Transition statements: Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

What is a transition statement?
A transition statement is a summary of each child’s learning and development during the Kindergarten Year. The transition statement is created towards the end of the Kindergarten Year by teachers in collaboration with the children, their parents/carers, and support personnel.

Who receives the transition statement?
Parents receive a printed copy of the transition statement from the kindergarten centre.
Parents/carers may choose to pass on a copy of the transition statement to the school as part of their child’s transition into the Prep Year.
The transition statement belongs to the parents/carers and child. Teachers in kindergarten centres do not provide the transition statements directly to schools or individual teachers.

How can the transition statement be used to promote continuity?
Parents use information in the transition statement to support their child as they move into early schooling. If parents share information recorded on the transition statement with Prep teachers, it can be used to help:

- identify different pathways and approaches to transitions that best suit children and their families
- plan ways to help children and their families feel welcome and comfortable in the new setting
- identify starting points for learning that build on children’s identified strengths, talents, motivations, interests and learning needs.

What should a transition statement include?
A transition statement summarises information gathered throughout the year in informal and formal ways and in a variety of learning contexts through day-to-day activities, conversations and interactions. It should:

- focus on children’s motivations, strengths and higher-order skills, understandings and learning dispositions
- include information that has been contributed by and collaboratively documented with children, parents, carers and educators
- include information about the child’s learning in each of the learning and development areas
- describe the level of support the child requires in familiar and/or new situations to demonstrate learning as described on page 35 of the Queensland kindergarten learning guideline (QKLG)
- be written using positive plain language that parents and carers can easily understand. If the parents’ or carers’ first language is not English, it may be necessary to organise a translator to help during the transition statement development
- include information about the kindergarten service, teacher and contact details
• be recognised as a ‘snapshot in time’ given that children’s learning is fluid at this age.

As noted in the QKLG (page 37), it is not helpful to summarise a child’s learning as being in a single phase on the continuum for a particular learning and development area. Kindergarten children's learning is fluid, particularly as they transition into a new setting, and each learning and development area describes a range of key focuses and significant learnings. While the Continua of learning and development can be used as a resource to develop descriptions of learning for the transition statement, it is not a reporting framework.

How can parents’ opinions and ideas be incorporated into the transition statement?

Teachers collaborate with parents and other partners formally and informally throughout the year to create a summary of a child’s learning. The information shared by these partners may be used to inform the development of the transition statements. In addition, teachers identify a way for parents/carers to contribute to the summary towards the end of the Kindergarten Year that best suits the particular family. For example, through a:

• formal discussion (face-to-face or via the telephone)
• short questionnaire that can be sent home with a letter that explains the purpose of the transition statements and the importance of parents'/carers’ contributions.

Do copies of the transition statements need to be kept on record at the centre? If so, for how long?

The licensee of the centre is required to keep a confidential record (Regulation 87, Child Care Act 2002) of children’s transition statements for the period of time recommended in the Child Care Act 2002 and Child Care Regulation 2003. This period of time is for three years after the record (transition statement) has been made (Regulation 104, Child Care Regulation 2003).

Note: If your service chooses to keep information on record for a period of time exceeding those three years, you will need to seek advice from your governing body regarding the additional time you may be required to maintain the records.

What will make the process of developing a transition statement easier?

The process of developing a transition statement is made easier by:

• building strong, trusting relationships with children, parents, carers, teachers, relevant support personnel and other partners. These relationships are developed through effective communication such as regular, informal discussions throughout the year and through focused discussions from time to time, e.g. midyear and towards the end of year
• organising time and space for teachers to:
  − reflect on children’s learning
  − engage in meaningful conversations with colleagues and parents
  − summarise the shared information and write each child’s transition statement.
• engaging in ongoing communication and collaboration between early years educators working in different settings, e.g. across pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and early schooling settings.

Are examples of a transition statement available?

Examples of transition statements are available in the resources section of the Queensland kindergarten guideline professional development materials on the QCAA website www.qcaa.qld.edu.au.