

newsletter

Effective pedagogy and practice
Edition 2016

Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the Supporting successful transitions newsletter for 2016. This edition focuses on effective pedagogy and practice – one of the five action areas described in the *Supporting successful transitions: School decision-making tool*.

The department is continuing to prioritise supporting transitions and more broadly, children's continuity of learning by refocusing on evidence-based approaches to teaching and learning in the early years of school. In using effective pedagogies, teachers consider the child's interests and capabilities as they select from a broad range of pedagogical approaches in implementing the Australian Curriculum. Deep professional reflection is a critical part of a teacher's role in guiding and creating engaging learning experiences for children. This newsletter provides some prompts to support this process.

We know effective pedagogies are learner-centred, involve the scaffolding of learning and actively engage students in learning. There is no set formula for the application of effective pedagogies in the early years, however there are characteristics that can guide teachers to create learning experiences that respond to the individual student, context and purpose of learning. These characteristics include active, agentic, collaborative, creative, explicit, language rich and dialogic, learner focused, narrative, playful, responsive and scaffolded.

This edition of the newsletter includes a case study with some reflections on effective pedagogy and practice and some tips for beginning a conversation with key partners.

These resources complement other statewide materials and school-specific transition documents provided in your schools' transitions folder.

Dr Mary Lincoln
Director, Early Learning Pathways



Successful transitions



We have maintained our strong commitment to making children's transition to school successful as outlined within *Advancing education: An action plan for education in Queensland and Every*

student succeeding – State Schools Strategy 2016 – 2020. As an election commitment, the Queensland Government has undertaken to 'establish strong foundations for children's continuity of learning through a return to age-appropriate pedagogies that underpin active, purposeful, creative learning experiences in the early years of school (Prep to Year 3)'. This commitment is communicated as an action in the *Portfolio Priorities Statement for Education*.

These department priorities are supported by evidence which demonstrates that when children's transition to school is supported and they are actively engaged in their learning, they have an increased likelihood of undertaking further education and participating in work and community in adulthood. The statewide transition initiative and refocus on age-appropriate pedagogies will help support Queensland state schools strengthen learning experiences for young children, leading to a love of life-long learning.

The *Age-appropriate pedagogies for the early years of schooling: Foundation paper*, prepared by Griffith University for the department, provides a review of key international and national literature and research on effective age-appropriate pedagogies. Furthermore, the foundation

paper outlines the characteristics of effective age-appropriate pedagogies that guide the selection and development of learning experiences in response to the individual child, context and purpose of learning. Using a range and balance of characteristics provides the conditions to engage young children in their learning. A summary of the Foundation paper is included with this newsletter.

The Foundation paper informed the approach taken in conducting the Age Appropriate Pedagogies Pilot in 2015. The department funded Griffith University to conduct a project with 45 volunteer state schools in three regions to use evidence-based approaches to teaching and learning in the early years in implementing the Australian Curriculum. In 2016, the department is expanding the program to a select number of schools across all seven regions. We are looking forward to partnering with the regions and State Schools Division to progress this important initiative.

I encourage all schools to use the resources highlighted in this newsletter to reflect on their early years pedagogy and practice as they collaborate with key partners to strengthen continuity of learning.

Gabrielle Sinclair
Deputy Director-General
Early Childhood and Community Engagement



Supporting successful transitions: School decision-making tool

The **principles** and **action areas** identified in the *Supporting successful transitions: School decision-making tool* complement the areas for action identified in *Advancing education - an action plan for education in Queensland*. The tool also details the intended **outcomes** to be achieved for students and families as a result of engagement with the principles and action areas.

Action area: Effective pedagogy and practice

The *Supporting successful transitions: School decision-making tool* is both a framework for action and reflection. The decision-making matrix (page 11 – 13) supports schools to reflect on their current transition practices.

The effective pedagogy and practice action area has two focuses – early childhood pedagogy and continuity of learning - that support school-based reflection. For each focus there is a description of a range of behaviours across three decision-making levels (school-centred, consultative and collaborative). These behaviour descriptors assist schools in reflecting on the level of collaborative decision-making in the effective pedagogy and practice action area.



Action area	Focus	School-centred	Consultative	Collaborative
Effective pedagogy and practice	Early childhood pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and learning are organised around limited understandings of early childhood pedagogies. School pedagogical frameworks have a limited focus on early years pedagogy and differentiation for the early years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning experiences in the first week of school reflect those offered in ECEC service. Understanding about the place of a range of age-appropriate pedagogies is limited and supplementary to teaching content. There is an understanding of how learning is organised in ECEC services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs incorporate a range of age-appropriate pedagogies, which include investigations, real-life experiences, focused teaching and learning. Curriculum planning is resourced, delivered and assessed using multiple pedagogies. School recognises how learning is organised in ECEC services and has adopted some similar approaches.
	Continuity of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little acknowledgement of children's engagement in learning in ECEC services. Curriculum programs have the same starting point in all classrooms for all children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School personnel are familiar with ECEC learning frameworks. School personnel and ECEC educators have discussed teaching approaches in their context. Support is provided to strengthen transitions for children with additional needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignments between learning frameworks and school curriculum inform decisions. Learning is viewed as a continuum for each child. Schools and ECEC services have a shared understanding of curriculum and pedagogy and how it applies across settings.

Upcoming events

The *Better Together Forum* will be held in the South East Region at The Arts Centre Gold Coast on Friday 20 May 2016. The Forum will bring together schools, early childhood services and local communities who support children's early learning, development and transition to school. To learn more about this Forum and register visit: <https://www.ivvy.com/event/AEDC/>

Get in touch

For any questions about this newsletter contact the Early Learning Pathways team on 07 3328 6704 or Transitions@dete.qld.gov.au

More support

Regional Transition and Partnerships and Innovation Officers are available to help schools with their transition planning. Find the contact details for appointed officers in your region via this page on OnePortal: <https://oneportal.deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/forschools/Pages/Transitiontoschoolsupportcontacts.aspx>

Access online information and a range of resources including video vignettes via the Successful transitions web pages on the ECEC website: www.qld.gov.au/transitiontoschool