

Protocol for enhanced transition from Kindergarten to School for children receiving Kindergarten Inclusion Support funding packages

Background:

The early years are critical to long-term health and development of children and their future life choices. The Victorian Government's *Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development* brings together a range of strategies to improve performance and promote excellence across Victoria's schools and early childhood services. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development recognises the importance of transition planning as children move from kindergarten to school. The *Transitions: A Positive Start to School* initiative aims to improve children's experience of starting school by enhancing the development and delivery of transition programs.

All children benefit from transition planning to make a smooth move from kindergarten to school.

This is particularly so for children with disabilities or developmental delays who may require extra planning so that the necessary adjustments and supports are in place prior to school entry. The Department has a commitment to kindergartens and schools working together to support children with disabilities and their families.

Before they start school, children with disabilities and developmental delays may have received extra support

from an early childhood intervention service, a preschool field officer or a Kindergarten Inclusion Support Service package. Staff in these services, the kindergarten teacher and the child's family can assist in providing the school with information about a child's developmental needs, abilities and strengths and interests, particular learning styles and effective strategies that promote learning and development.

This protocol sets out a plan to assist the transition from kindergarten to school for children who have severe disabilities and who have received a Kindergarten Inclusion Support Services package. If an application is to be submitted for the Program for Students with Disabilities, that operates in Government Schools, additional assessment may need to be carried out with the student. The Department provides an outsourced assessment service for applications on behalf of students in the categories of Intellectual Disability and Severe Language Disorder with Critical Educational Needs. The assessment and application process will be coordinated by the school the child is to attend.

The protocol:

- Acknowledges the important role that parents, early childhood services and schools play in a child's life
- Promotes each child's success at school through sharing information and planning collaboratively
- Recognises that additional supports need to be in place for children and their families to ensure the smooth transition from kindergarten to school

- Ensures that children with severe disabilities are prioritised for assessment for the school's Program for Students with Disabilities

The purpose of transition planning is to:

- Share relevant information
- Develop a relationship between the kindergarten, family and school
- Support the child's successful participation in school

Sharing Our Journey Parent Kit:

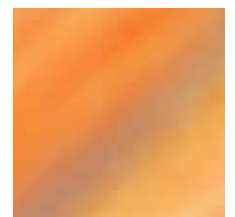
Parents of children in receipt of a Kindergarten Inclusion Support Service package will be provided with a Sharing Our Journey Kit that contains information and activities supporting the child's transition to school, as well as a planner and a copy of the *Transition: A Positive Start to School* Learning and Development Statement family sections Part 1 and Part 1A.

Enquiries

If you require further clarification please call your local kindergarten or school or **1300 731947**. Please advise that your enquiry relates to transition to school for a child in receipt of a Kindergarten Inclusion Support funding package.

Further information about Program for Students with Disabilities is available at:

www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/guidelines.htm

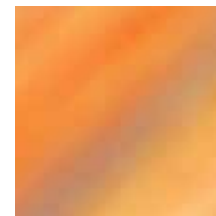


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Terms 2 & 3 of Kindergarten		
Protocol/Action	Context	Responsibility
<p>School Enrolment</p> <p>The parent enrolls the child at the school and advises the kindergarten of the school the child will be attending. The kindergarten teacher will follow this up with the parent if this has not yet occurred.</p>	<p>The parent enrolls the child at the school and advises that their child has additional needs, and has received additional support at kindergarten via a Kindergarten Inclusion Support package and may require extra planning/ support. Some children may be eligible for the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) or the equivalent program in the Catholic and Independent schooling sector. In this situation, the school will then initiate the information gathering and assessment processes that need to occur to start an application for additional program support from the PSD.</p>	<p>Schools, Kindergartens & Parent</p>
<p>Sharing Our Journey Parent Kit</p>	<p>Parents of children who are receiving a Kindergarten Inclusion Support package will receive the Sharing Our Journey Kit. This Kit will be provided by the Kindergarten teacher or the Early Childhood Intervention Service. The Kit will include copies of the Transition: A Positive Start to School Learning and Development Statement family sections Part 1 and Part 1A.</p>	<p>Kindergarten Teacher and/or Early Childhood Intervention Service</p>
Terms 3 & 4 of Kindergarten		
<p>Information gathering</p> <p>Information is collected about the child's developmental status, abilities, strengths and interests</p>	<p>Information gathering commences and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical and child development documentation (e.g. test results, medical reports, early intervention assessment reports) • Kindergarten observations or portfolios • The Transition: A Positive Start to School Learning and Development Statement family sections Part 1 and Part 1A for children with a disability or developmental delay 	<p>Parent, Kindergarten teacher and early childhood intervention services family services coordinator</p>
<p>Identification of key school contact</p> <p>The principal allocates a key school contact for the family.</p>	<p>The school contact may be the Prep teacher for the following year, special education coordinator, transition coordinator, or other appropriate person. The key school contact will attend the Kindergarten to School Support Group meeting</p>	<p>School Principal</p>



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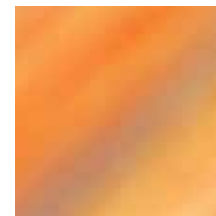


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<p>Kindergarten to School Support group meeting</p> <p>The kindergarten teacher will convene a Support Group meeting specifically focussing on the development of a plan to support the child's move to school. The meeting will include:</p> <p>Parent, Kindergarten teacher, Key school contact, Early childhood Intervention services Family Services Coordinator and Other school personnel, early intervention workers or a family advocate as required. The purpose of the meeting is to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information about the child • Start planning using the Sharing our Journey planner • Appoint a kindergarten-to-school key worker • Consider an application for the PSD and refer for priority assessment where applicable • Plan for further meetings in Term 4, if required. 	<p>This meeting should be held in the setting of the parent's choice. It will be similar to other Kindergarten Inclusion Program Support Group meetings that have been held throughout the child's kindergarten year, but membership will be widened to include school personnel who will be involved with the child and family at school.</p> <p>Purpose of this meeting is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable the family and others who know the child to share a picture of the child's abilities, strengths and needs • provide an opportunity to start to plan regarding adjustment, adaptations and /or supports that may be required to support the child's active and successful participation at school • Appoint a kindergarten-to-school key worker. It is recommended that, where possible, this role be undertaken by the Early Childhood Intervention Family Services Coordinator as this is consistent with their role with the family • Discuss the school's orientation program and further opportunities to visit the school • Sharing Our Journey Planner is completed outlining actions to support the child's move from kindergarten to school • First support group meeting will consider whether an application should be initiated for the Program for Students with Disabilities or equivalent program in Catholic and Independent schools if this has not yet occurred. • Children who may be eligible for additional resources through the school's Program for Students with Disabilities will be prioritised for assessment when referred to DEECD assessment service provider. 	<p>Kindergarten teacher (lead)</p>



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Protocol/Action	Context	Responsibility
Visit to School The child and parent will visit the school supported by the kindergarten-to-school key worker	This visit provides an opportunity for parents to ask questions, tour the school and gain an understanding of any adaptations or adjustments that may need to be discussed with the school.	Early Childhood Intervention Services family Services Coordinator
Further Information Gathering	Kindergarten teacher and early childhood intervention Family Services Coordinator will provide the parent with relevant assessment reports and other information that are able to be passed on to the school. They will also assist the parent to complete the Transition: A Positive Start to School Learning and Development Statement family sections (Part 1 & 1A). This process to be led by the kindergarten teacher. The school will provide details of what information the school requires to ensure effective planning is able to occur.	All
Student Support group meeting scheduled for term one of the school year	It is recommended that the Student Support Group meeting is planned ahead of term 1 to enable full participation of support group members.	Key School contact
Term 1 of School year		
Protocol/Action	Context	Responsibility
Kindergarten-to- School key worker follow up	Key worker to have phone contact with the family and prep teacher to follow up initial progress in Term 1 prior to the school's Student Support Group meeting.	Kindergarten to school key contact worker (e.g. early childhood intervention family services coordinator)
Student Support Group Meeting The school coordinates a Student Support Group meeting in Term 1 of the child's first school year.	It is recommended that the early childhood service and Early Childhood Intervention Service providers attend this meeting. Following this meeting formal involvement of these services may cease, or through negotiation with the school, some contact may continue in the short term.	Key School contact



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