

POLICY

Early Childhood Transitioning

Responsibility of:	Early Childhood Education and Care	DET File: EC2016/30-4
Effective Date:	28 APRIL 2017	EDOC 2017/21503
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Target Audience:	Principals, school teachers and educators including Families as First Teachers educators, parents, students, community and service providers	

This document should be read in conjunction with the [Enrolment and orientation of new children and their families in preschool guidelines](#)

1. POLICY

All Northern Territory (NT) government schools will ensure they have effective early childhood transitioning processes in place to support children's movements prior to and from preschool.

Schools will include an outline of their early childhood transitioning processes in their annual operational plan. An NT Early Childhood Transitioning Information Package has been developed to support schools to develop, implement and review their transitioning processes.

2. BUSINESS NEED

A share in the future - Review of Indigenous Education in the Northern Territory identified a need to:

- bridge the gap between families and schools and enhance family involvement and engagement in the curriculum and their children's learning;
- ensure continuity of learning and support as children move from early childhood settings into preschool, Transition and the subsequent early years of schooling; and
- maintain established relationships with families and strengthen these during the preschool year and beyond.

In response, the department committed to ensuring schools provide clear transitioning for children and their families prior to and from preschool.

Effective transitioning processes go beyond the steps taken to orientate children and their families at the start or end of a school year. The process of transitioning takes place over a prolonged period of time. It begins in the years prior to children commencing in preschool and/or Transition, and continues after they have started compulsory schooling. It not only entails a geographical move, but also the transfer of information.

Successful transitioning processes assist children to become confident learners and families to actively engage with the preschool and school.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all NT Government schools that have responsibility for delivering an early childhood programs and/or services.

It provides an overarching framework within which individual schools can develop and annually review their early childhood transitioning processes to successfully support children and families through this important period.

Schools that have existing transitioning plans should review these plans to ensure they are consistent with the information provided in this policy.

3. DEFINITIONS

Families as First Teachers (FaFT) is a quality early learning and family support program for children from birth to three years of age. FaFT aims to improve the lifelong education, health and wellbeing outcomes for young children and their families, particularly in remote Indigenous communities.

Parent, for the purpose of this policy, signifies a child's father, mother or any other person who has parental responsibility for that child, including a person who is regarded as a parent of the child under Aboriginal and Torres Strait customary law or tradition.

Preschool is a centre-based early childhood service that provides a quality preschool program to children in the year before they commence full time schooling and in very remote locations may include three year old children, providing they are accompanied by their parent until they reach the age of three and half years.

Prior-to-school setting is a place or program a child may attend prior to entering preschool such as home, FaFT, long day care or family day care. Some children may attend a combination of these settings.

School community includes principals, school staff, students, school councils, parents and community members with an interest in the efficient and successful operation of a school.

Transition is a non-compulsory, planned, play-based learning and development program delivered by a school that assists in the development of children transitioning into Year 1.

Transitioning is the process and period of change for children and their families from one year level to the next. Particularly focusing on the periods prior to and post preschool.

The department refers to the NT Government Department of Education.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Early Childhood Education and Care division is responsible for:

- reviewing the department's Early Childhood Transitioning Policy to ensure it is effective and consistent with any amendments to related policies or legislation; and
- promoting and communicating the importance of early childhood transitioning across the early childhood sector including Transition, preschool and prior-to-school settings.

Regional directors are responsible for:

- ensuring principals adhere to the requirements of this policy and guidance provided in the NT Early Childhood Transitioning Information Package.

Principals are responsible for:

- ensuring early childhood transitioning processes are outlined in the school's annual operational plan and reviewed annually;
- ensuring the development, implementation and annual review of a place-based early childhood transitioning plan in consultation with the school community;
- facilitating regular collaboration of all early childhood teachers and educators (including FaFT) for the purpose of planning and implementing effective early childhood transitioning processes; and
- ensuring early childhood transitioning statements (NT Early Childhood Transitioning Information Package refers) are completed for each child in preschool and FaFT programs by the end of the school year.

Teachers and FaFT educators will:

- implement a school's early childhood transitioning plan and processes;
- encourage family, community and external service providers engagement in the development and implementation of a school's early childhood transitioning processes; and
- complete an early childhood transitioning statement (NT Early Childhood Transitioning Information Package refers) for each child in their preschool or FaFT program by the completion of the school year to transfer knowledge about each child from one educator to the next.

5. RELATED POLICY, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

- [Education and Care Services \(National Uniform Legislation\) Act](#), which includes the *Education and Care Services Act (NT)*
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [Enrolment policy](#) and associated guidelines
- [Student enrolment form](#) and [Supplementary preschool enrolment form](#)
- [Students at Risk of Anaphylaxis guidelines](#)
- [Administration of medications to students with notified medical conditions policy and procedures](#)
- [Pre-compulsory years of schooling: early years learning framework policy](#)
- [Preschool Specific Policy](#) - specifically the [Enrolment and orientation of new children and their families in preschool guidelines](#)
- Principles and Program Practice - Families as First Teachers

6. APPENDICES AND ATTACHMENTS

NT Early Childhood Transitioning Information Package

- **NT Early Childhood Transitioning Overview**

Audience: Principals and school leadership

Purpose: To provide detailed information about early childhood transitioning in the Northern Territory.

Other uses: Beneficial in the collaborative development of place-based early childhood transitioning plans with all stakeholders in working groups

- **NT Early Childhood Transitioning on a Page**

Audience: Principals and school leadership

Purpose: To develop place-based early childhood transitioning plans

Other uses: Beneficial to identify areas of strength and proposed areas for growth by reflecting on transitioning from the views of the four key stakeholders

- **NT Early Childhood Transitioning Information Page – Ready Schools**

NT Early Childhood Transitioning Information Page – Ready Families

NT Early Childhood Transitioning Information Page – Ready Communities and Services

NT Early Childhood Transitioning Information Page – Ready Children

Audience: Principals and school leadership

Purpose: To gain deeper information and ideas for engagement with each of the four key stakeholder groups in early childhood transitioning.

Other uses: Beneficial for use in the collaborative development of place-based early childhood transitioning plans with all stakeholders in working groups. Shows areas of alignment with other key documents such as the National Quality Standards, Early Years Learning Framework, NT Preschool Curriculum and the Australian Curriculum.

- **NT Early Childhood Transitioning School Action Plan template**

NT Early Childhood Transitioning School Action Plan populated sample

(Suggested sample only)

Audience: Principals and school leadership

Purpose: To develop place-based early childhood transitioning plans in collaboration with children, families and communities.

Other uses: Use to plan actions, timeframes and resources for place-based early childhood transitioning processes.

- **NT Early Childhood Transitioning Statement template**

NT Early Childhood Transitioning Statement populated sample

(Suggested sample only)

Audience: Teachers and Families as First Teachers educators

Purpose: To ensure the transference of knowledge about a child from one educator to the next at the conclusion of the school year. This will provide support for each child through their transitioning process.

DoE Policy: *Early Childhood Transitioning*

Other uses: Beneficial to assist in meeting the National Quality Standard documentation requirements for parents.

- **NT Early Childhood Transitioning Sharing About My Child resource page**
(*Suggested sample only*)

Audience: Parents

Purpose: Allows a family the opportunity to provide knowledge about a child from their perspective to teachers and educators before commencement in the program.

Other uses: Beneficial for providing support to each child and family through their transitioning processes.