



Supporting Student Transitions: Primary to Secondary

There are many considerations to be made while planning school transitions for students with extra learning needs. Continuity of learning has been acknowledged as being the key to a successful transition and assisting students in their transition from primary school to secondary school should be a collaborative approach between the student, family, teachers, schools and therapists. Planning for this transition should be well in advance and relies upon communication and information sharing between primary and secondary schools.

Keywords: *Transition, high school, secondary, primary school*

The following handout has been designed as a guideline to support positive student outcomes during the transition from primary to secondary school. It will outline a framework for a co-ordinated, systematic and timely transition to the Secondary Phase of Learning for students with Language Disorder. The Guidelines have been developed using the underlying principles informed by Queensland Government Education, Training and the Arts *Quality Outcomes for Students with Disabilities*.

Rationale

Moving from primary to secondary school is a big transition for all students, and involves many new routines, classrooms, transport options, teachers, friends, subjects and more. While it can be a fun time of excitement and anticipation, it can provoke worry and other challenging feelings for some students. During this transition, it is essential that all students feel supported and prepared.

For students with extra learning needs, additional time may be required to ensure that these students feel supported and prepared to begin this next stage of their schooling journey. Often, students with Language Disorder have received additional support throughout primary school to assist in reaching their learning goals and a range of data has been collected to inform curriculum planning. Successful planning across year 6 to year 7 sites allows for continuity of learning and a smooth transition to Secondary School.

Transition Process

Each student with Language Disorder will have different learning and community needs and one transition process will not fit for all students. The follow page outlines timeframes and general recommendation to support students with Language Disorder during their transition from Primary to Secondary School.



Suggested Timeframe	Recommendations
Term 1 – Year 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated staff (e.g. HOSES, Year 6 Coordinator) begin to outline the secondary transition process to parents via parent information sessions. • Discussions with student educational support team (HOSES, Year 7 Coordinator, Guidance Officer, etc.) occur with parents regarding program, support and service options for Year 7. IEP goal focuses on transition to Secondary School. • Year 6 class teachers to introduce whole class to high school practises, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use of diary (scheduling tests, excursions, due dates, etc.) ○ Weekly timetables ○ Classroom layout (not having individual desks with tidy trays) ○ Seating (allocating students to different desks for different subjects throughout the day) ○ Scheduling for books and resources that will be needed at certain times of the day ○ Use of a visual schedule with times to show the subjects they will be learning throughout the day to allow for pre-planning ○ Time management when changing into a sports uniform from formal uniform for sports classes ○ High school specific vocabulary and definitions (e.g. period, assignment, timetable, text books, schedule, etc.)
Term 2/3 – Year 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated staff (e.g. HOSES, Year 6 Coordinator) make contact with the high school the student will be transitioning to. Organise orientation visits so that students may increase familiarity with the high school campus, teachers, lessons and routines. More than one orientation visit may be required, potentially to occur in the final weeks of Term 4. • Introduce a regular lesson to support transition for all year 6 students. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self-advocacy skills training (e.g. communicating needs, requesting assistance, goal setting, independence skills, etc.) ○ Time management and organisational skills training ○ Social language, relationships and social skills lessons ○ Personal details, likes, dislikes, strengths and challenges exploration ○ Safety skills lessons ○ Group discussions surrounding transition to high school • Explicitly talk with students identified as requiring additional support in their transition about any concerns they may have with moving to Secondary School and develop a plan as to how to support them with these worries.
Term 4 – Year 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated staff (e.g. HOSES, Year 6 Coordinator) to create a learner profile for students identified as requiring extra support upon being Secondary School. This will provide a brief summary to the students' high school to assist transition from their end. Please see the <i>Language Disorder Australia Student Learner Profile</i> for a suggested layout.



Want to learn more?

To learn more about Language Disorder and how to support children and young people for whom language is their primary disorder, please **contact us**. Language Disorder Australia provides holistic, innovative and effective therapy, education and support services and has a transdisciplinary team of speech pathologists, occupational therapists, educators, psychologists and physiotherapists.

Contact: 1300 881 763 or [**hello@languagedisorder.org.au**](mailto:hello@languagedisorder.org.au)

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References

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