

Transition to school

Project: Transition: A Positive Start to School. Supporting reciprocal visits by educators

Organisation: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD)

Project date: 2014 – 2015

This project aims to facilitate and support reciprocal visits between early childhood educators and prep teachers in Victoria. It builds on research that identifies the importance of reciprocal visits by educators for the benefit of children, families and the educators themselves. The project will be run in four locations across Victoria each involving early childhood education and care service(s) and primary school(s). Semann & Slattery, in collaboration with the Institute of Early Childhood, Macquarie University, will facilitate the project in two of these locations.

The purpose of the project is to increase understanding of curriculum design, planning and implementation through shared professional learning as part of reciprocal visits. An additional outcome is to support stronger relationships around children's transitioning to school between educators and children and their families. Participants will be supported throughout the project with opportunities to come together in facilitated conversations and professional learning that builds their knowledge of collaborative processes to share knowledge and information. The priorities and interests of the participants will determine the topic areas. Potential topic areas include: Creating continuity of learning; Building cross-site relationships; Pedagogy and practices; Building relationships with families across educational sites; and Transition statements and making the most of them.

The project will also include the production of video vignettes based on the professional interactions occurring before, during and after the visits. The video vignettes will be used to support the ongoing learning of all educators, in early childhood programs and in schools, most particularly those not participating in the project. In addition, an evaluation framework will be developed as a means of evaluating the outcomes of participating in reciprocal onsite visits, and providing further evidence of the benefits of reciprocal visits for children, families and educators.