# Strong and successful start to school – tailored transition support

The evidence base highlights the importance of tailoring transition practices for identified equity groups. An understanding of the child’s existing skills and knowledge enables schools to provide a differentiated approach.

## Strategies for newly arrived children and families, including those with refugee backgrounds

* Processes, relationships and collaboration are in place to identify and connect with children and families from culturally diverse backgrounds, including early collaboration with early childhood services.
* [Planning English as an additional language or dialect learners (EAL/D) support](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/english-as-an-additional-language-or-dialect/planning-eald-support)
* [Engaging communities](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/culture-and-diversity/engaging-communities)
* Consult with local community organisations and incorporate feedback into planning.
* Liaise with relevant staff members including EAL/D specialists, Community Liaison Officers, SLSOs bilingual and others within the school to identify targeted students who require additional transition support.
  + [EAL/D education](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/english-as-an-additional-language-or-dialect)
  + [Enrolment and orientation to support students from refugee backgrounds](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/refugee-students-in-schools/whole-school-response/enrolment-and-orientation2)
  + [The Welcome Program](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/refugee-students-in-schools/whole-school-response/the-welcome-program)
* School, classrooms and curriculum are culturally inclusive and reflect the diversity of the school and wider community.
  + [Cultural inclusion](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/culture-and-diversity/cultural-inclusion)
  + [Henry Parkes Equity Resource Centre](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/henry-parkes-equity-resource-centre)
  + [Building belonging](https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/education/building-belonging-toolkit-early-childhood-educators-cultural-diversity-and)
* Staff engage in professional learning to strengthen their support for students from refugee backgrounds.
  + [Refugee education professional learning](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/refugee-students-in-schools/Professional-learning)
* Staff access onsite, online and telephone interpreters and know where to find the translated documents on the Department of Education website, including translated enrolment forms. Family literacy skills are considered and appropriate communication strategies are employed as required, for example the use of an interpreter instead of or in addition to translated documents.
  + [Interpreting and translations](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/interpreting-and-translations)
* Determine if student meets the eligibility criteria New Arrivals Program (NAP) support. Apply for NAP support after child is enrolled.
  + [New Arrivals Support (NAP)](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/english-as-an-additional-language-or-dialect/new-arrivals-program)

### Reflective questions

* Do we connect with local early childhood services to get to know the children and families?
* Do we engage in community consultation to guide our interactions?
* Is the school culturally inclusive? Are the learning environments and resources welcoming and reflective of Australia’s diverse society?

## Strategies

* Connect with children, family and community. Collaborate with local early childhood services, early intervention services, other agencies and health professionals and supported playgroups.
  + [Australian Early Development Census](https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/whole-school-approach/australian-early-development-census)
  + [Opening the school gate](https://aus.oltinternational.net/browse-resource/opening-the-school-gate?dyn=true)
  + [Refugee Student Counselling Support Team](https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/counselling-and-psychology-services/school-counselling/refugee-teams)
  + [NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors](https://www.startts.org.au/)
* Refer to the Calendar for cultural diversity when planning transition and other key events to avoid overlapping with important cultural and religious dates.
  + [Calendar for cultural diversity](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/culture-and-diversity/calendar-for-cultural-diversity)
* Meet to share knowledge about the child, identify strengths and language proficiency and plan strategies and adjustments, including home language practices.
  + [Planning EAL/D support](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/english-as-an-additional-language-or-dialect/planning-eald-support)
* Get to know the child and family both informally and formally (playgroup, BBQs/morning tea, enrolment interviews and information sessions). While CLO or SLSO Bilingual staff can provide language support at informal events it is best practice to book qualified interpreters for enrolment interviews and other meetings.
  + [Interpreting and translations](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/interpreting-and-translations/translations)
* Value and support family and community involvement and flexibility. This should be evident in family-school relationships.
  + [Family - School Partnerships Framework](https://www.dese.gov.au/uncategorised/resources/family-school-partnerships-framework-strategies)
* Create a welcoming atmosphere by understanding the additional needs of refugee students. Invite families to formal and informal events to enhance their understanding and involvement in the processes and practices of the school. Value family and community involvement and tailor it to the family context
  + [Supporting refugee students](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/refugee-students-in-schools)

### Reflective questions

* Do we have inclusive plans in place to welcome families?
* Have we explored avenues to best meet the needs of information gathering and sharing?

## Strategies

* Information included on the Transition to school statement will also inform and offer successful strategies that can be transferred between settings.
* [Department of Education - Transition to school statement](https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/transition-to-school)
* Develop a personalised transition support plan where appropriate, as the beginning step in a personalised learning plan, in consultation with the child, family and early childhood service.
  + [Planning EAL/D support](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/english-as-an-additional-language-or-dialect/planning-eald-support)
* A personalised approach supports refugee students by looking at their strengths, interests and specific learning and wellbeing needs.
  + [Personalised learning](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/refugee-students-in-schools/personalised-learning)

### Reflective questions

* Do we use consultative processes to plan appropriately for children and families?