

Voices in transitions

Principal: West End State School

Transcript of video 2 of 2

This video is available from www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/p-10/transition-school/successful-transitions/voices-in-transitions-principals

Judy Thompson
Principal

One of the ways that we've been able to ensure we have smooth transitions from our kindies to the school is that we've contacted all the kindies in the area.

To get that continuity to come from a range of kindergartens into Prep is always difficult, and it's difficult because of sometimes the time constraints of the Prep teacher and the relationships they have with the kindies. [Note: Speaker means difficulty is finding time for this, to build relationships.] Each school is very different because each school has its own challenges in where do they get to their students from, how do they get there, what are the transitions?

We have found when we have invited the different kindies *and* the daycares *and* the wide range of feeder centres that they just love it because that's the chance that they've got to talk to each other. So it's become a real learning environment for everybody.

It has an agenda, it has a purpose, and it develops. It cannot be forced. And the best people to start it are the teachers from the Prep. So from a principal's point of view, it is giving them the time to make those links and then consider it a privilege to be invited in to when they're talking about it.

We invite the parents and the children to come to what we call Prep practice days. What it is is to talk to the children and show them the links between their familiar environment in kindy and the play-based familiar environment in a Prep classroom. So it removes the worries and the concerns.

Welcoming children and families

A school community is a wonderful place to be. And for a school like West End, we have people coming from many different cultures. And we need the parents to be involved in the child's learning, we need the home-school partnerships to be as strong as they can, we need communication.

We do lots of things to have play spaces where families, many of whom live in apartments, can feel they are quite welcome to come in and make friends with people from the same cultures, people from the same nationalities, a range of nationalities.

And what we do is purposely target in many activities throughout the school year so that it is about the parents making the links, because if they feel comfortable and engaged, then we will be able to support them to support their child.