

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL POLICY

Starting school is a significant milestone in the life of any child and family. Our approach to school readiness is holistic. The progression of skills across all developmental areas, including a child's social and emotional self, is supported to provide a readiness for the school environment. We believe that each child will display a varying range of skills and dispositions for learning when they start school. We guide and support all children towards becoming enthusiastic about learning, co-operative with their peers and developing a strong sense of self.

PURPOSE

Highland Grove liaises 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/practices and provide a shared understanding between Highland Grove Preschool 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. By developing these skills and abilities and promoting their creativity and individuality, we promote children's ability to become confident and successful learners.

SCOPE

This policy applies to Management, Nominated Supervisor, educators, children and families of Highland Grove Preschool.

IMPLEMENTATION

Highland Grove is committed to supporting children and their families in making a smooth transition to kindergarten. Our program reflects the awareness that this transition should happen over an extended period of time and that each child's transition will be individual, depending on the child, the school and the family.

Educators have a critical role in providing an educational environment that supports children's wellbeing, promotes equity and celebrates diversity. Our approach to transition to school planning and practices is developed in collaboration with our community and ensures children are active participants in their transition to school. This approach is inclusive of children and families at all levels of transition.

Highland Grove is aware of, and values highly, the importance of communication between the preschool and school environment. Management and educators take part in school

transition meetings with local schoolteachers, local educational leader's meetings, and meetings with other allied health professionals to support children's school transition.

An annual, after-hours 'School Transition Meeting' is provided at the centre for educators and parents/carers to discuss transition to school. Resources specific to our area and community are provided. The evening is facilitated by a Dept. of Education School Transition specialist.

Several of our educators have had the opportunity to visit a local kindergarten classroom. This experience facilitates our educator's knowledge of a Kindergarten curriculum and builds upon our relationships with the wider teaching communities.

Educators from the Moonbeam Room often visit the local school settings during orientation ('Head Start') events. Photographic documentation of children attending school, alongside any preschool peers who will be attending the same school, is kept in a booklet and is available for parents, staff and children to reflect upon and to support the transition. These visits also build upon Highland Grove's relationships with the wider school communities.

Room Leaders complete a 'School Transition Statement'. The documents' purpose is to share information about the child's learning and dispositions with the child's kindergarten teacher. This document is provided to the families and emailed to the school.

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 and practices to ensure a smooth transition for children from the education and care environment to the school environment. The program requires both parent and educator support for the child. This cooperation will ensure the best possible environment for children's transition.
- 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 NSW’s policy of when children must begin formal schooling
- be supported 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 Highland Grove’s transition program
- be flexible and responsive to the needs of children and families
- take into account contextual aspects of community, and of individual families and children within that community.

(Adapted from Dockett & Perry, 2007.)

TRANSITION STATEMENTS

NSW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION- TRANSITION to SCHOOL STATEMENT

The NSW Transition to School Statement is a practical and simple tool designed to enable information to be shared between families, early childhood services and schools. The statement summarises a child’s strengths, interests and approaches to learning.

The Statement is completed by one of the child's early childhood educators. Written parent authorisation is required and the centre provides the Statement is communicated to the child's intended school where it provides the school and teachers with information they can use in planning and preparing for the child's arrival and transition into the new learning environment.

WHEN A CHILD MAY NOT BE READY TO TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

We understand that all children are unique and achieve milestones in their own time. Parents and carers know their child’s strengths, interests and needs better than anyone and have expectations about what they think their child should be able to do. Parents may ask educators their opinion on specific skills such as pre-writing skills, numbers, social and emotional development to assist in making decisions about starting school. The decision for when their child starts school is an individual decision. For some children, starting school at age six rather than five may provide them with an additional year to mature and increase independence.

NEW SOUTH WALES (NSW)

- Children can begin compulsory Kindergarten at the beginning of the school year if they turn 5 on or before 31 July in that year. All children must be enrolled in school by the time they turn 6.
- [Transition to School Statement](#)
- Starting school: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/primary-schools/starting-school>
- Transition to school: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/primary-schools/starting-school>
- Getting ready for primary school: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/media/documents/getting-ready-for-school.pdf>
- [Strong and successful start to school Transition guidelines \(2020\)](#).
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/early-learning/media/documents/el-strong-and-successful-start-to-school-transition-guidelines.pdf>

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