



In practice

Positive transitions in action across Queensland

Schools, ECEC services, and regions across Queensland were invited to share examples of transition practice that support children, families and communities. These in practice cards bring together a collection of real-life examples from a variety of contexts, including promising practices shared through the *Step Up into Education* initiative.

Each example reflects a point-in-time snapshot of practice designed to inspire reflection, conversation and new ideas.

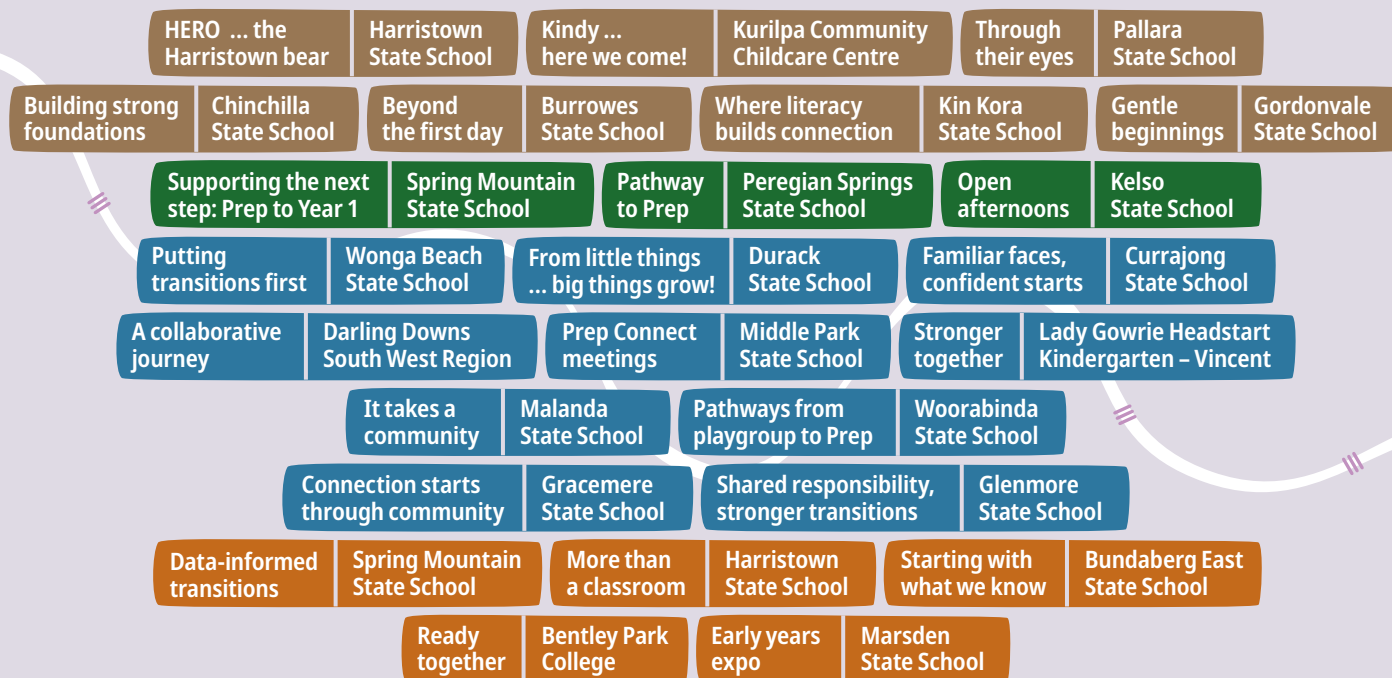
Positive transitions look different in every setting. These examples are not one-size-fits-all – they are starting points for thinking, planning and strengthening transition practices over time. This collection will continue to grow as more schools, services and communities share their transitions practice.



... shared practice ... stronger transitions ...



In practice cards overview





HERO ... the Harristown bear

Helping little learners feel brave

Step Up into Education: Promising practice

Who ...

Hero is a 'buddy' who travels between school and prior-to-school settings. He captures the voice of both children in the year prior to Prep and current Prep students to inform planning for the transition to school program.

What ...

Hero travels with his own backpack, which contains:

- a letter of introduction
- school uniform items
- a 'Prep at Harristown' storybook to be shared with children (another transition initiative)
- brochures outlining transition events for families
- resources to support school and ECEC correspondence.

How it works ...

- Children at ECEC services ask Hero and Harristown State School Prep students questions.
- Educators capture questions, drawings, comments and photos in a scrapbook.
- Prep students, with support of their teachers, respond with personal experiences, drawings and photos.
- Scrapbooks provide an age-appropriate, tangible record of childrens' voices in transition.

Knowing children and families

IN PRACTICE:
Harristown
State School

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Foster a sense of belonging



... capturing voice prior to school



CONTEXT

Harristown State School was part of the *Step Up into Education* initiative. They worked closely with the department's transition research partners, Peridot Education, to evaluate their transition to school program. When reflecting on previous practice, they identified:

- communication with ECEC services **focused** on giving and gathering information for **administrative purposes**
- enrolment processes **focused on children's needs, not strengths**
- additional input from ECEC services or support agencies was only sought for **children with identified needs**
- **child voice** was not part of the transition to school process; focus was on children's knowledge and skills.

KEY ACTIONS

Listening to child voice has prompted:

- **orientation mornings** (hosted in different Prep rooms) providing group table activities, floor time and self-directed, play-based experiences
- opportunities to become **familiar with the school environment** – children visited/used the playground, toilets, eating area, tuckshop, library, computer labs, music room and swimming pool
- **opportunities to connect** with their new classmates and teacher prior to starting school in their new classroom space
- **shifting language** to build children's confidence to reduce worry associated with 'big school'.

PRIORITIES

- **Develop connections** between kindy and Prep learners, families, and school and ECEC teaching teams.
- **Help kindy children feel comfortable** and familiar with their new school environment.
- Establish a **sense of belonging** where children feel valued and listened to.
- **Develop a shared understanding** between school and ECEC contexts to prioritise the success and wellbeing of all children as they transition into school.

OUTCOMES

- Children's voices were acknowledged and heard, helping them feel **valued and supported**.
- A strong **sense of belonging** was fostered through **shared experiences**.
- Children developed **increased confidence** and familiarity with school spaces, routines and relationships.
- **Strengthened partnerships** between ECEC services and schools.
- Future planning to support **sustainability**.

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Valuing the voice of children and families
- Partnerships between ECEC and school settings

RESOURCES

[Step Up into Education hub](#)





Kindy ... here we come!

The next step: Junior kindy to kindy

Transition begins before day one ...

At Kurilpa Community Childcare Centre, educators recognise that transitions happen long before the first day of kindy. Each year, they create thoughtful, ongoing experiences to support their junior kindy children as they prepare for the move into kindergarten.

Educators intentionally create warm and predictable experiences that help children feel safe, informed and excited about what's ahead. Through conversations, shared stories and familiar relationships, children build an early understanding of their new learning environment and develop a strong sense of belonging well before they step into kindy.

Listening to child voice ...

Children share what they think new peers will learn, love and discover.

Educators invite children to create artwork and messages or a special 'Welcome to kindy' book for the younger cohort. Through mark-making and conversations, children share their ideas about learning, culture, play and what makes their space special.



'You will enjoy learning about kabuls ... kabuls are snakes in Aboriginal ... Yeah.'

Sian

Knowing children and families

IN PRACTICE:
Kurilpa Community Childcare Centre

COMMITMENT
Honour learners' unique strengths and contexts

COMMITMENT
Nurture continuity of learning

'They will learn about acknowledgement.'

Bella

'You will like the magnets and make tall buildings.'

Jasper

QA 1, 5, 6

D 3, 7, 8



...belonging grows through shared stories, voices and relationships

HOW IT WORKS

- **Yarn ups and conversations about next year**
Educators talk with children about where they will be next year, who their new educators will be, making friends and what they can look forward to.
- **Combined room experiences**
Children spend increasing time exploring the kindy classroom and outdoor areas to build familiarity and confidence.
- **Reading books about change, friendships and new environments**
Shared stories open space for rich discussions and help children explore feelings, questions and hopes about the move to kindy.
- **Educator swap-outs**
Educators spend time in their new learning spaces and begin building meaningful connections with children ahead of the transition.
- **One-to-one emotional check-ins**
Educators spend time individually checking in with each child to understand how they feel and offer reassurance.

OUTCOMES

- **Children feel excited and confident** about their upcoming move into Kindy.
- **Familiar spaces and relationships reduce children's worry** and support their emotional safety.
- **Children develop a sense of leadership and belonging** as they help welcome younger peers.
- **Stronger community connections** are built through shared experiences and storytelling.
- **Families feel informed and reassured** through communication and visible transition practices.



Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Valuing the voice of children and families
- Continuity of curriculum and pedagogy
- Promoting social and emotional wellbeing



Through their eyes

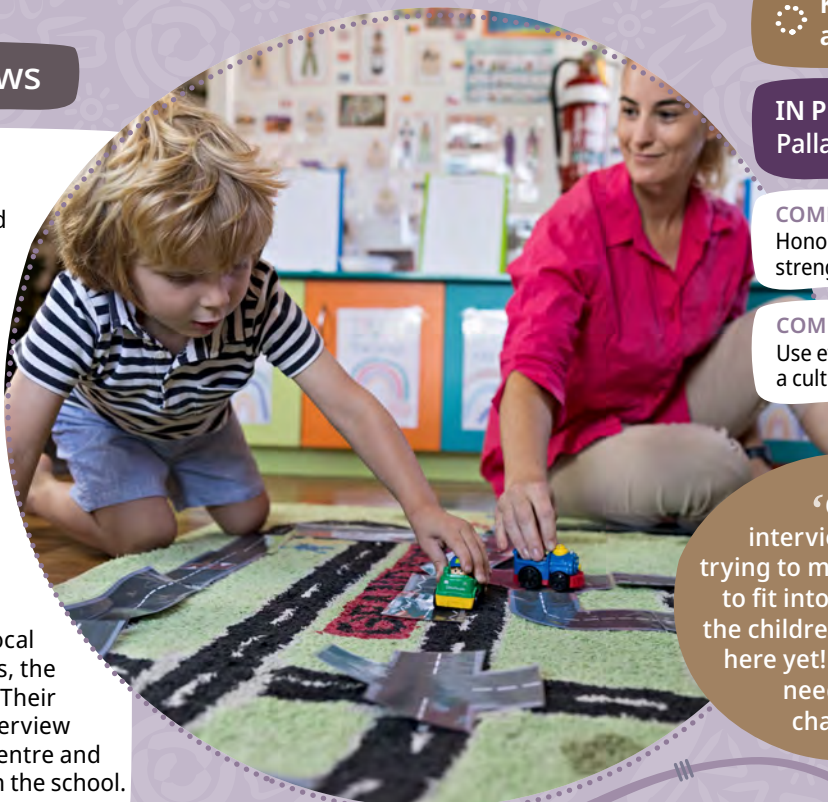
Rethinking Prep interviews

CONTEXT

At Pallara State School, leaders reflected on their existing Prep interview process and recognised that 'something didn't feel right'. This sparked a journey of reflection, collaboration and consultation to rethink how Prep interviews could effectively engage children and families.

Reviewing current practices, leaders identified that the placemat used during interviews was prompting more screening-style questions, limiting opportunities for authentic interaction and connection with children.

Working alongside past Prep families, local ECEC services and support professionals, the school began trialling new approaches. Their aim was to create a more interactive interview experience that placed children at the centre and supported positive first connections with the school.



Knowing children and families

IN PRACTICE:
Pallara State School

COMMITMENT
Honour learners' unique strengths and contexts

COMMITMENT
Use evidence and build a culture of inquiry

‘Our interviews were trying to mould children to fit into school and the children aren't even here yet! Something needed to change.’

Deputy Principal

QA 1, 5, 6

D 3, 7, 9



KEY ACTIONS

Introducing play-based prompts for conversation

The team trialled a range of interactive resources designed to support children to engage naturally in conversation during the interview. Familiar images and visual prompts were used to spark discussion about children's experiences, interests and ideas, allowing staff to learn about each child in a more relaxed and meaningful way.

Creating opportunities for playful interaction

Simple play-based activities were introduced to support children to feel comfortable and confident during the interview. These playful moments allowed children to interact with staff, take the lead in conversation and show their personality in a way that felt natural and engaging.

Shifting the purpose of the interview

Through these changes, the interview process moved away from a screening-style approach towards a more child-centred experience. The focus shifted to building connection, supporting communication and understanding each child's strengths, interests and social-emotional development.

OUTCOMES

Greater child engagement

The revised interview approach created a more relaxed and enjoyable experience, with children more actively engaged and willing to participate in conversations.

Stronger teacher-child connections

Play-based interactions created opportunities for positive early relationships between teachers and children, allowing teachers to learn more about each child in a natural and authentic way.

Increased family comfort and confidence

Families reported feeling more at ease during the interview process, particularly when they saw their child smiling, laughing and engaging confidently.

Positive feedback from staff

Prep teachers reported that the new approach supported more meaningful interactions with children and provided richer insights into each child's strengths and personality.

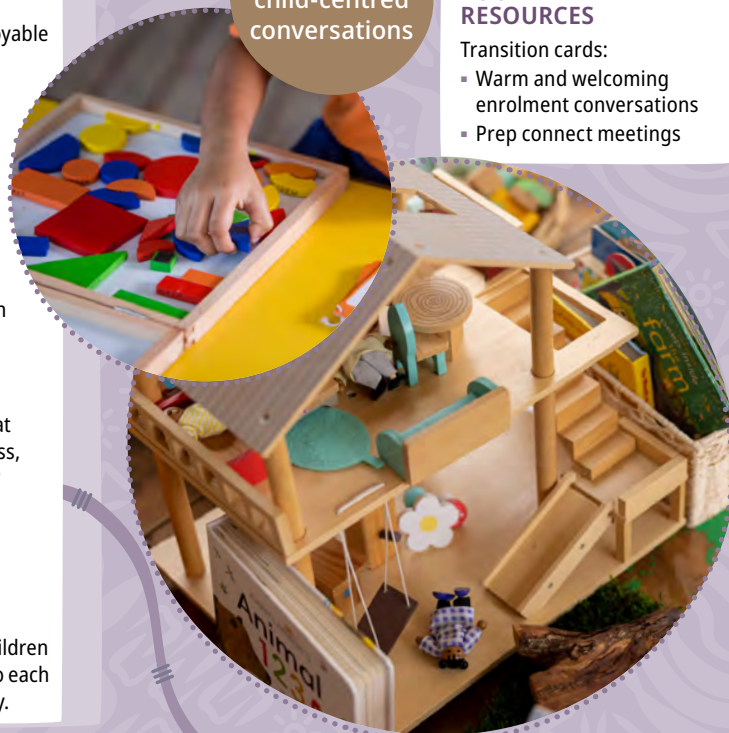
... family and child-centred conversations

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Warm and welcoming enrolment conversations
- Prep connect meetings





Building strong foundations

Belonging begins before the first day

PURPOSE

At Chinchilla State School, the transition to school is approached with care and intention. Rather than relying on one-off events, transition experiences span the year, allowing children and families to build relationships and familiarity with the school community over time.

Grounded within a rural community where relationships matter deeply, this approach focuses on knowing each child and their family and recognising children as strong in their identity through connections with the people who know them best. Transition practices have been shaped through the voices of children and families to foster:

- a strong sense of belonging for children and their families
- trust and familiarity between families and school staff
- collaborative relationships with early childhood partners
- confidence in children as they view school as a known, safe and 'joyful place'.

These experiences are more than transition events – they are the first steps in a lasting partnership between home and school.

Knowing children and families

IN PRACTICE:
Chinchilla State School

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Foster a sense of belonging



... community, connection and a confident start



Chinchilla State School transition experience

KEVIN KOALA'S SCHOOL ADVENTURE

Chinchilla State School welcomed future Prep students and their families through the **Principal's Warm Welcome Tour** – a playful **treasure hunt** to find the school's mascot, Kevin Koala. Led by the leadership team, Prep teachers and support staff, children followed Kevin's clues while exploring key areas of the school. The experience allowed children and families to meet staff, become familiar with the environment and begin building positive connections with their future school.



PARTNERING WITH ECEC SERVICES

The school strengthened connections by visiting local ECEC services. Staff shared the story '**Kevin Koala's First Day at Chinchilla State School**' and joined community events, such as Book Week. These visits extended relationships beyond the school gate, supporting children's emotional security and building excitement and familiarity ahead of starting Prep.



STORY-TIME AND PLAY VISITS

Prep and specialist teachers hosted **story-time** and **play visits**, giving children opportunities to experience play-based learning in the school environment. These visits helped children become familiar with teachers, spaces and routines while building early connections with the school. Families were also invited to **community BBQs, yarns and play sessions**, creating relaxed opportunities to connect with staff and other families.

PERSONALISED WELCOME

Families who attended transition experiences received a **postcard** from the school, reinforcing early connections. Children also received a Happy Birthday postcard when they turned five, a simple and thoughtful gesture that extended the school's warm welcome before starting Prep.



Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Valuing the voice of children and families
- Partnerships between ECEC and school settings
- Transition programs: more than orientation
- Families transitioning together

Beyond the first day

Responsive transition experiences

Step Up into Education: Promising practice

HOW IT WORKS

At Burrowes State School, teaching teams and leaders reflected on how children experienced the first weeks of school and recognised an opportunity to strengthen transitions beyond the first day. Increasingly, children were finding the move into Prep challenging, particularly those experiencing invisible transitions and children with limited prior early learning experiences or from diverse language backgrounds.

Using the *Supporting successful transitions: School decision-making tool* to guide reflection, the school identified that their practices were more school-centred, with limited understanding of each child's prior learning, experiences and preferences. This prompted a shift towards becoming a 'ready school' – one that builds on what is known about each child and responds through aligned learning, environments and pedagogy.

The focus became strengthening continuity of learning from prior-to-school settings into Prep, ensuring children experience familiar approaches that support their confidence, wellbeing and success as learners from the very beginning.



In practice



Knowing children and families

IN PRACTICE:
Burrowes
State School

COMMITMENT
Honour learners' unique
strengths and contexts

COMMITMENT
Nuture continuity of learning

Parent
‘He was so excited to make friends, and this way of learning allows the children to play and find friends.’

QA 1, 5, 6

D 3, 7, 8



KEY ACTIONS

Recognising and responding to invisible transitions

Teaching teams identified children who may not have had opportunities to engage in transition experiences or prior early learning settings, and adjusted planning in the first weeks of school to proactively support their transition.

Planning for continuity beyond the first day

Transition planning extended into the first weeks of school – aligning learning, environments and pedagogy with children's prior experiences.

Using what is known about each child

Teaching teams drew on knowledge of children's backgrounds, culture and family context to inform responsive planning and support.

Capturing children's voice

Children shared their experiences through drawings, conversations and reflections, informing ongoing adjustments to learning and environments.

Listening to family perspectives

Families were invited to share how their child was settling in, contributing valuable insights to support each child's transition.

Reflecting and adapting practice

Teaching teams used reflection tools to shift towards more child-centred approaches, strengthening continuity of learning and engagement.

OUTCOMES

More confident and settled learners

Children demonstrated increased confidence and engagement, with smoother adjustments in the first weeks of school.

Stronger continuity of learning

Aligned practices supported familiar, play-based and collaborative learning experiences across ECEC and school settings.

Improved support for every child

Responsive approaches strengthened support for children experiencing invisible transitions, with teaching informed by children's and families' voices.

Improved learning outcomes

Increased engagement and continuity contributed to stronger academic outcomes, alongside improved wellbeing and positive attitudes towards learning.

‘I know my nephew didn't have this type of start and his mother has said that it would have helped him to feel more comfortable.’

Parent



‘I'm sure that if my child had the old ways of starting, that he would not have coped.’

Parent

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Transition programs: more than orientation
- Continuity of curriculum and pedagogy
- Invisible transitions

RESOURCES

[Step Up into Education hub](#)

[Supporting successful transitions: School decision-making tool](#)



Where literacy builds connection

Supporting positive transitions through early literacy

CONTEXT

At Kin Kora State School, leaders recognise that knowing children and families is essential to supporting successful transitions. An early literacy focus is embedded across the school's transition approach, providing a consistent and familiar thread from early engagement in playgroup through to Prep and beyond.

Through a coordinated and evidence-informed approach, the school builds early understanding of each child's strengths, interests and learning needs through their engagement with early literacy experiences. A dedicated Prep Transition Officer plays a key role in leading these practices, working closely with children and families to ensure they feel known, supported and connected from the very beginning.

This strong focus on relationships and early literacy supports children to begin school with confidence, a sense of belonging and a positive start to learning.



... Starting with stories and conversations

Knowing children and families

IN PRACTICE:
Kin Kora
State School

COMMITMENT
Honour learners' unique
strengths and contexts

COMMITMENT
Nuture continuity of learning

‘Having detailed information before day one means we can tailor support immediately.’

Prep teacher

QA 1, 5, 6

D 3, 7, 9



KEY ACTIONS

Early connections through shared literacy experiences

Regular visits to playgroup, ECDP and local kindergartens include shared reading, rhyming games and rich conversations that build vocabulary. These experiences help children become familiar with school staff before starting.

Child and family-centred enrolment conversations

Strengths-based conversations capture parent and carer insights, while children engage in play-based literacy experiences such as book browsing and drawing. Enrolment packs include transition to school social stories and resources that support oral language, phonological awareness and early writing and mark making.

Ongoing family engagement in early literacy

Families are supported as their child's first teacher through regular communication, literacy tips and transition information. Playgroup and transition events strengthen relationships and promote shared approaches to early literacy learning.

OUTCOMES

Confident and connected learners

Children begin school familiar with staff, peers, routines and learning environments, supporting confident and positive starts.

Stronger partnerships with families

Families report feeling welcomed, respected and informed, with early connections supporting ongoing communication and engagement.

Informed and responsive teaching

Staff start the year with insights into each child's strengths, interests and learning needs, enabling targeted early literacy support.

Sustained community connection

Consistent engagement through playgroup, communication and transition events creates a trusted and recognisable point of connection for families.

Prep parent
 'It was such a relief that my child already knew their teacher and the classroom before school started. They were excited to come back on the first day.'

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Honouring children's prior knowledge and experiences
- Families as first teachers
- Supported playgroups





Gentle beginnings

Respecting the early years while building positive transitions

CONTEXT

At Gordonvale State School, transitions are shaped through respectful timing, strong partnerships and a deep understanding of early childhood learning. The school values the kindergarten experience as a time for exploration and development, intentionally delaying formal transition activities to ensure children can fully engage in age-appropriate learning.

Early connections are built through gentle, informal experiences that allow children and families to become familiar with the school in a relaxed, welcoming way. From mid-year, transition opportunities expand to support children to build confidence and a sense of belonging as they move towards Prep.

A dedicated Prep team, made up of experienced teachers and teacher aides, as well as a specifically allocated Education Support and Transition Teacher (kindy and Prep), plays a key role in strengthening partnerships with local kindergartens, supporting shared understanding and coordinated approaches to transition. Through this approach, the school works alongside families, ECEC services and community partners to create inclusive pathways that support every child's successful start to school.



Knowing children and families

IN PRACTICE:
Gordonvale State School

COMMITMENT
Honour learners' unique strengths and contexts

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships



... stronger starts through relationships and connections

QA 5, 6

D 3, 9



Transitions in action

Gentle early connections

Children and families engage in informal events such as teddy bears' picnics, Easter hat parades and story-time visits, building familiarity in a relaxed, pressure-free environment.

Flexible and responsive visits

Additional visits and experiences are offered based on children's needs, ensuring transition support is responsive and inclusive.

Supporting every child

Families and external agencies are engaged to support children with additional needs, creating inclusive environments and removing barriers to participation in school or transition activities.

Inclusive transition experiences

From mid-year, all children are invited to participate in events such as Book Week, Under Eights Day, Prep Open Day, Stay 'n' Play sessions and classroom showcases, supporting confidence and belonging.

Strong kindergarten partnerships

A dedicated transition teacher works closely with local kindergartens to build reciprocal relationships, shared understanding and aligned transition practices.

Connecting through community

The school collaborates through the Gordonvale Early Years Network, sharing resources and strengthening transition practices across the region.

“Stay and play” sessions



early years network

Classroom showcases

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Partnerships between ECEC and school settings
- Partnerships with families
- Establishing an early years network
- Partnerships with community



Supporting the next step: Prep to Year 1

Leading intentional transitions beyond the first year of school

CONTEXT

At Spring Mountain State School, leaders recognised that transitions are not limited to the move into Prep. Moving from Prep to Year 1 is another significant transition for children as learning environments, expectations and play spaces change.

To support this important step, the school developed a **Prep to Year 1 transition program** that helps students become familiar with the spaces, routines and staff they will encounter in the following year. The program provides safe and engaging opportunities for Prep students to explore what it means to be a Year 1 learner before the transition occurs.

HOW IT WORKS

The Prep to Year 1 transition program aims to:

- introduce Prep students to Year 1 teachers and learning spaces
- provide expectations and early experiences with Year 1 learning approaches, including the use of iPads
- support students to become familiar with new play areas and environments within the school
- build understanding of the routines and expectations that keep students safe in these spaces
- provide opportunities for students to explore and play in the Year 1 environments.



Showing leadership

IN PRACTICE:
Spring Mountain State School

COMMITMENT
Nurture continuity of learning

COMMITMENT
Use evidence and build a culture of inquiry



Stepping into Year 1: Helping students become familiar with new spaces, routines and expectations

Exploring Year 1 spaces

- In Term 4, Prep students participate in a 4-week transition program exploring Year 1 learning and play spaces.
- Teachers outline routines, expectations, where to go and what to do in these areas.
- Students visit spaces such as the library, playgrounds, oval, eating areas and tuckshop, building familiarity and confidence for the move to Year 1.
- The agenda is guided by staff, parent and student voice.

Introducing iPad learning

- In Semester 2, Prep students are introduced to iPads as learning tools.
- Students learn safe and responsible use, including taking photos, voice recording and moving safely with devices.
- In Term 4, Year 5 and 6 buddy classes deliver an iPad program.
- Students explore Year 1 apps and learning expectations, building confidence ahead of their increased use in Year 1.

Individualised transition support

- In Term 4, students requiring additional support are provided with an individualised transition process.
- Students have opportunities to meet their Year 1 teacher and visit their new classroom.
- Social narratives are used to support familiarity with new routines and environments.
- Teachers collaborate with Prep teachers to understand student needs and support a smooth transition.

Specialist lessons in new spaces

- In Term 4, Prep students attend specialist lessons in specialist classrooms.
- This supports students to move around the school beyond the Prep precinct and become familiar with new learning spaces.
- Students practise school movement routines and expectations aligned with the school's PBL approach.
- These experiences help prepare students for greater independence and the Year 1 learning environment.

Building independence

- In Term 4, Prep students are supported to develop greater independence in preparation for Year 1.
- Students begin adjusting to having one teacher in the classroom, reflecting the Year 1 learning environment.
- Prep teacher aide support is gradually reduced, helping students build confidence managing routines and learning more independently.

'Move up' day

- In Term 4, Prep students spend time with their future Year 1 teacher and classmates.
- Students ask questions, explore the classroom and begin building connections and familiarity.
- This experience supports belonging and confidence ahead of the new school year.

familiarity,
independence,
leadership



Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Schools transitions planner

Individual transitions guide

Transition cards:

- Planning for a positive transition
- Continuity of curriculum and pedagogy
- Transition programs: more than orientation



Showing leadership

IN PRACTICE:
Peregian Springs State School

COMMITMENT
Honour learners' unique strengths and contexts

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

Pathway to Prep

Planning for successful transitions

CONTEXT

At Peregian Springs State School, leaders have taken a strategic and intentional approach to transition planning, developing the comprehensive '**Pathway to Prep**' framework. This approach supports children and families to feel welcomed, connected and confident before starting school.

The framework brings together a range of coordinated transition practices designed to build relationships, strengthen familiarity and support wellbeing. Key elements include:

- dedicated **Prep transition teachers** to lead and coordinate transition practices
- an **onsite playgroup** to support early connection with children and families
- a comprehensive **enrolment website** to provide accessible information for families
- **information sessions and school tours** to build familiarity with the school environment
- **workshops for families** to support understanding of school expectations and routines
- **group enrolment interviews** to build early relationships with children and families
- engaging activities such as a **school treasure hunt** to support connection and confidence
- ongoing **kindergarten visits** to strengthen partnerships and continuity across settings.

Through this coordinated approach, the school prioritises relationships, positive connections, engaging environments and a strong sense of belonging for every child and family.



... stronger starts and connections ...



PRACTICE

Group enrolment conversations:

- During Term 3, the school introduces **small group enrolment conversations** with children and families.
- Prep teachers engage with children in a **relaxed, play-based group setting**, while leadership connects with families to gather key information and answer questions.
- This approach replaced individual interviews, which were found to be **less effective and, at times, increased anxiety for children and families**.
- Group conversations **support stronger relationships and more meaningful insights** into each child.
- Information gathered informs **individualised transition planning**, developed in partnership with families, ECEC services and support agencies.
- This approach helps ensure families feel **supported, informed and connected** from the beginning.

OUTCOMES

Group conversations have resulted in:

- **more proactive and responsive planning**, with clearer understanding of children's needs and family expectations
- **tailored transition supports**, including individual plans, transition stories and calendars developed in partnership with families and ECEC services
- **stronger relationships and shared responsibility**, recognising that successful transitions are built through collaboration between schools, families and community partners
- **earlier connection and belonging**, with teaching teams and leaders becoming familiar with children and families before the school year begins
- **improved identification of support needs**, enabling targeted planning and support prior to children starting school.



Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Schools transitions planner

Transition cards:

- Planning for a positive transition
- Partnerships with families
- Warm and welcoming enrolment conversations

building trust prior to school

In practice



Open afternoons

A whole-school approach to supporting connection, belonging and learning

Step Up into Education: Promising practice

HOW IT WORKS

At Kelso State School, leaders recognised that transitions continue beyond the move into Prep and that building strong relationships with families across the early years supports children's ongoing success. To strengthen connection, belonging and shared understanding of learning, the school introduced 'open afternoons' as a way to engage families in classroom learning from Prep through to Year 2 and beyond. During open afternoons, families are invited into classrooms to engage and share in their child's learning and build partnerships with school staff.

What began as a Prep initiative to support transition into school quickly evolved into a coordinated lower school approach, and later a whole-school practice. Open afternoons provide opportunities for children to share their learning, for families to engage in meaningful conversations, and for teachers to build strong, ongoing partnerships with families.

Through this approach, the school prioritises connection, communication and continuity across year levels, supporting children and families at each stage of their schooling journey.

learning showcase

celebrating success

parent and community engagement

Showing leadership

IN PRACTICE:
Kelso State School

COMMITMENT
Honour learners' unique strengths and contexts

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

building relationships

open classrooms

... transitions don't stop at Prep

QA 1, 5, 6

D 3, 7, 9



KEY ACTIONS

Scaling a transition practice across the school

Open afternoons began in Prep and were intentionally expanded first to Prep to Year 2 and then whole school, creating a consistent approach to family engagement across year levels.

Creating student-led learning conversations

Students share their learning with families, supporting confidence, ownership and meaningful conversations about progress.

Providing open and flexible engagement opportunities

Classrooms are open for extended periods, allowing families to engage in learning in a relaxed and informal environment.

Strengthening relationships with families

Teachers connect with families through ongoing, informal conversations, building trust and shared understanding of each child's learning.

Using evidence to inform and refine practice

Attendance data, feedback from families, staff and students, and observations are used to evaluate impact and guide ongoing improvements.

Embedding open afternoons across the year

Open afternoons are strategically planned across the year to support different transition purposes – Term 1 focuses on building relationships and supporting transition into the new year level, Term 2 highlights learning and academic growth, and Term 3 provides opportunities to share student progress and work samples.

OUTCOMES

Stronger family engagement in learning

Increased attendance and participation demonstrate higher levels of family engagement compared to traditional approaches.

Improved relationships and communication

Regular, informal interactions support stronger partnerships between families, students and teachers.

Increased student confidence and ownership

Students take an active role in sharing their learning, supporting confidence and a sense of success.

Continuity of transitions across year levels

Families and students experience ongoing connection and familiarity as they move through Prep to Year 2 and beyond.

More responsive and evolving practice

Ongoing data collection and reflection support continuous improvement and refinement of the approach.

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Continuity of curriculum and pedagogy
- Partnerships with families

RESOURCES

[Step Up into Education hub](#)





Putting transitions first

Coordinating early years pathways

CONTEXT

Wonga Beach State School welcomes children and families into the school community early. The transition into Prep begins through Playgroup, KindyLinQ and an SDK. By engaging deeply with the early years community, Wonga Beach State School demonstrates that trusting partnerships and early identification of support are the foundations for lifelong learning.

Central to the approach is an Early Years Support Coordinator. As a bridge between families, teachers and the community, the Early Years Support Coordinator helps ensure that every child is supported in their learning journey and has access to services and intervention. The early years program highlights that trusting, collaborative relationships with families are fundamental to achieving quality outcomes for children. When schools engage actively, transitions are intentional and supportive.

‘The early intervention and transition program has been instrumental in supporting my child’s developmental milestones. Through coordinated referrals, communication and friendly connections with staff, we have felt supported through each transition and now my child is thriving with curiosity, social confidence and resilience while giving us access to vital resources and community services.’

Mother of Prep student, 2025



Trusting partnerships

IN PRACTICE:
Wonga Beach State School

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Strengthen collaborative partnerships



Benefits of early intervention and transitions

Smoother start to school and informed teaching

- Children who have engaged in early years programs begin Prep confident and settled, with familiarity of teaching teams, peers and environments supporting a positive transition.
- Children show growing confidence with routines, expectations, communication and social interactions.
- Teaching teams develop a deeper understanding of each child's strengths, support needs and family context.
- Classroom adjustments and personalised supports are in place from day one of Prep.

Stronger sense of belonging

- Children and families feel recognised, valued and supported, and part of the school community from the early stages.
- Information is shared between early years services, families and the school, building trusted partnerships before children begin school.

Sustained outcomes over time

- Early connection and support contribute to ongoing growth in literacy, numeracy and social development.
- Early confidence supports continued engagement, attendance, participation and resilience across the school years.

State Delivered Kindy



Playgroup



KindyLinQ

Explore
+ extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Partnerships with families
- Partnerships between ECEC and school settings
- Supported playgroups
- Promoting early learning pathways
- Growing local transition leaders



From little things ... big things grow

Planting the seeds for confident learners

CONTEXT

Durack State School recognised the need to strengthen how children transition to school, particularly for families with a language background other than English and those with limited engagement with the school. School data showed that many children were starting Prep without prior experience in early learning programs, highlighting the importance of building earlier connections with families and young children in the community.

Using the *Supporting successful transitions: School decision-making tool*, the school reflected on current practices and identified key areas for improvement. Leaders worked closely with ECEC services and families to develop strong, two-way relationships to better understand what children need before starting school.

In response, the leadership team and Prep/transition teacher designed a suite of programs for local children from **birth to pre-Prep age**, aligning these initiatives with the school's strategic and annual implementation plans.



... where
strong
starts begin



Trusting
partnerships

IN PRACTICE:
Durack State School

COMMITMENT
Honour learners' unique
strengths and contexts

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

QA 1, 5, 6

D 3, 7, 9



KEY ACTIONS

Communicating with service providers

The school **established an early years network** with local ECEC services to share practice around transitions, behaviour strategies and access to support services. This collaboration helped educators guide families in seeking early intervention and health supports, while also sharing practices to support children's social and emotional development between kindergarten and Prep.

Involving families and children

A **40-week playgroup** was introduced, linked to school events and informed by AEDC data. The design of the program was shaped by priority domains identified through AEDC community data, including trends of an increase of children developmentally vulnerable within social competence, physical health and wellbeing, communication skills and general knowledge domains. Intentional activities such as music, movement, play and health initiatives were included in response to data and community needs, while also supporting children and families to build familiarity with the school environment. A transition program was also established for families and children starting Prep the following year.

Community participation

Durack State School partnered with Wandarrah Preschool, Inala Elders and other local services to **strengthen cultural safety and community connection**. Through the involvement of the school's Community Liaison Officer and reflection through the school's Reconciliation Action Plan, the school worked to deepen cultural understanding and build a stronger sense of belonging for families.

OUTCOMES

Increased family engagement

Over 45 families attend the weekly playgroup during school terms, with many children later transitioning into Prep. The pre-Prep program, held fortnightly from July to December, has engaged more than 200 families over four years, with parents attending alongside their children.

Smoother transitions

The transition teacher visits local kindergartens early in the year, with Prep teachers, cultural aides and school leaders visiting in Semester 2 to support transition programs. Strong collaboration also occurs with the school's neighbouring kindergarten to ensure continuity of learning and support.

Deeper community connections

The school's transition work is valued by families and early childhood partners. Strong relationships and ongoing community involvement continue to strengthen and sustain these programs.

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Families transitioning together
- Supported playgroups
- Partnerships with families
- Establishing an early years network
- Culturally safe spaces

RESOURCES

[Supporting successful transitions: School decision-making tool](#)





Familiar faces, confident starts

Building relationships across playgroup, kindy and school

CONTEXT

At Currajong State School, transition practices are grounded in strong and consistent relationships with children, families and community. The school facilitates both a KindyLinQ program (birth to three years) and a Pre-Prep Playgroup (birth to 3.5 years), creating early opportunities for families to connect with the school community.

Each week, children and families are welcomed into these programs, while school staff regularly visit local kindergartens to engage with children, families and educators. These connections help build familiarity and trust across early learning settings and the school environment.



... familiar people ... familiar places ...

Trusting partnerships

IN PRACTICE:
Currajong
State School

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Foster a sense of belonging



Building familiarity through play and storytelling

A key feature of the kindergarten visits is Curra Bear, a teddy bear dressed in the Currajong State School uniform. Curra Bear accompanies staff on visits and helps children imagine themselves as future Prep students.

During visits, children ask questions about starting school and listen to the story 'Curra Bear visits Currajong State School'. The storybook, gifted to each kindergarten, introduces children to what a typical Prep day might look like in a friendly and accessible way.



Creating continuity across environments

The KindyLinQ and Pre-Prep Playgroup spaces at the school are intentionally designed to reflect a kindergarten learning environment, supporting continuity for children moving between settings.

Children and families attending the Pre-Prep Playgroup also participate in school tours, visiting key areas such as the library, playground, office and classrooms. These experiences help children and families feel confident and familiar with the school environment before starting Prep.



Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Supported playgroups
- Partnerships between ECEC and school settings
- Partnerships with families

OUTCOMES

Through regular engagement across KindyLinQ, playgroup and kindergarten visits, children and families build familiarity with school staff and the school environment well before the first day of Prep.

For one child, recognising a familiar staff member during a transition event provided the confidence to approach and connect. The following year in Prep, the child's family shared that their child felt 'safe, supported and connected' at school.



A collaborative journey

Early years communities of practice

CONTEXT

The Darling Downs South West **Early Years COPs** were established in 2018 to improve outcomes for children in the early years of school. School leaders engaged in professional learning, coaching between meetings and peer feedback to develop contextualised, evidence-based action plans.

Guided by early years data and the *Supporting successful transitions: School decision-making tool*, leaders explored how to strengthen early years practices – including by reframing school readiness, refining pedagogy and developing transition experiences that extended beyond one-off orientation visits.



... shared practice ... stronger beginnings ...



Trusting partnerships

IN PRACTICE:
Darling Downs
South West region

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Strengthen collaborative
partnerships



PROBLEMS OF PRACTICE

Through participation in the COPs, partners identified several challenges impacting transitions for children and families.

Schools recognised that the voice of ECEC partners had previously been missing from COP collaboration, limiting opportunities for shared understanding and aligned transition practices between ECEC services and schools.

Partners also identified gaps in the continuity of support for families during the transition to school. The team at Kulila Indigenous Kindergarten observed that while their Transition Coordinator supported families up to Year 3, there was often no equivalent connection point within schools to support a warm handover or help families build trusting relationships with school staff.

ACTIONS

Kulila and the Darling Downs South West Regional team initiated the **Transition Champions strategy** in 2023, engaging nine primary schools in Toowoomba. Each participating school identified an existing staff member to act as a **Transition Champion** – a key contact for families and early childhood partners during the transition to school.

ECEC services were also invited to actively participate in the COPs, working alongside school leaders to share practice, reflect together and develop improvement strategies that strengthened continuity between early childhood settings and schools.

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Growing local transition leaders
- Establishing an early years network
- Partnerships between ECEC and school settings

RESOURCES

[Supporting successful transitions: School decision-making tool](#)

OUTCOMES

Transition Champions acted as key connectors between families, schools and community supports. Their role was focused on building trusting relationships, strengthening cultural capability and ensuring families felt supported and understood during transitions.

Through this collaborative approach, schools and ECEC services have strengthened wraparound support, deepened community engagement and continued working towards a shared goal – giving every child a strong start through connected and evidence-based transition practices.





Prep connect meetings

Enrolment conversations reimagined

Step Up into Education: Promising practice

HOW IT WORKS

At Middle Park State School, enrolment conversations were reimagined as **Prep connect meetings** – small group sessions designed to build relationships from the very beginning.

Instead of one-to-one interviews, five families attend together. Parents/carers are invited to introduce themselves and share a little about their child. The Deputy Principal then guides families through key questions about interests, strengths, health or medical considerations, challenges, learning and development. Parents/carers record their responses through Microsoft forms on iPads during the session, streamlining documentation and ensuring accurate information is captured. Families are encouraged to ask questions throughout, supporting open communication and shared understanding.

At the same time, children spend time with a teacher engaging in play, listening to a story, recognising their name and drawing. They can access their parent or caregiver in an adjoining space if needed, promoting a calm and confident start.

“I liked the new format, was good to meet other parents and for my child to meet her future peers.”

Parent

Trusting partnerships

IN PRACTICE:
Middle Park
State School

COMMITMENT
Honour learners' unique
strengths and contexts

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships



PURPOSE

Feedback from parent surveys highlighted that families often felt a lack of connection with others starting Prep. The school recognised that positive transitions are not only about supporting children, but also about fostering belonging for families.

Group meetings created opportunities for families to meet one another, begin building networks and feel part of a community from day one.

They also allowed teachers to observe how children interact with peers in a relaxed setting, using professional observations to support a smooth and responsive transition to school.

OUTCOMES

- Families reported a stronger sense of belonging, valuing the opportunity to meet other parents and begin building connections before the school year commenced.
- The meetings gathered rich, meaningful information about each child while strengthening relationships from the outset.
- Children connected with peers, teachers and the school environment early, building familiarity and confidence prior to starting Prep.
- Teaching teams gained insights through observing children interacting together in a natural, play-based setting.
- Group meetings improved efficiency, saving time and staff coverage costs, with parent-completed documentation streamlining follow-up processes.



“This is a great set-up. It felt very personable.”

Parent

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Warm and welcoming enrolment conversations
- Valuing the voice of learners and families
- Partnerships with families

RESOURCES

[Step Up into Education hub](#)



Stronger together

Connecting families, kindergarten and schools

CONTEXT

Lady Gowrie Headstart Kindergarten – Vincent has been providing culturally inclusive early learning to the Townsville community for more than 50 years. Feedback from families highlighted that some parents felt hesitant to connect with schools due to their own previous school experiences.

Families also shared that transitions to Prep were sometimes challenging for children. Some children were separated from friends and relatives when they started school and families felt there were limited cultural connections to support a sense of belonging.

Recognising the importance of strong partnerships, the kindergarten prioritised building trusting relationships with local schools so children and families could transition to school with greater confidence and connection.



Trusting partnerships

IN PRACTICE:
Lady Gowrie Headstart
Kindergarten – Vincent

COMMITMENT
Honour learners' unique
strengths and contexts

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

... trust grows
through
partnership





KEY ACTIONS

Building reciprocal partnerships

The kindergarten began meeting regularly with local schools where children were transitioning. These meetings created opportunities to build shared understanding, strengthen relationships and collaboratively support children and families during the transition to school.

Supporting schools and families

Kindergarten teams shared strategies with schools to support children's learning, engagement and sensory needs. They also supported families to complete enrolment forms and connect with schools in ways that felt comfortable and supportive.

Strengthening school connections

Prep teachers visited the kindergarten to meet children in a familiar and safe environment. Schools also created resources for children and families, including photo booklets introducing Prep classrooms, teachers, playgrounds and daily routines.

Creating community connection points

The partnership has grown into an ongoing network where schools and the kindergarten meet throughout the year to discuss transitions. A community day is also held at the kindergarten, providing a safe and welcoming environment for families to meet schools and begin enrolment conversations.

OUTCOMES

Mutual trust and respect

Relationships between kindergarten and teaching teams have strengthened, with recognition of the valuable knowledge each brings about children's learning and development.

Continuity of learning

Prep teachers become familiar with children in their kindergarten setting, while kindergarten teams share successful strategies to support children's ongoing learning at school.

Greater cultural responsiveness

Schools have worked alongside the kindergarten to strengthen cultural understanding and connection with families, supporting a greater sense of belonging for children and their communities.



Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Partnerships with community
- Partnerships with families
- Partnerships between ECEC and school settings



It takes a community

Partnering with families and local services

CONTEXT

At Malanda State School, leaders have placed the early years at the centre of their approach, recognising that strong community partnerships support successful transitions to school. Their work focuses on building relationships with children and families well before the first day, creating a sense of connection, belonging and trust.

Through a combination of a well-established playgroup and a year-round transition program, the school has created multiple opportunities for families to engage with the school community. These programs have been shaped by community needs and informed by data, ensuring they are responsive, inclusive and accessible.

Together, these approaches create a connected pathway into school, where children and families feel welcomed, supported and confident as they begin their schooling journey.



... working together for a strong start ...

Trusting partnerships

IN PRACTICE:
Malanda State School

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Strengthen collaborative partnerships



Partnerships in action

Community playgroup

A weekly, school-based playgroup provides a welcoming space for families to connect, with age-appropriate indoor and outdoor environments and opportunities for learning through play.

Year-round transition program

Transition experiences are offered throughout the year, supporting children to become familiar with the school environment, routines and people before starting Prep.

Connecting with early learning services

School staff and students regularly visit local ECEC services, building relationships with children and strengthening continuity between settings.

Welcoming children and families to school

Kindergarten children and families are invited to participate in open days, 'come and try' sessions and guided tours, meeting staff and exploring the school environment.

Supporting every child

Individualised transition supports are provided for children who require additional assistance, ensuring all children and families feel confident and supported.

Partnering with community organisations

Local partners contribute to the playgroup and transition program through workshops and shared learning opportunities that support children and families.

Strengthening professional connections

An early years network brings together teaching teams from local ECEC services and schools for professional learning and collaboration, supporting continuity of learning across settings.

Promoting connection and access

Programs are actively promoted through multiple channels, ensuring families know they are welcome and able to access support from the earliest stages.



Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Partnerships with community
- Partnerships with families
- Establishing an early years network
- Supported playgroups

... belonging
grows
through
connection





Pathways from playgroup to Prep

Building early connections that support positive transitions

CONTEXT

At Woorabinda State School, strong connections with community are at the heart of transition practices. With many families engaging in the school's playgroup and SDK, staff recognised an opportunity to build relationships early and strengthen pathways into Prep.

Leaders prioritised knowing children and families well, creating a connected approach across playgroup, SDK and Prep. This approach supports continuity of learning and ensures children experience familiar people, places and practices as they transition to school.

Through culturally responsive and relationship-focused practices, the school works alongside families to foster a strong sense of belonging, supporting children to begin school feeling confident, connected and supported.

‘Our playgroup and kindy are more than just learning spaces, they are places where families feel at home, children feel proud, and transitions are natural and supported.’

Community Engagement Officer

Trusting partnerships

IN PRACTICE:
Woorabinda State School

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Nuture continuity of learning



... pathways from playgroup to Prep

Playgroup

Playgroup connections

Playgroup sessions reflect EYLF while celebrating culture, family strengths and community identity.



Building connections

Working together

With consent, playgroup and SDK educators share information and collaborate to support each child's development.

Valuing family voice

Families are invited to share stories, songs and cultural knowledge, strengthening connection and pride.



Transition to kindy

Exploring new spaces

Children participate in transition visits to the kindy environment, meeting staff and becoming familiar with routines.

Supporting enrolment

Families are supported through the enrolment process, ensuring smooth movement between settings.

Strengthening support

Wraparound support

Partnerships with local services provide additional support for children and families, reducing barriers to participation.

Thriving in Prep

Confident transitions

Children arrive familiar with staff, spaces and routines.

Families feel welcomed

Families feel supported, valued and connected.

Deeper understanding of learners

Educators understand children's strengths, needs and identity.

Belonging and cultural pride

Children experience a strong sense of belonging and cultural connection.



Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Partnerships with families
- Culturally safe spaces
- Supported playgroups



Connection starts through community

Building relationships that support positive transitions

CONTEXT

At Gracemere State School, building strong connections with families, ECEC services and the wider community is central to supporting successful transitions to Prep. The school prioritises being visible, accessible and engaged within the community, recognising that early and ongoing connections help children and families feel confident and supported before starting school.

Through a combination of community engagement, early years programs and structured transition experiences, the school creates multiple opportunities for children and families to connect with the school environment, staff and local supports. The school also values and celebrates the diverse cultures, languages and backgrounds of its community, including those of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people, fostering a strong sense of belonging and connection from the earliest stages of engagement. By building relationships through community and culture, children and families are supported to feel seen, valued and connected as they begin their schooling journey.

This connected approach strengthens familiarity, trust and shared understanding, supporting children and families to experience a positive and confident start to school.

 **Trusting partnerships**

IN PRACTICE:
Gracemere
State School

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Strengthen collaborative
partnerships



... belonging begins with connection ...



Transitions in action

Visible in the community

Staff actively participate in local events and host school-based celebrations, building familiarity and strong community connections.

Collaborating through networks

Staff engage in early years network meetings with local ECEC services, schools and organisations to strengthen partnerships and shared approaches.

Connecting with early learning services

Regular visits to local ECEC services support continuity and alignment of practices as children transition to Prep.

Early connections through KindyLinQ

A twice-weekly KindyLinQ program supports parent-child interaction and connects families to early learning and the school community.

Step into Prep program

A structured transition program begins in Term 3 and continues into Term 4, including school visits, information sessions and tailored transition supports.

Welcoming and supporting families

Families are provided opportunities to engage with the school, building understanding, confidence and a sense of belonging before Prep begins.



Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Partnerships with community
- Partnerships with families
- Partnerships between ECEC and school settings

‘For me as a mum, it’s provided an opportunity to get out of the house with my kids to a place that provides an educational support system. As an immigrant it has helped the kids build their language skills (English). It provides an opportunity not just for the kids but for mums to socialise with others as well.’

KindyLinQ parent



Shared responsibility, stronger transitions

Building reciprocal community partnerships

CONTEXT

At Glenmore State School, strong, two-way partnerships with families, ECEC services and community organisations are central to supporting successful transitions to school. Through ongoing collaboration, the school creates connected pathways where children and families feel welcomed, valued and supported before starting Prep.

These partnerships reflect the school's commitment to wellbeing, inclusion and community connection. Families and community partners are recognised as co-educators, with shared knowledge supporting a deeper understanding of each child and strengthening transition practices.

This approach supports continuity across early learning and school, helping children begin their schooling journey feeling confident, secure and connected.



Trusting partnerships

IN PRACTICE:
Glenmore
State School

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Strengthen collaborative
partnerships

‘Together, we’ve focused on creating smoother transitions for children moving from kindy to Prep and increasing access to early learning opportunities. The Glenmore SS Principal has embraced the kindergarten community, inviting families, staff, and children to actively participate in school life.’

C&K – Early Childhood Education Manager



KEY ACTIONS

Expanding early years partnerships

Reciprocal visits with local kindergartens strengthen continuity. In partnership with C&K, a second onsite kindergarten group was established, increasing access to a kindergarten program and strengthening pathways into Prep.

Collaborating with community services

Health, wellbeing and family support services work alongside the school to provide coordinated, holistic support for children and families.

Welcoming and inclusive enrolment

Enrolment conversations value family voice, with opportunities to share children's strengths and cultural background alongside play-based engagement for children.

Creating opportunities for connection

Events such as Under Eights Day, Prep Fun Days and Book Week provide meaningful opportunities for families and partners to connect with the school.

Strengthening literacy and inclusion

Partnerships with libraries and external agencies support early literacy, inclusion and targeted supports, ensuring children's needs are identified and supported.

Promoting engagement and attendance

Families and community partners support consistent attendance, reinforcing the importance of being at school and ready to learn.

OUTCOMES

Stronger connections and sense of belonging

Children and families feel welcomed and connected to the school community before starting Prep.

Improved continuity of learning

Shared approaches across early childhood settings and school support smoother transitions for children.

Deeper understanding of each child

Educators gain insights into children's strengths, needs and backgrounds, supporting responsive teaching from the start.

Coordinated support for children and families

Partnerships with community organisations enable timely and targeted support for children's learning and wellbeing.

Play Matters Rockhampton Manager

“Working together means families don't have to navigate school on their own. They feel supported by both the school and community.”

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Partnerships with community
- Partnerships with families
- Partnerships between ECEC and school settings
- Promoting early learning pathways





Data-informed transitions

Using evidence and community insights to design responsive transitions

CONTEXT

At Spring Mountain State School, leaders recognise that effective transition practices are strengthened when evidence and data are used to inform action. Understanding the strengths, needs and experiences of incoming students and families helps the school design transition programs that are responsive to their community.

With a culturally diverse community, where around 70 per cent of students speak English as an additional language or dialect, the school places strong emphasis on inclusive practices that recognise and respond to this diversity.

By drawing on multiple sources of data and community insights, the school works collaboratively with families and early childhood partners to shape transition practices that support confident and connected starts to Prep.



From evidence to action

IN PRACTICE:
Spring Mountain State School

COMMITMENT
Honour learners' unique strengths and contexts

COMMITMENT
Use evidence and build a culture of inquiry



evidence guiding action ...



KEY ACTIONS

Respecting and responding to diversity

Transition practices are designed to respond to the strengths and needs of the school's diverse community. Strategies include:

- using Abecedarian Approach Australia (3a) learning games in playgroup and Prep to support language-rich learning experiences between children, families and teachers
- embedding invitational and provocation-style play to support communication and engagement
- conducting oral language screening on students in Prep, with early intervention offered for students requiring additional language support
- maintaining a strong focus on differentiated curriculum and inclusive learning environments
- using age-appropriate pedagogies in teaching and learning opportunities.

Using data to inform transition planning

A range of data sources are analysed to guide transition planning and strengthen collaboration with early childhood partners, including:

- AEDC data
- kindergarten transition statements
- Prep enrolment conversations
- feedback from staff, Prep families and students about their transition experiences
- information gathered through visits to local ECEC services and playgroups.

Teachers are provided an opportunity to unpack data sources with school leaders. These insights help the school identify trends, understand student needs and prioritise transition actions that support incoming Prep cohorts.

OUTCOMES

Stronger connections before school begins, with children recognising familiar staff, peers and routines when starting Prep.

Improved learning outcomes, with teachers gaining early insights into children's social, emotional and language development.

More responsive learning environments, informed by data gathered prior to the start of the school year.

Stronger partnerships with families and ECEC services, supporting confident and connected transitions to school.

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Interpreting early years data
- Feedback to inform future transitions



More than a classroom

Creating indoor and outdoor spaces that support transitions

Step Up into Education: Promising practice

CONTEXT

At Harristown State School, teaching teams reflected on how their Prep learning environments supported children transitioning from early childhood settings. Through engagement with local ECEC services, they recognised a disconnect between early learning environments and their Prep classrooms.

Classroom spaces were not always reflective of children's interests, lacked flexibility, and did not consistently promote independence or a sense of ownership. This prompted a shift towards creating **responsive indoor and outdoor learning environments** that better aligned with early childhood settings.

The goal was to design spaces that could adapt to children's changing needs, promote familiarity and belonging, and support child-focused pedagogies from the start of school.

it starts with the environment...

environment
as the third
teacher

In practice



From evidence
to action

IN PRACTICE:
Harristown
State School

COMMITMENT
Nuture continuity of learning

COMMITMENT
Foster a sense of belonging



QA 1, 3, 6

D 4, 8, 9



PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

Learning from early childhood settings

Staff visited local ECEC services and engaged in professional learning to better understand how environments support children's learning, independence and wellbeing.

Using voice to inform change

Student, family and ECEC service feedback was gathered to understand how learning spaces could be improved and made more responsive to children's needs and interests.

Redesigning indoor and outdoor environments

Prep learning spaces were redesigned to be flexible, inviting and adaptable, with changes made to both indoor and outdoor environments to support continuity of learning.

Supporting independence and ownership

Accessible storage and flexible furniture were introduced to enable children to independently access resources, make choices and take ownership of their learning environment.

Embedding ongoing reflection

Staff implemented a cycle of ongoing review, using data and feedback to continually adapt environments in response to children's needs, including considerations for diverse learners.

OUTCOMES

Greater continuity between early childhood and school environments, supporting familiarity and smoother transitions.

Increased student independence and confidence, with children able to access and manage resources.

More engaging and responsive learning spaces, reflecting children's interests and supporting play-based learning.

Stronger sense of belonging, with environments that feel welcoming, familiar and child-centred.

Sustained use of flexible, responsive spaces, supporting ongoing adaptation to children's changing needs.



capturing
child
voice

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Responsive learning environments
- Continuity of curriculum and pedagogy
- Reciprocal visits between early years staff

RESOURCES

[Step Up into Education hub](#)





From evidence
to action

IN PRACTICE:
Bundaberg East
State School

COMMITMENT
Honour learners' unique
strengths and contexts

COMMITMENT
Nuture continuity of learning

Starting with what we know

Using kindergarten transition statements to support positive transitions

CONTEXT

At Bundaberg East State School, teaching teams and leaders noticed that some children were beginning Prep with additional support needs that were not immediately evident during the short transition experiences offered. This prompted reflection on how the school could gain a deeper understanding of children's needs earlier in the transition process.

The team began exploring the potential of **kindergarten transition statements** as a way to learn more about each child before they started school. By accessing and engaging with the statements earlier, staff were able to build a clearer picture of children's strengths, interests and support needs.

This earlier insight and shift in practice has strengthened planning for transition, enabling more responsive support for children, families and Prep teachers as children begin their schooling journey.



... insights before day one ...

QA 1, 5, 6

D 2, 7, 9



Using kindergarten transition statements to support positive transitions

INSIGHTS AND SHIFTS IN PRACTICE

Planning for support earlier

Key words and phrases within transition statements helped identify where additional support for children – and sometimes families – may be required, allowing staff to plan earlier and tailor engagement approaches.

Using insights to inform planning

Patterns across transition statements highlighted speech and self-regulation as areas where additional support may be needed. This informed early planning and the strategic allocation of supports such as teacher aide time.

Building understanding of transition statements

Teaching teams and leaders developed a deeper understanding of kindergarten transition statements, the QKLG and how learning and development phases are used to communicate children's progress and support needs.

Attendance insights

Information about kindergarten attendance patterns helped guide conversations with families and provided useful context when considering children's experiences prior to starting Prep.

Understanding the phases of learning

The three phases of the QKLG continua of learning and development provided valuable insights into the learning experiences children had engaged in and the level of support they had received in kindergarten.

Building staff capability

Leadership supported teaching teams to develop confidence in accessing and interpreting transition statements. Over time, staff shifted from uncertainty about the process to proactively engaging with the information to support planning.

...turning information into action



understanding
the child
behind the
statement



Explore +
extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Responsive planning using transition statements
- Interpreting early years data
- Continuity of curriculum and pedagogy



Ready together

Strengthening transitions through shared responsibility

CONTEXT

Bentley Park College recognised that a successful transition to school extends far beyond school-determined familiarisation activities. By collaborating with local kindergartens and the wider community, staff gained valuable insight into the diverse experiences, perspectives and expectations of families.

Analysis of AEDC data at both school and community level helped guide transition planning and identify areas where additional support was needed for children and families. Through ongoing analysis of AEDC data (since 2015), the school and community partners used 2021 data to prioritise transition practices targeting the AEDC domains of physical health and wellbeing, social competence, and language and cognitive skills. A key focus was reducing the number of children identified as developmentally vulnerable on two or more AEDC domains. These shared priorities helped guide collaborative planning, early intervention and coordinated supports for children and families before school.

A successful transition benefits everyone – children, families and schools. Quality early learning not only improves a child's life prospects, it also has generational impact, creating better opportunities for their future children.

Bentley Park College's story reflects how shifting from school-centred approaches to authentic community collaboration can transform outcomes *inside* the school gate – by starting *outside* it.



From evidence to action

IN PRACTICE:
Bentley Park College

COMMITMENT
Strengthen collaborative partnerships

COMMITMENT
Use evidence and build a culture of inquiry

“An ecological systems approach conceptualises readiness as ‘ready schools, communities, ready families, for ready children’ (Krakouer, 2016). This recognises the broader spectrum of influences and relationships impacting learners’ wellbeing and health as they experience change.”

Transitions literature review p.9



KEY ACTIONS

Built upon trust and partnerships, staff co-designed a transitions approach to support the school to be ready for all children. They aimed to strengthen transitions through the lens of ready schools, ready communities, ready families to support all children (Krakouer, 2016).

School: Bentley Park College engages purposefully with families, ECEC services and the wider community, using transition data to guide planning. Strong networks, community liaison officers, AEDC data, and professional dialogue between kindergarten and Prep teachers support a shared understanding of children's strengths and needs. Kindergarten transition statements help align teaching practices and expectations.

Community: Partnerships with local kindergartens and community organisations strengthen shared responsibility for transitions. Ongoing collaboration builds understanding of family experiences, supports connection, and creates more inclusive and responsive pathways into school.

Family: Families are engaged early to ensure the transition is responsive to their needs. Tailored strategies include family-centred enrolment interviews focused on strengths and goals, developmentally informed resources, and events that encourage open dialogue and connection. 'First day' approaches intentionally build on each child's early learning experiences to support continuity.

Children: A transition program built through collaborative decision-making provides school-based experiences that support children to build confidence and a sense of security. The annual program culminates in a Prep orientation, where children and families participate together, fostering a strong connection to the school.

OUTCOMES

These approaches led to significant improvements for children, families and early childhood partners.

Kindergarten participation rates increased substantially, generating more transition statements, deepening understanding of each child and strengthening curriculum continuity.

AEDC data informed understanding of school and community needs, supported shared dialogue with early childhood partners, and provided a population-level indicator to guide transition planning and collaborative approaches over time.

Children started school with confidence and successfully adapted to school routines and environments, while families reported positive experiences.

Stronger partnerships and early years networks emerged, supporting the co-design of community projects that align early childhood and school efforts around shared goals.

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Partnerships with families
- Partnerships with community
- Planning for a positive transition
- Families transitioning together
- Interpreting early years data





Early years expo

Listening, learning and leading change through community voice

Step Up into Education: Promising practice

CONTEXT

At Marsden State School, staff reflected on their transition practices and recognised that previous approaches were not supporting meaningful connection for children and families. Large, information-focused sessions limited opportunities for interaction, often increasing anxiety for both children and parents.

Through feedback from families, teachers and children, and guided by the *Supporting successful transitions: School decision-making tool*, the school identified a need to redesign their approach to prioritise relationships, oral language and connection. This led to the development of the **Early Years Expo** – an interactive, play-based experience designed to bring children, families, ECEC services and community partners together.

Grounded in evidence and shaped by ongoing feedback, the Expo reflects a shift towards responsive, relationship-focused transition practices that support belonging and connection from the outset.



conversations

From evidence to action

IN PRACTICE:
Marsden State School

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Use evidence and build a culture of inquiry

music

play

Attendance was great, so there were lots of opportunities for connecting and sharing.

games

painting

QA 5, 6

D 2, 3, 9



KEY ACTIONS

Using evidence to redesign transition practices

Feedback from children, families and teaching teams informed a shift away from large, information-based sessions to more interactive and relational approaches.

Creating a play-based transition experience

The Early Years Expo was designed as an open-ended, play-based event where children and families could explore, engage and connect in a relaxed environment.

Capturing child and family voice

Data was intentionally gathered through conversations, questionnaires, visual prompts, observations and interactive methods, ensuring multiple ways for participants to share their experiences of the Expo.

Using data to inform future planning

Insights from each Expo were analysed and used to refine future events and transition activities, ensuring practices remained responsive to the needs of children and families.

Responding and adapting in real time

Feedback led to immediate changes, including increasing child choice, improving accessibility to transition experiences and strengthening opportunities for meaningful interaction.

Monitoring impact over time

Multiple datasets were collected across events to track participation, engagement and connection, supporting ongoing evaluation and improvement.

OUTCOMES

Stronger connections and engagement

High attendance and increased interactions between children, families and teachers supported early relationship-building.

More responsive and evolving practice

Data collected from children, families and community partners directly informed ongoing improvements to the Expo and broader transition practices.

Increased child agency and confidence

Children engaged more confidently through play-based experiences that allowed choice and supported communication.

Improved access and inclusion

The Expo created opportunities for both enrolled and previously unconnected families to engage with the school community.

Sustained improvement through evidence

Ongoing data collection and reflection ensured transition practices continued to evolve, remaining relevant, inclusive and effective over time.

Explore + extend

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

Transition cards:

- Partnerships with families
- Families transitioning together
- Feedback to inform future transitions

RESOURCES

[Step Up into Education hub](#)

[Supporting successful transitions: School decision-making tool](#)



“Lots of interest and interaction from parents and children.”