

PREPARING FOR TRANSITION

Transition: *Passage from one form, state, style, or place to another.*

There are many stages of transition in a child's life. At each stage there are opportunities and possibilities but there may also be challenges and obstacles. Transition can be seen as change, passage, movement, growth. At every transition point it is vital that parents are informed and able to discuss the opportunities and expectations in age appropriate terms. The keys are [Resilience](#), [Organisation](#), [Persistence](#), [Confidence](#) & [Getting Along With Others](#).

1. Transition into school.

Starting school is a big milestone in a child's life, and their understanding of the changes will assist them to make a smooth transition. Many children will follow older siblings or neighbours to school, full of enthusiasm and eager to experience school life. The anticipation of learning new skills, such as reading and writing, as well as being part of the school community, playground and sporting activities are all part of the new school experience. For some children, the move to school will invoke different emotions. School can appear to be 'so big' for some. They may exhibit signs of anxiety and parents should be aware of this. Asking your child to talk through his/her feelings about school and the transition to school can be a very positive experience.

Almost all children will have some reaction to starting school. Not all children will exhibit this on the first day or even in the first few weeks. Most children will settle down and adjust to the changes of starting school once a routine is established. Parents should take note of any changes in their child's behaviour and discuss these changes with their child's teacher. Often the teacher can reassure you that reactions you have observed are typical, but if the problem persists parents should seek further help from the teacher/school or other professionals.

2. Transition from Prep to Year 1 and 2 – Junior school: VELS Levels 1 & 2

As with the transition into school, the increased independence, responsibility and academic expectations at Year 1 and Year 2 can be a challenge for some children. The change from the simple instructions and routine to more complex behavioural, social, emotional and educational expectations can be difficult for some children. Remembering their jumpers, reader satchels, homework and notices may need routines and reminders.

3. Transition from Year 2 to Years 3 and 4 – Middle school: VELS Level 3

This is identified as one of the significant transition points. At Year 3, the curriculum increases substantially with children being taught specific content and skills in additional subject areas, e.g. Italian, Science, history and geography, Civics & citizenship, advanced computer skills and competitive sport. These require additional homework, organisation and individual responsibility as children are introduced to diaries.

4. Transition from Year 4 to Years 5 and 6 – Senior school: VELS Level 4

This is another identified significant transition point with even more substantial increase in curriculum content. Children are introduced to economics, the democratic process and elections, more complex mathematics and English content, and Interschool sport. Homework, organisation and individual responsibility are vastly increased as children are prepared for secondary school.

5. Transition from Year 6 to Secondary school: VELS Levels 5 & 6 then VCE

This process commences early in Year 6 with visits from several secondary schools to explain the benefits of individual schools. For some students, their secondary schooling has been planned well in advance but others are still identifying and selecting a school in June each year. The formal secondary school enrolment form is coordinated through DEECD but parents must prioritise schools and many schools now have enrolment ceilings or zone boundaries, limiting choice.

Attending enrolment days and school orientation sessions assists students and parents in making an informed decision however, attending a school with a friend or schoolmate is a help.

6. Transition from Flemington PS to another school:

This is often a more difficult transition as children may know no-one, parents may be unfamiliar with the area and community and there may not be a support network to fall back on. It is important to familiarise children with the school as soon and as much as possible before commencement and to become involved in the school.