

TRANSITION

FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTING TO SCHOOL



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS WHOSE CHILDREN WILL SOON BE STARTING SCHOOL

A BIG STEP

Starting school is a big change for children, so here are some things you can do to help your child. Over the next few months let your child get used to:

- eating and drinking without help
- unwrapping food
- unscrewing a bottle
- peeling fruit
- getting a drink from a tap
- putting on and doing up shoes. If possible have shoes with buckles or velcro clips. Five year olds find laces difficult
- using a handkerchief or tissue
- putting on and taking off a jumper

It is important that your child knows how to:

- use and flush the toilet and wash his/her hands. (If you have a boy be sure he knows how to use a boy's toilet). In the early weeks of school send spare underclothes if you expect toileting problems
- say his/her name and address
- care for his/her belongings i.e. remember where his/her jumper has been left after taking it off.

HEALTH

- Starting school is usually tiring even for a healthy child. Earlier bedtimes are a good idea during the first weeks.
- A child with an infectious disease e.g. measles or mumps, may be excluded from school. Ask the teacher for a list of regulations.
- If your child has an illness or specific condition e.g. asthma, sight or hearing impairment, allergy, or is on medication, tell the teacher.

IMMUNISATION

- To ensure that children and the public are protected against infectious diseases, the Victorian Government has introduced the School Entry Immunisation Certificate.
- This Certificate is obtained from the Health Department of your local council or your doctor.
- The Certificate will state whether or not the child has been immunised against diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles and mumps. It is to be given by parents/guardians to the primary school when the child is enrolled.
- All primary schools maintain records of the immunisation status of the child so that in the event of an outbreak of one of the diseases, appropriate action can be taken. e.g. excluding non-immunised children from school. This will ensure that immunised and non-immunised children are protected.

ENROLMENT

- Most children start school when they are five but are not legally required to attend until they turn six. You may like to think about the age at which you would like your child to start school. Sometimes it is in the child's best interests to start school at an older age. Your early childhood educator would be happy to discuss your child's readiness for school with you.
- You can choose whether to send your child to government or non-government school.
- Visit the school of your choice during the year before your child is to start.
- Take along proof of the child's age - e.g. Health Centre Booklet, Birth Certificate.
- Some schools have special visiting days for new children and their parents. Ask your early childhood educator about visiting days.

BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS

- Show your child where the school is, so he/she knows the way.
- Talk about school and answer questions honestly.
- Put names on clothes, lunch box and school bag. Keeping track of individual items in a classroom is not an easy task!
- Ask if the school has an information booklet.

CLOTHES

- Be prepared for changes in weather. The temperature can change unexpectedly!
- In Summer
 - Shorts and T. Shirt or cotton dress.
 - Sandals (Thongs are not safe footwear for school)
 - Sun hat and sun screen
- In Winter
 - Warm clothes, socks, shoes, coat.
 - On wet days he/she may like to wear rubber boots, but take dry shoes or slippers to wear indoors.

FOOD

- Children take play-lunch and lunch.
- Put play-lunch (snack) in a separate bag and show your child which is which.
- Make sure the child can easily open the food containers and the drink lid.
- Make the food so it is quick and easy to eat. If you send too much, it may be discarded.

BEGINNING SCHOOL

- Make sure you know what time school starts and finishes. At the beginning of the school year normal times of 9.00a.m. to 3.30 p.m. sometimes vary.

Try not to hurry your child. Children need time to eat breakfast and get ready. Establish a routine.

Don't be surprised if your child cries. It is normal to feel anxious and it won't last long. Some children settle more quickly than others.

Be on time in the morning and at home time. Small children become anxious when they cannot see a familiar face at home time.

If you are unable to take or collect your child tell the teacher the name of the person doing it for you.

Show you are interested in what your child is doing at school.

Try to send your child to school every day.

Keep children who are sick at home and when the child returns to school, send a note to explain why the child was away.

Look in your child's school bag every day for notes from the teacher.

Only send money which is needed.

Favourite toys are best left at home. They may get lost or damaged.

COMING AND GOING

Walking

- Your child should be accompanied on the walk to school until you are satisfied that he/she can travel safely and independently with friends.
- Teach your child to watch for cars reversing from driveways.

- Emphasise that the safest place to cross is at the school crossing displaying flags.

Riding a bike

- It is advisable that children under eight should not ride a bike on roads.

DRIVING CHILDREN TO SCHOOL

- If you drive your child to school be sure he/she fastens the seat belt and always park so the child can leave the car from the passenger side.

PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

- Parents and teachers need to support each other.
- Find out how to contact the teacher in case you need to tell them something important or discuss your child's progress.
- Ask your child's teacher how to become involved in the school's affairs.

WITH YOUR HELP, SCHOOL WILL BE A HAPPY PLACE FOR YOUR CHILD.

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