# Strong and successful start to school – tailored transition support

The evidence base highlights the importance of tailoring transition practices for identified equity groups. An understanding of the child’s existing skills and knowledge enables schools to provide a differentiated approach.

## Strategies for children and families from low socio-economic areas

* Collaborative processes are in place to identify and connect with the local community.
* Community liaison is acknowledged and considered in the school budget. This will strengthen relationships and support the school in responding to local needs.
* Community organisations provide connections to services to help the school to provide support such as breakfast programs and homework centres.
	+ [Building belonging - a toolkit for early childhood educators cultural diversity and responding to prejudice](https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/education/building-belonging-toolkit-early-childhood-educators-cultural-diversity-and)
	+ [Department of Education external wellbeing providers – checklist for engaging a provider](https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/external-wellbeing-providers/page-3)
	+ [The Hive – Mount Druitt](https://thehivemtdruitt.com.au/why-the-hive/#:~:text=The%20Hive%20is%20a%20network%20of%20people%20working,starts%20school%20well%2C%20and%20has%20enhanced%20life%20outcomes)
	+ [Smith Family](https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/external-wellbeing-providers/prequalified-external-providers/smith-family)
* Consideration of uniforms and other associated costs with starting school. Engage community links (for example, Samaritans and other NFP organisations) and contact businesses to seek community support (school bags, uniforms).
	+ [Bunnings Warehouse: in our community](https://bunnings.com.au/about-us/in-our-community)
	+ [Schools Plus: for schools](https://schoolsplus.org.au/for-schools/)

### Reflective questions

* Are we aware of local organisations that can support the school with transition and beyond?
* Have we committed financial support to the transition process (support with gaps in costings)?

## Strategies

* School and staff are competent, including joint professional learning and visits with local community networks (for example trauma informed practice, consistency of support for families)
* Staff engage in online professional learning
	+ [Department of Education school communities working together](https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/whole-school-approach/school-communities-working-together)
	+ [A new approach to trauma-informed teaching: Teacher practice with the Berry Street Education Model](https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/2019/08/22/new-approach-trauma-informed-teaching-teacher-practice-berry-street-education-model)
	+ [Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth](https://aracy.org.au/)
	+ [Publications and resources](https://aracy.org.au/publications-resources/area?command=record&id=224)

### Reflective questions

* Are our staff equipped with professional knowledge and resources to support families and children?

## Strategies

* Get to know the children and the families both informally and formally (playgroup, BBQs as well as culturally sensitive informative sessions).
* Value and support are given to family and community involvement, flexibility is evident in family-school planning. Plan timing-straight after school for ease of parents to stay, feed the family and chat with staff or morning playgroup.
* Continue with these connections into the kindergarten year and beyond.
* High expectations of all stakeholders fostered through reliable and confident interactions, for example activities for young siblings to enable family participation in the P & C.
	+ Live life well @ school
* Meet to share knowledge about the child, identify strengths, language and needs and plan strategies and adjustments.
	+ [Diversity and inclusion strategy 2018-2022](https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/strategic-plan/corporate-plans-and-strategies/diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2018-2022)
	+ [Department of Education - Multicultural Education: Culture and diversity](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/culture-and-diversity/calendar-for-cultural-diversity)
* Consider alternate ways to engage with families. Seek their input- text messages maybe preferable for some, or via siblings in the school.
* Provide parent workshops in a social setting, connect with local Elders or local language (for example cooking, yarn up groups, art).
	+ [Evidence for learning: Parental engagement](https://www.evidenceforlearning.org.au/the-toolkits/the-teaching-and-learning-toolkit/all-approaches/parental-engagement/)
	+ [Department of Education 2021 School Excellence in Action - Authentic community engagement](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability/2021-school-excellence-in-action/authentic-community-engagement)
* Strategies in place to support families in complex cases. Consider multiple challenges, combining to cause stress.
* Opportunities are taken, transition to school is a point where interactions between families and schools can set the scene for ongoing engagement.
* [Facilitating children's transition to school from families with complex support needs](https://csu.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/517036/Facilitating-Childrens-Trans-School.pdf)

### Reflective questions

* Do we strive to support relationships with families?
* Are we able to respond to the local context?
* How do we liaise with the community to ensure families feel welcome in the school?

## Strategies

* The school learning and support team work with teachers, early childhood and the family and community to identify who may need additional support to make a successful transition.
* Staff roles are linked, for example, Learning and Support Teacher, Community Liaison Officer, on transition team relationships.

### Reflective questions

* Do we ensure we have a team approach to supporting children and families with transition?

## Strategies

* Information included on the Transition to school statement will also inform and offer successful strategies that can be transferred between settings.
	+ [Department of Education Transition to school statement](https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/information-for-parents-and-carers/transition-to-school)
* Engage in data driven planning and implementation.
	+ [Australian Early Development Census Data : Communities](https://www.aedc.gov.au/communities)

### Reflective questions

* How do we use data to inform our practice?