



TRANSITION TO SCHOOL POLICY

Aim:

To provide opportunities for the children who are going to school in the following year to transition to school confidently. Starting school is a significant milestone in the life of any child and family. At the Rumpus Room we support continuity of learning and transitions for each child by sharing relevant information, clarifying responsibilities and by developing strategies that support a positive transition to school (National Quality Standard 6.3). We are committed to engage children, families, professionals, educators, and community members in the transition to school process to ensure the implementation of this policy is meaningful, supportive and reflective of best practice. Transition is viewed as a collaborative and dynamic process occurring over time ensuring a sense of belonging in all environments (Transition to School: Position Statement, 2011).

Transition programs impact a child's engagement with school, their wellbeing and ongoing learning trajectory. A transition to school program is developed in response to the needs of the children and parents within the local context.

A transition program includes:

- a set of planned experiences or a process established over a longer period of time.
- information sessions for parents
- ongoing experiences for the children

Purpose:

We aim to liaise with local schools to develop a smooth and comprehensive transition to school for all children. We will support children and families by strengthening the development and delivery of transition programs and provide a shared understanding between our service and local primary schools about what is important for children and their families during the transition to school process.

We believe it is vital to enhance children's social and emotional development to ensure a successful transition to school. By developing these skills and abilities and promoting their creativity and individuality, we promote children's ability to become confident and successful learners.

The policy links to the following NQS:

NQS 6.3

See appendix 1- National Law and National Regulations.

Reviewed: 28th August 2020

IMPLEMENTATION:

Children are challenged with several transitional changes during early childhood. This includes orienting children into early childhood, transitioning between routines and rooms, and then transitioning into school. Children respond in different ways to transitions - some with confidence and others with hesitation. Children's confidence will be enhanced when changes happen gradually and when time is prioritised to support these transitions with sensitivity, planning, and preparation.

Our transition to school program is developed in collaboration with all stakeholders and ensures children are active participants in their transition to school.

For children attending school the following year, our 'Transition to School Program' provides additional activities and experiences to help prepare them for a smooth transition to a school environment. This program refers to daily-programmed activities and experiences that are implemented throughout the year, encouraging the developmental skills that are optimal for children to retain before commencing school.

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL PROGRAM:

As Early Childhood Educators who are instrumental in influencing children's learning patterns for later life, it is our responsibility to set them on a course that will inspire investigation, exploration, problem solving, questioning, discovery, and challenges.

The Program in The Rumpus Kings/Wild Things room is focused on individual children attending school in the following year. To ensure the transition to school is a positive experience for children and families, we will implement a range of activities and experiences that may include, but is not limited to:

- Visits by children to local school settings
- Family information sessions
- Visits from Primary school teachers and/or Principals
- Exchanging information about a child's individual strengths and needs
- Networking with educators, primary school teachers and principals
- Developing children's talking and listening skills
- Alphabet and number awareness
- Shapes and colour recognition
- Social and emotional enhancement
- Pre-writing development
- Name writing and recognition
- Concentrating on the task at hand
- Determination when faced with complications
- Responding positively to new situations
- Taking responsibility for their own behaviour
- Developing the communication skills necessary for group or individual play
- Developing positive feelings about themselves and others

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- Experiencing a sense of self-satisfaction resulting from achievement
- Experiencing eating from lunch boxes, as we educate children about different foods eaten at recess and lunch and how to open different packaged foods.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Incorporate transition to school into the daily program by encouraging children to think and talk about school by exploring various elements of primary school (This may include uniforms, eating packed lunches, talking about school and how a school environment is different).
 - Talk with children about starting school, respecting any concerns and communicating these to families.
 - Ensure children are active participants in their transition to school.
 - Communicate with families to ensure we meet the requirements of the individual strengths and needs of all children and families.
 - Consider family priorities and any concerns about the transition process. Each family's cultural and linguistic needs will be respected, along with family diversity.
 - Develop a program to ensure a smooth transition for children from the Rumpus Room environment to the school environment.
 - Contemplate the individual rest or sleep needs of children in the months leading up to the transitioning to school.
 - Discuss children's development, strengths, and competencies for transition to school with families.
 - Support each family's decision about when to send children to school, acknowledging the NSW Department of Education and Training's policy that "children must turn five by July 31 in the year they start Kindergarten. All children in NSW must start school by their 6th birthday". Some Independent schools have different age guidelines which parents need to be aware of.
 - Educators to access and attend professional development opportunities to ensure current knowledge and practice regarding transition to school.
 - Facilitate relationships and networking with local schools to support children and families with the transition process and to open lines of communication. The importance of school preparation through school visits, orientation days and meeting the Kindergarten teachers will be promoted.
 - Facilitate each child's development as a capable learner through open ended learning experiences.
 - Effectively evaluate our service's transition program.
 - Be flexible and responsive to the needs of children and families.
- (Adapted from Dockett & Perry, 2007.)

Final Assessment and the Transition to School Statement

The Rumpus Room Children's Centres completes either a Summative Assessment of the child's learning and readiness for school or completes the Transition to School Statement. Parents and schools may have a preference. Both documents summarise the children's abilities as they start school and assists teachers to get to know the children beginning

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school and their individual learning styles. Parents have an option to share this statement with the child's future school or 'opt out'. The transition statement can be completed electronically and can be downloaded to share with families and early childhood services or in paper form.

WHEN A CHILD IS NOT READY TO TRANSITION TO SCHOOL:

We understand that all children are unique and achieve milestones in their own time. Families have expectations about what they think their child should be able to do. They may ask educators their opinion on specific skills such as pre-writing skills, numbers, social and emotional development etc.

We believe that Early Childhood Educators have professional insight to assist families in making the decision about a child's transition to school as they have developed trusting and supportive relationships over time. However, prior to speaking with families about their personal views, educators will discuss their thoughts with the Director about the child's individual strengths and needs and any recommendation about beginning school will be communicated with families during a scheduled meeting. Our staff will adhere to confidentiality at all times.

WHEN A CHILD HAS ADDITIONAL LEARNING and SUPPORT NEEDS:

The Rumpus Room will assist families to initiate contact with their local school well in advance of enrolment when there may be requirement for additional learning and support to be provided for a child.

It is recommended that parents and carers contact their local school principal to discuss their child's needs by:

- term 2 of the year before starting school for a child with disability and additional learning and support needs
- term 2 of **two years** before starting school for a child needing help with access or mobility, e.g. for wheelchair access or if other significant changes to the school environment may be required.

The Principal will connect the family with the Local School Services teams who provide advice about the transition to school for children with disability and additional learning and support needs. Local teams can be contacted on 131 536 and calls can be made from anywhere in NSW.

The Rumpus Room will provide information and demonstrate techniques used during the child's enrolment which may be significant for a successful transition to school. Students with a confirmed disability may be enrolled in any one of the following:

- regular classes (subject to **standard enrolment procedures**)
- support classes in regular schools (subject to placement panel procedures)

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- special schools (subject to placement panel procedures)

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