



Mount Hawthorn Education Support Centre

Transition for Students Policy

2015-2017

Introduction

At Mount Hawthorn ESC there are several types of transition that students may go through;

- Transition into the Centre in the Early Years
 - into the Early Intervention Program, Kindy or Pre Primary
 - into the Education Support Centre Pre Primary class
- Transition into the Centre later in Primary schooling from another school or vice versa
 - from a Primary School
 - from another Education Support Centre
 - From interstate
 - From overseas
 - into a Pre Primary Class part time at another school (Early Intervention Centre)
- Transition from one classroom into another
- Transition out of our Centre to High School

Students with special needs often need more time to become used to a new environment but in our experience, if sufficiently prepared, can make any type of transition with no problem at all.

Transition into MHESC Early Intervention Kindy or ESC Pre Primary

Parent preferences are taken into consideration as much as possible. If parents would like a slow transition, such as half days for the first two weeks, or alternate days, this will be accommodated at the start of schooling, particularly in the hot end-of-summer weather. If parents do not want a transition but would prefer their child to start full time from the start, that will also be done. If the school is aware of new Pre Primary students well enough in advance, photographs of the school, class and staff can be provided to parents to show students many times before the student starts. Parents are encouraged to bring their children for a walk around the school before school starts. Students should ideally visit the school before they start and have the opportunity to play in the classroom and get the feel of the school and the reinforcers available. It is generally possible at this stage for staff to determine how well the new student will integrate in the first week.

Transition into the school from a Primary School or other Education Support Centre

Parent preference will be considered uppermost and transition speed will be guided by them, since they know their children better than anyone. Part days can be accommodated at first, if thought best. Our experience is that once a potential new student has visited the school and played in the classroom and seen the various schooling areas, iPads, sand pit, Smartboards and toys, they will feel quite comfortable about attending from the first day. Sometimes parents are quite anxious about their children coming to a new school, particularly if traveling by special bus. School staff will keep in touch with parents via daily diaries and/or phone calls to reassure them.

Transition into local Primary Schools for Pre Primary Students in our Autism Early Intervention Centre

Students in our Early Intervention Centre are with us full time in the Kindy year (ie 2.5 days) but become enrolled in their local state primary school for the Pre Primary year and subsequent

years. However, in the Pre Primary year, even though they are enrolled in the local school, they still attend our Early Intervention class two days a week. Our staff liaise with the primary schools with the intention of making the student's transition to primary school as smooth as possible. We can provide various ideas and resources to primary school teachers which we know will be useful for a particular child. For example this might be communication methods, social stories, PECS, strategies to deal with emotional regulation etc.

The teacher in charge of Early Intervention will contact all the primary schools and meet with their teachers, education assistants and/or administration staff whenever needed during the Pre Primary year. We will be guided by the primary school as to what we can do to help them learn more about the student. Primary school staff are always welcome to come and observe the new student in our classroom, ask questions about them and see the strategies used for communication and emotional regulation etc.

Transition from one classroom to another

Towards the end of the year, some students will begin to visit an alternative classroom, if it has been decided that they will move, for example to the older students' room. Students will visit for an hour or two to get to know the new room, students and staff, during fourth term.

Transition into High School

All of our students will eventually have to move to a high school, either a special school such as Sir David Brand School, a High School education support centre such as Dianella or Duncraig SHS ESC, or a private school. All of these types of school generally offer a transition program for new students.

In the case of an SHS ESC, there may be a special two day transition program which all new students attend together and have the opportunity to get to know the school and staff as well as their new classroom buddies. They may be provided with a booklet with photos of the new school, staff and friends to look at during the school holidays.

Special schools may have a much longer process; a student may attend their new school one day a week for the whole of term 4 the year before they start, for example. Parent preference is important in determining the speed of transition and what resources may be needed to aid the process such as relevant photographs.

Mount Hawthorn ESC will provide education assistants, if needed, during this transition time to meet the student at the new school to and work with them in their new environment. Education assistants will not drive students to the new school; parents are responsible for taking their child where they will be met at the new school by a suitable education assistant who knows the student.