Starting school is among one of the most important transitions your child will make.

When starting at school is a positive, happy experience, it can become the foundation of many years of academic and social success in the future.

You have a very important role to play at this time.

Your child will look to you for information and reassurance about this exciting time.

Most primary schools enrol new students in May for the following year.

Early enrolment, gives you, your child and the teachers plenty of time to get to know each other and plan to support your child’s positive start to school.

Please work with your child’s pre-school or care facility to prepare a Transition Learning and Development Statement. Interpreters are there to help you, if you need one.

(Transition Learning and Development Statement is displayed on screen)

This short, straightforward document is prepared by you with help from your child’s kindergarten teacher or child care worker.

It helps the teachers at the new school to understand your child’s personality, strengths, interests, and any special needs.

In the first section (Displayed on screen) you can help the teachers understand your background and the things that are important to you and your child.

Languages spoken at home, names of brothers and sisters, anything that helps the understanding of ordinary everyday life – can help give your child a good start at school.

Experiences at home and outside the home can be listed. Kindergarten, play-school, child care, family day care and any specialist support should be listed here.

Even contact details from that service can be helpful, if you wish to include them.

Of course, if your child is in need of on-going support due to a disability, this information should also be included. There is an extra page for you to include this information (Part 1A form is displayed on screen).

There are some other things you may also like to write on the statement like; Does your child need help with dressing? Or concentrating? Or joining in group activities?

Your questions are important too.

You might want to ask who the teachers will be, what the curriculum will be like, the provisions for gifted or challenged children, and what actually happens during the first few weeks at school.

You can also use the form to clearly state what you expect from the new school and how you would like to be involved. Also to note any specific concerns you might have.
Of course, it is also very important to make sure your child has a voice on this form. This part of the form is where you record their thoughts about starting school.

(Part 1: The Family page displayed on screen)

Please ask your child:

- What would you like to do at school?
- What are you looking forward to?
- Are you worried about anything?

Once you have completed your part, you need to return it to your child’s kindergarten teacher or child care worker. They will compile it with information they have written and forward it back to you to approve to send to the school. This will happen in October or November.

Your child’s kindergarten teacher or child care worker will then send it onto the school to help your child’s new teacher better understand, consider and then prepare the best possible introduction to school for your child.

If you haven’t decided on which school by the end of November, an extra copy will be given to you to supply to the school when you chose one.

You will also be invited to participate in transition-to-school programs. Each kindergarten or child care service and school will organise its own. Check with your chosen school or ask at the kindergarten or child care service your child currently attends for more details.

The Transition Learning and Development Statement and additional resources are available online from the website shown on screen. The Statement can be downloaded and filled out with the help of an interpreter. Your child’s kindergarten or childcare service can arrange this for you.

For further information on transition to school please visit the website, or talk to your child’s early childhood educator.

(Website address is displayed on screen: www.education.vic.gov.au/earlychildhood/transition)