition to school on children's ongoing wellbeing, learning and development. These principles support a range of educational entitlements around the transition to school.

Transition to school is a dynamic process of continuity and change as children move into the first year of school.

The process of transition to school is characterised by:

Opportunities for

- children to continue shaping their identities and to extend their existing knowledge, skills and understandings through interactions with adults, peers and family;
- families to strengthen and support each child's ongoing learning and development;
- educators to build relationships with children, families, other educators and communities that provide the basis for effective learning and teaching interactions;
- communities to recognise this as a significant event in the lives of children and families.

Aspirations as

- children look forward to making friends and learning at school;
- families look forward to positive educational outcomes for their children – both social and academic;
- educators work towards professional partnerships that create strong and supportive educational environments for all children;
- communities seek to provide ongoing support and resources to promote children's positive engagement in school;
- educational organisations and systems aim to promote positive educational trajectories and outcomes for all children.

Entitlements as

- children access high quality education that demonstrates respect for existing competencies, cultural heritage and histories;
- families demonstrate confidence that their children will have access to education that promotes equity and excellence and that attends to the wellbeing of all children;
- educators receive professional regard and ongoing professional support;
- communities are regarded as essential contributors to children's education;
- educational systems and organisations as well as policy makers acknowledge the importance of positive curriculum alignment and continuity in promoting high quality education.

Expectations as

- children start school expecting to learn and face challenges; they expect to be with friends and to have support from responsive adults;
- families expect their knowledge to be recognised and respected; they expect to contribute to their children's education and to work in partnership with educators;
- educators expect to have support and appropriate professional recognition as they create positive learning and teaching environments, partnerships with families, other educators and professionals;
- communities expect schools to attend to the wellbeing of all children and to promote active citizenship and engagement;
- educational organisations and systems expect that children will benefit from education and that a wide range of benefits will derive from children's engagement in education.

