



CENTRAL COAST
TRANSITION
TO SCHOOL

2016
Naidoc
CELEBRATING NAIDOC WEEK



LET'S YARN ABOUT
BIG
SCHOOL

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We pay our respects to the Elders, past and present for their valuable knowledge, wisdom and loving care passed onto our community. This book is dedicated to the Aboriginal youth who will shape our world and continue to fill it with rich culture.

This book was adapted from the 'Off to Big School' publication.

The Department of Education would like to acknowledge and thank: the children and staff at Kooloora Preschool and Toukley Primary School for their contributions to this publication.

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More Copies are available from:
Department of Education, Gosford
Ph (02) 4348 9100

Kooloora Preschool/ Toukley Public School
Ph (02) 4396 4275

**Aboriginal
Child, Youth
and Family
Strategy**



Proud communities
Strong families



**Education
Public Schools**

familiesNSW
supporting families to raise children



THE BIG QUESTIONS

Beginning school is a big transition for any child and family. This booklet has been designed to help you make a decision about sending your children to school and about making this transition as happy as possible for you and your child. We aim to answer your big questions. These often include:

- *Is my child ready to go to school?*
- *Who will be looking after my child?*
- *Will they be happy at school?*
- *Will they eat their lunch?*
- *Will they make friends?*
- *Will they listen to the teacher?*
- *Will the teachers care for my child and understand their needs?*

Worries and concerns about big school are normal. Starting school can be very scary. With encouragement and support, it can be a positive and fun experience.





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KINDERGARTEN ENROLMENT AGE

CHILDREN MAY ENROL IN KINDERGARTEN AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR IF THEY TURN FIVE YEARS OF AGE ON OR BEFORE THE 31ST JULY IN THAT YEAR. IT IS THE INTENTION THAT CHILDREN BE ENROLLED IN SCHOOL BY THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR THAT THEY TURN SIX.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE AGE OF YOUR CHILD AND WHEN THEY SHOULD BE ENROLLED, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL.

WHEN DO
I ENROL MY
CHILD?

IF YOU HAVE

FURTHER QUESTIONS OR
CONCERNS ABOUT ENROLLMENT
AGE, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL
SCHOOL OR YOUR CHILD'S
PRESCHOOL FOR SCHOOL

READINESS ADVICE

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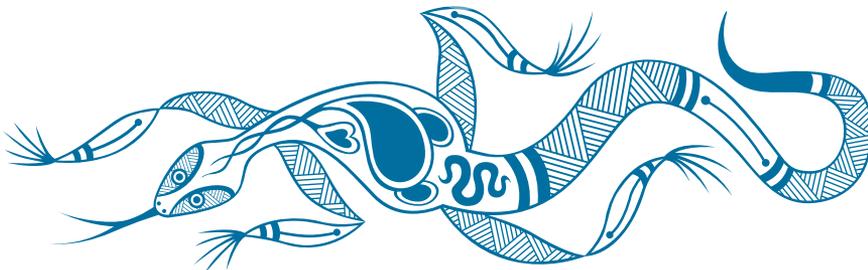
THE BIG DECISION

THE MOST COMMONLY ASKED QUESTION IS...
'IS MY CHILD READY TO GO TO SCHOOL?'

Consider your child's-

- Age
- Emotional Development or Maturity
- Intellectual Development
- Specific Individual Needs.

If you have decided to keep your child home until the beginning of the year that they turn 6, it would be really valuable for them to attend a preschool or child care centre where they will be a part of learning programs and experiences. Local playgroups are also another good opportunity for children to learn and develop social skills.



PRESCHOOLS AND PLAYGROUPS

PRESCHOOL AND PLAYGROUPS HELP YOUR CHILD PREPARE FOR SCHOOL.

Children benefit from the social interaction that preschools and playgroups offer. Ask your local preschool about their transition to school programs.

* REMEMBER- All NSW government schools offer transition to school activities in the year prior to starting kindergarten. Contact your local school for details.





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PROGRAMS SCHOOL

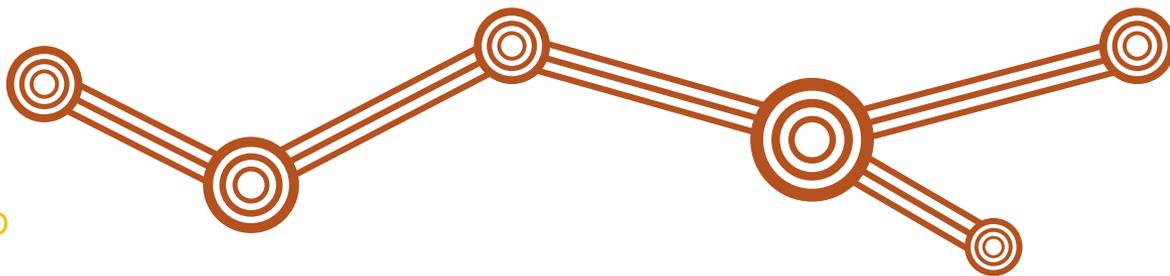
HOW DO I HELP?

ROUTINE IS THE KEY!

Having a routine is very important in setting a child up for a smooth transition to school.

Some good routines to consider are:

- *Sleep Routines-* A good night's sleep is very important. Set up regular sleep times.
- *Breakfast Routines -* Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Going to school with a belly full of good breakfast kick starts a great day of learning.
- *Morning Routines-* Help your child develop positive morning routines including getting dressed independently. Practising packing a bag and lunchbox is a helpful routine to begin before starting big school.



LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

To help with your child's literacy development you can-

- Read to your child every day.
- Talk to your child. Practise talking and listening by taking turns in conversations.
- Sing songs and nursery rhymes.
- Have lots of reading and writing materials available for your child. Books, paper, pencils, chalk etc.
- Help your child to learn to write their name. Their name might be unrecognisable for some time, and this is OK.

The best thing that you can do for your child's education and overall development is to **READ TO THEM EVERYDAY!**



NUMERACY DEVELOPMENT

The following is a list of everyday things that you can involve your child in to help them develop their numeracy skills.

- Counting pegs and grouping in colours.
- Cooking- Measurement.
- Identify size of things with simple language. Example 'Your cup is big but my cup is little'.
- Supermarket shopping- Weight. You could talk about some items being heavy and others being light. Shopping is also a great way to talk about the position of things. 'The baked beans are above the Weet-Bix on the shelf'.
- Use other mathematical words such as up, down, in front, behind, more, less etc.
- Sharing- Encourages the beginning thought of fractions.
- Pairing socks is a great activity that encourages matching and grouping. This is the beginning of multiplication.



Can you see a pattern?



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PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR SCHOOL

ENROL

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO ENROL IN YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL EARLY AND MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD GOES TO THE SCHOOLS' ORIENTATION DAYS.

ATTEND ORIENTATION DAYS

AT THE ORIENTATION DAY YOU WILL HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO:

LOOK AROUND THE SCHOOL.

MEET TEACHERS AND AS WELL AS OTHER CHILDREN WHO WILL BE STARTING KINDERGARTEN.

MEET OTHER PARENTS WHO HAVE CHILDREN BEGINNING KINDERGARTEN.

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ATTEND PARENT INFORMATION SESSIONS

MOST SCHOOLS HOLD PARENT INFORMATION SESSIONS.

AT A PARENT INFORMATION SESSION, YOU WILL HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO:

ASK QUESTIONS

MEET TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS

WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL LIFE?

Sharing
Stories

ATTENDANCE

School attendance is compulsory! Regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best. When your child attends school every day, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children

Shared
Experiences

Positive,
caring
relationships with
teachers and
school staff

Positive Attitude
Towards Learning

Participation

Parents and carers play an essential role in developing the foundations to learning on which the rest of their child's education is built.





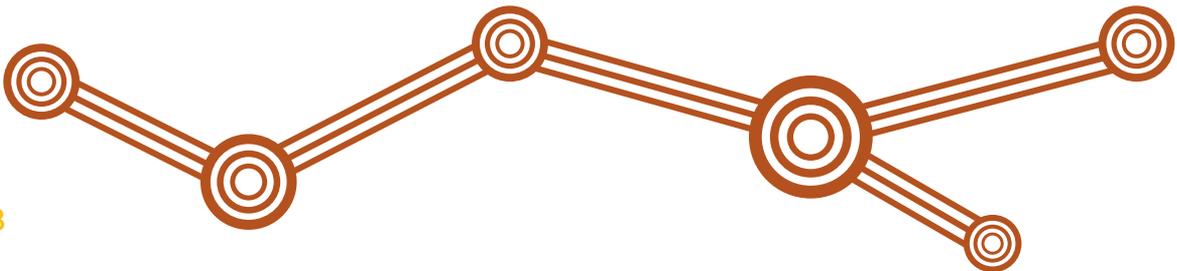
BEST START ASSESSMENT

What is it? A state wide Kindergarten assessment that helps teachers identify what your child already knows in literacy and numeracy to help plan for their teaching.

Why does my child do a Best Start Assessment? The Best Start Assessment is designed to provide teachers with information to best plan effective teaching and learning programs.

Who will be there? Your child will sit with a kindergarten teacher. You are welcome to be in the room with your child if they are feeling worried or apprehensive.

When will it happen? The Best Start Assessment will usually be carried out in the first few weeks of Term 1.





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PERSONALISED LEARNING PATHWAYS

Personalised Learning Pathways (PLPs) are developed by the school in partnership with your child and yourself as the parent/carer. Together you will work out some goals for your child's education based on their current abilities and interests. In some cases you may also work in partnership with an Aboriginal Education Officer or an Aboriginal support person.

Personalised Learning Pathways map the pathway that a student needs to follow to achieve learning goals in line with standards expected for all students.

PLPs describe a clear destination for your child in terms of goals for learning. They identify the potential obstacles that might impede a child getting to their goals, and chart a course to help them through.

Being involved in your child's PLP is one of the best possible ways of increasing their learning. These are the reasons.

- All the parties are involved - teacher, student, parent/caregiver and Aboriginal worker if applicable at your school - and all have a direct stake in what is happening. You can assume a good level of engagement.
- You are all talking about something real and fundamental that is happening now, the student's learning.



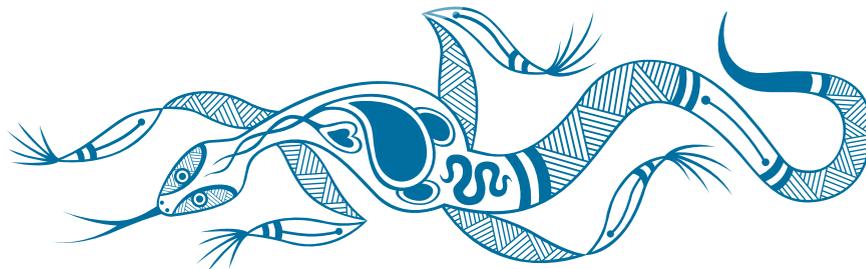
- *It is a chance to work directly on issues that will affect your child's school performance.*

In situations where PLPs are in use, marked improvements in attendance, engagement and academic performance are often reported.

(What works: Improving outcomes for Indigenous students. Commonwealth of Australia 2011. Website)

HEALTH SCREENINGS

There are a few health checks that you can arrange through your local doctor or medical service to ensure a healthy and happy start to school. The two main health checks to remember are for eyesight and hearing. Otitis Media is an ear infection that is highly common in Aboriginal children. If left untreated, it can lead to permanent hearing loss. These screenings can be arranged by contacting your local Aboriginal health unit.



Pack your child a **HEALTHY LUNCH BOX**



Choose a variety of foods from each food group

Fruit



Vegetables



Dairy



Wholegrains



Lean meat & alternatives



A Healthy Lunch Box



MAKE WATER YOUR DRINK



PACK ICE BRICKS TO KEEP FOOD COOL



USE A THERMOS TO KEEP FOOD WARM



Health

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

At Enrolment:

- You will be asked for a copy of your child's **birth certificate and immunisation register**. Your child's immunisation register can be found on line by searching Australian Child Immunisation Register.
- Your school will require **proof of address** to make sure you are in their zoned area. A bill, such as a telephone bill is fine to use for this.
- Your school will also need to know about any **medical conditions** your child may have. You could be asked to supply a **medical health plan**, available from your GP.

How to Get Involved Within the School Community:

- Most schools would love volunteers to help within the canteen and during classroom activities such as reading groups or creative arts.
- Attend school assemblies.
- Organise social activities outside of school to network with other families from the school community.
- Attend local AECG meetings





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ADDITIONAL CONTACTS

At times you may have an issue or concern that you would like to talk about. Remember to see your child's classroom teacher first or the school principal. Some schools will also have an Aboriginal Education Officer or you can contact the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer based at the Department of Education local office.

There are many services within the community that can help you if you need further assistance with education and health.

- Yerrin Aboriginal Health Services
- Nunyara Aboriginal Health Unit
- Ngiyang Health Services
- Aboriginal Education Consultancy Group (AECG)
- Mingaletta Aboriginal and Torres Strait Corporation
- Regional Aboriginal Education Team
- Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers - Central Coast
- Darkinjung Land Council

LEARN LOTS AND ENJOY BIG SCHOOL! IF YOU'D LIKE TO YARN SOME MORE, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL.





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