

Children who have a positive start in their new class are likely to engage well and to experience academic and social success. A positive start is made possible when school and families work together. A change of class or even school can present opportunities as well as challenges for our children and we know that with supportive adults, the challenges can be effectively managed. We all have a part to play in supporting children to manage this process well. We can do this by reminding them of their previous successful transitions both at school and at home.

We can also reassure children that their teacher will support them to be successful and confident through:

- creating the safe conditions for learning
- explicit teaching of routines, roles and expectations in this new environment
- activities that support and develop positive relationships and provide strategies for when 'mean on purpose' behaviour occurs
- collaborative development of class codes of conduct and grievance procedures
- development of class identity and belonging to a community of learners with group norms
- sharing personal character strengths and intentional teaching of strategies to build wellbeing
- encouragement of a growth mindset by modelling curiosity and wonder in preparing for the new class.

Questions such as those below can activate children's existing problem solving skills and direct their attention towards a positive future:

## **Making a Successful Transition**

*What transitions have you already successfully made?*

*What would you like others to know about you?*

*What questions could you ask your new teacher?*

*What might surprise you?*

*What character strengths would be useful in getting to know others?*

*What do you already know about other class mates?*

*What new friends might you make?*

*What opportunities for new learning might there be in this new class?*

Transition is an on-going process and by providing support and scaffolds, students can develop their personal resilience skills to ensure the transition is a positive experience. These skills are best taught in the calm times so that when they are in a flurry or stressed, they have a bank of skills to call upon. These include asking questions, practising mindfulness and recalling prior accomplishments in making positive transitions and so knowing they can do it again.

If children are feeling uncomfortable, we can model the positive belief that the discomfort will be temporary and that they will experience the good feelings that come with having a buddy, learning new names, skills and routines and making a successful transition.

## **TIPS FOR FIRST TIME PARENTS**

At Thorndon Park Primary School, our vision for a child's Reception year is that it features the best aspects of both pre-school and the early years in a school setting that understands and respects their developmental needs and meets them in a caring, nurturing way providing a strong foundation for their future learning.

All students who turn 5 prior to the end of April each year are able to commence Reception. Many students get tired in their first few weeks of school until they adjust to the new activities. You may wish to collect your child earlier for the first few weeks by arrangement with their teacher. Young students starting school for the first time embark on a steep learning curve and it may be beneficial for you to make a time to speak to their teacher to enquire about how you can help.

*Students will have the opportunity to visit the school before she/he actually starts in Reception.*

Parents will have an Information session followed by children attending school for three consecutive orientation visits. This occurs mid-term 4, before your child commences school. Families will receive information from the school outlining dates, times and what students need to bring along for their visits.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION / FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS and WAYS to SUPPORT YOUR RECEPTION CHILD in the EARLY YEARS**

- Ensure good nutrition, regular exercise, very limited screen time and ample sleep.
- Talk to your child about starting school, making new friends and learning new skills.
- Listen to your child (this helps children at every stage of their schooling).
- Help your child to learn to tie shoelaces, manage clothes, etc.
- Ensure your child can open and close their lunchbox.
- Allow your child to pack their own lunchbox and other belongings into their bag so they know where everything is when they attempt to find it.
- Label full name on all things that are brought to school.
- Help your child to recognise her/his full name.
- Help your child to develop responsibility, initiative and independence by giving her/him little duties to perform which require one to two verbal instructions. This will give confidence to complete tasks.
- Give your child the opportunity to play with other children
- Give your child the opportunity to use scissors, cut, paste and paint at home.
- Allow your child time away from parents so that she/he accepts that parents will not always be present.
- Teach your child to be safe by knowing first and last names, address, phone number and parent names.
- Discuss any fears about school before the first day. Reassure your child. Do all you can to make your child happy and confident about entering the school environment.
- On the first day leave cheerfully and promptly, unless your child's teacher suggests that you stay. Let your child know you will be back at the end of the day.
- Encourage your child to openly discuss her/his feelings about school and meet with the teachers if you have any concerns. Our teachers care about how parents and children feel.

Feel free to talk to us about your own anxieties or worries about your child starting school. Seeing your child off to school can be a big transition for parents as well, as they make their own re-adjustments to family, work and personal lives. Many feelings of worry and uncertainty are commonly experienced by parents when children first start school, so if there is anything you want to know, please speak with someone from the school.

## **REGISTRATION OF INTEREST**

Families wishing to enrol their child(ren) may complete a Registration of Interest form. Priority will be given to siblings of existing children currently enrolled in our school and to families living within our school catchment (check DfE website for your nearest local schools). Proof of residency is required. An early indication of intention to enrol assists with our planning.

Children living outside of the school catchment can only be enrolled if there are spaces available in the child's year level at the time they are to commence school. The Registration of Interest to enrol will be held on file and families are responsible for checking progress of their child's Registration of Interest regularly.

### **Registration of Interest Form**

## **PARENT SCHOOL TOURS**

An opportunity for parents to tour the school, meet with the Principal, and discuss school programs is organised once per term. Parents who are considering enrolling their child (either to begin school, or to transfer in from another school) are welcome to attend a Parent School Tour. The School Tour consists of a 45min presentation by the school leadership team, followed by a school tour conducted by Student Ambassadors. Please contact the school via email or a phone call if you wish to attend.

## **TRANSFERRING FROM OTHER SCHOOLS**

Many students transfer to Thorndon Park Primary School from within South Australia, from interstate, and from overseas. A number of students attend Thorndon Park PS while families are undertaking work placements or study in Adelaide. We encourage parents to provide information from the previous school, including samples of student work so that we can make appropriate placements and maintain continuity of the learning programme to the best of our ability.

Reviewed September 2019



**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Education