MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

Information for parents and caregivers of children with special education needs



Stating

TE TĪMATA O TE HAERE KI TE KURA



This booklet is to help your child get off to a good start at school if they have special education needs.

It outlines what to look for when choosing a school and explains your choices and rights. It explains how your child can be supported at school so they can join in and learn alongside other children their age.

Contents:

- 3. What can I expect?
- 4. Which school is right for my child?
- 6. Moving from Early Intervention services to school
- 8. Choosing a school
- 10. Getting ready
- 11. Moving from köhanga
- 12. Working in partnership
- 15. How special education works at school
- 18. When things go wrong or don't feel right
- 19. Changing schools
- 20. Preparing for secondary school
- 21. Information for refugee and migrant families
- 22. Information available to teachers
- 23. How to contact us

What can I expect?

This can be an exciting time for your child. School provides wonderful opportunities for them to grow and learn about the world.

Your child will have the opportunity to:

- make new friends
- learn new skills
- become more independent, as well as be part of a group
- explore new environments
- think about and plan for their future
- develop confidence, self-esteem and a positive identity.

Your attitudes will play an important role in how they approach this new stage in their lives.

Give your child lots of encouragement and be enthusiastic about them

starting school. You and your family/whānau's involvement is important and valuable.

Starting school involves change — you and your child will be leaving a familiar environment with people you know and stepping into a bigger world with different routines and new people. You might be worried about how your child will cope and if they will be happy there. It's only natural to feel this way.

You will also notice that services and support are different from what is provided in early childhood.

Teachers and staff at your new school will need to get to know your child and how they can support

them so that they can provide your child with the same opportunities to learn as all students.

Everyone will need to have a shared understanding about what your child needs. For the move from early childhood education to school to go as smoothly as possible, it's important that everyone communicates and works closely together.

When your child starts school you also become part of the school community. This is a great time to get involved in school activities and start meeting other families whose children will move through school with your child.

these negative connotations of what he couldn't do and it's been totally turned around. Every day it's what can you do. And the achievements he's made in eight years for a boy who's usually in a wheelchair, who's been to the top of a climbing wall with the assistance of every member of his class... I mean that's something to be celebrated. Every week he's achieved something that I would have thought as a five-year-old would have been totally impossible. And it's not just the staff, it is the kids."

Jeanette

Which school is right for my child?

You have a range of choices when it comes to enrolling your child at school. Discuss your child's needs with his or her support specialists, disability groups and other parents. Listen to their advice – but remember, at the end of the day, you know your child best.

Local schools

The Education Act 1989 makes it clear that every child from the age of five has the right to go to their local school and that this right applies equally to children with special education needs.

The New Zealand Disability Strategy and United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities also support children with special education needs having the same right to go to school as every child.

Most children with special education needs will be in regular classes and have extra help provided by the school.

If your child has high needs, the school will approach Special Education to provide direct help for them.

You and your child should be made to feel welcome when approaching any school to enrol. If your local school has an enrolment scheme, then your child usually has to live within the school's enrolment zone.

If you feel a school is being unwelcoming or is reluctant to enrol your child because they have special education needs then this is of concern to the Ministry. Please *let us know* at Special Education if this happens to you – call and ask to speak to the district manager at your nearest district office (see contacts at the back of this booklet).

Schools must make sure children have a safe physical and emotional environment. If this involves making changes to buildings, the school will work with your local Ministry of Education office to provide this support.

Special schools, satellite classes, and special units within regular schools

If your child has high needs, they might be able to go to one of the 28 special day schools around the country. There are also residential schools and health schools, each helping children with different needs.

Children with high needs might also be able to go to a special class, sometimes also known as a satellite class. These are run by a special school but sit on the grounds of a regular school. Some special schools also offer a special education mobile teaching service where children with high needs can be enrolled in their local school but are taught by specialist teachers from the special school.

If you're interested in enrolling your child in a special school you will need to have what is known as a Section 9 Agreement – Section 9 of the Education Act covers enrolment at special schools.

Some regular schools also have units that provide specialist support for children with special education needs. Your child can move between regular classes and the unit.

Special Education staff will give you the information you need to help you work out the best option for your child.

Te Kura (The Correspondence School) and home schooling

Te Kura offers distance learning in certain circumstances. You can also choose to home school your child and there might be extra support available to help you.

Our schools are expected to be open and welcoming to every child whatever their ability. Every child stands to benefit from the experience of learning alongside a child with special education needs, just as children with special education needs will learn a great deal from their peers.

U Probably one of the things that I was most worried about was that I wouldn't be able to make friends and people would make fun of me because of the way I acted. I was scared that no-one was going to

care about me. I wasn't going to be supported in any way. If I had just known there was that support maybe I wouldn't have been as scared as I was."

Zane, student previously receiving ORRS



The terms 'moderate', 'high' and 'very high' are special education terms. These words are only used to describe how much help your child will need to join in and learn alongside the children in their class.

We all had a very clear idea about where we were with James. We knew all his various sensitivities to noise and crowds and we put careful plans in place. We had his visual timetables, he had his own special desk ready with a screen around it in case he needed to be taken somewhere secure and quiet and calm, with pictures of us all around. So it was all in place from day one."

Annabel

Moving from Early Intervention services to school

When choosing a school it's important you begin planning early, ideally when your child turns four, so that support is in place when your child starts. If your child has been receiving Early Intervention services, their Early Intervention team or key worker can discuss schooling options with you and help your child make the transition to school.



Wour lad's been able to learn alongside everybody else despite his major disabilities. There's been a way around everything. The staff, the principal, have always looked for another way. Because of access problems, they shifted the whole class down to where there was a ramp." Teanette



- Start taking your child to the school for visits.
- · Your child's class teacher might visit the early childhood education centre.
 - · Your child's key worker or someone from their Early Intervention team will meet with the school to discuss resourcing and ensure all supports are in place.



In the months after your child has started school

- · The team around your child can start developing their Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- The support provided by your child's Early Intervention team/key worker will phase out over the first few months at school.
- · Your child's IEP should be reviewed at least twice a year.





- · Your child's Early Intervention team or key worker can help your child settle into school by remaining as a part of your child's education team.
 - It's helpful to have regular meetings between you, school

staff and your child's key worker to discuss how your child is getting on.

· It's a good idea to have a notebook that travels between school and home with your child to record issues and day-to-day events.



Choosing a school



Make a list

Make a list of what you believe is important for the school to offer. This might include:

- a suitable physical environment, remembering that it's possible to make changes to buildings
- experience in supporting children with similar needs to your child
- □ a welcoming attitude to your child
- a strong emphasis on subjects or activities your child is passionate about
- small class sizes.

Make another list of all the schools you're considering.

Gather information

Get as much information as you can about the schools on your list:

- search the School Directory on www.minedu.govt.nz
- read the information on the school's own website. You might be able to read their charter and their special education policies online otherwise request copies of these
- read the school's Education Review Office (ERO) reports (www.ero.govt.nz)
- □ talk to other parents who have children at these schools
- take a walk around the grounds during the weekend. You'll get to see what facilities are available, the layout of the school, the sort of things on classroom walls and maybe a school noticeboard.

Using this information, make a shortlist and arrange to visit each school and meet the principal.

Make a list of questions to take with you. It's also a good idea to take someone else along – your spouse/partner, a friend, whānau, or a support person from a disability group. You might also like the support of someone from your child's Early Intervention team if they have one.

What to look for

Ask to visit classrooms during the school day and watch the children in the playground. Get a feel for:

- how well your child might fit in there
- the culture of the school
- the atmosphere, such as playground sounds
- how the children are playing
- levels of supervision
- any noise distractions, such as an airport or main road
- how suitable and adaptable the school's physical environment is
- whether there is suitable access to classrooms and toilet facilities
- what the grounds are like level or steep and uneven, what fencing and off-street parking there is.

What to ask

Principals and teachers are used to parents asking questions about what their schools offer. They're keen for you to be involved in your child's learning because they know that the more involved you are, the more successful your child's learning is likely to be.

All schools should be welcoming to your child. They are all different in the ways they are run and provide support. The following questions will help you work out which school best suits your child and the way you want them to be taught.

I used to think James wasn't ready for school, didn't I? And he obviously was. But I did choose to delay it for half a year so that he started at the beginning of a year, and was out of nappies and was able to say a few words. It was good to have this flexibility for him to develop some more before he started school."

Annabel

They're meant as a general guide.
You know your child and you'll
know which questions apply to
them. Think about anything else
that has not been included

- What will the school do to ensure my child feels safe, welcome and accepted?
- □ How does the school involve us as parents and families/whānau in our child's schooling and in helping them settle into the new school?
- ☐ How does the school reflect and support the cultures of its families?
- □ How will the school identify and work with the things my child is interested in and good at?
- ☐ What help will my child get if they enrol at this school?
- How does the school keep in touch with parents and families/ whānau and how will it keep me up-to-date with information about my child's progress?
- What will the school do to make sure my child is included in the same activities as all the other children?
- What sports, clubs and other activities are available for my child?
- ☐ What does the school do if there's bullying?
- ☐ What bilingual support is available for my child?

- ☐ Who will help my child at lunchtimes and playtimes? Is there a playground 'buddy' system?
- What is the process for giving students medicines and how does the school manage medical needs?
- Is there wheelchair access at the school?
- What equipment is currently available to help my child, or what equipment will the school need to get (eg, technology, handrails, note-takers, FM systems, etc)?
- ☐ Is there somewhere my child can go if they need to be in a quiet place for a while?
- Are there suitable toileting and showering facilities if my child requires these?
- ☐ How does the school deal with difficult behaviour?
- ☐ What is the classroom layout like and how many students are likely to be in the class?
- Will I be able to come to school to help or be with my child in the classroom?
- What kind of professional development is there for teachers to teach children with my child's disability?
- ☐ Ask to observe the class your child would be placed in.

	П	

More general issues to consider

- Does the school have an enrolment scheme? If it does have a scheme in place then your child usually has to live within the school's enrolment zone or you will have to put their name down to go into the ballot that allows a certain number of students to attend from out of zone.
- How far will your child have to travel to get to and from school and how will they get there? If they're to walk, is it a safe route or is there a walking school bus? Your child might be entitled to school transport assistance.
- ▶ If they have brothers, sisters, or close friends, do they, or will they, also go to that school?

Getting ready

You, your child, and the school will need to get to know each other as you prepare for your child to start school. School visits will help you and your child to meet key people and discuss how to make sure things go smoothly.

School visits

Discuss with the school how many visits your child should have – how often and for how long – so that your child will have a good introduction to the people, routines and environment that will soon be part of their daily life.

School visits might involve your child joining their new class for half a day a week for a while before your child begins school formally. If you like, a member of your Early Intervention team or your key worker may be able to come with you on some of these visits.

You could also ask to take your child to activities such as sports days if you want your child to have even greater contact with the school before they start.

School visits mean the classroom teacher and many of the children will be quite familiar by the time your child starts school full time.

How to prepare your child

Before you start school visits, talk with your child about what going to school will mean.

- ▶ Tell them about the wonderful new things they will do and learn.
- Listen to their fears and talk with them about how you can address their concerns.

Explain how things like toileting, break time and quiet time will work for your child.

If you show your child that you believe they can manage well at school then this will help them believe in themselves. Try not to let them know about any worries you might have as they may pick up on this and also begin to worry.

- Explain basic school rules, such as putting your hand up to ask a question or asking to go to the toilet.
- Make sure they have all the required items, like a good schoolbag and sunhat.
- Think of anything that could be tricky, such as being able to open that shiny new lunchbox – and practise this at home.
- To help your child feel confident, make a checklist (using words or pictures) of things they need to take to school in their bag and things they need to remember to bring home every day.

What to expect in the early days

Be aware that all children take a while to adjust to the longer day and the more formal activities and structure of the classroom. Because there's so much to take in, your

child might be unsettled at first and more tired than usual.

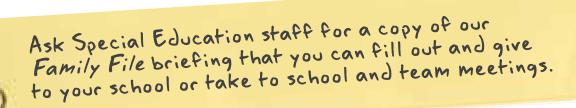
They might be quite grumpy after school and need to go to bed earlier for the first few months. They could be famished after school (learning is hungry work!) and need a big snack when they get home, which may mean they'll only want something small or nothing at all when it comes to dinner. This is normal.

How to prepare the school

The school will need to decide on the best way to help your child fit in and thrive. School staff will want to liaise with other professionals involved in supporting your child, such as Early Intervention staff and/ or teachers from your child's early childhood education centre.

The school will need to know:

- specific information about your child's needs
- details of any medicines your child takes
- the names of parents, caregivers, family/whānau and other significant people involved with your child and who to contact in an emergency
- information about your child's ethnicity and the language you speak at home.



Moving from Köhanga

... to Kura Kaupapa to Wharekura

...ki te Kura Kaupapa Māori me te Wharekura

You will probably find that the kōhanga and kura are connected to and/or located closely to each other, so the move to kura may be relatively smooth and the kura may be known to your whānau.

This is a good opportunity for your whānau to be involved in the changes that are happening for your tamaiti and to work out what support they need. You will

probably be guided by the 'kawa' of the setting and might be led by kaumatua or representatives from within your local Māori community. It's important that all partners in the change process share information about your tamaiti.

... to mainstream school ...ki te kura auraki

When your tamaiti is moving from kōhanga reo to school, whānau and the school will need to share useful information so that everyone works in partnership and understands the significance of the new environment that your tamaiti is moving into.

In preparing for the first meeting with the school, you might want to list particular issues that you would like to discuss and questions you may have. You might want to talk with the school about:

- your tamaiti's strengths and preferences
- how the school will be able to support and enhance your tamaiti's culture and identity (eg, opportunities for your tamaiti to use te reo Māori and tikanga)
- how you and your whānau will want to be involved in your tamaiti's education and in school activities
- how you would like the school to communicate and share information with you about your tamaiti.

You might wish to take along an advocate or support person or people, such as family members, to the first meeting – and even later on.

Special Education employs kaitakawaenga. These are Māori cultural advisors who can provide cultural support for you and your whānau. Contact the Special Education kaitakawaenga or your key worker if you want to discuss the issues above or others you may have.

Most when Patrick started school was how cool the other kids were - the relationships Patrick built with other kids and how they just loved it when he was there (most of the time - there were times that they didn't!). I love seeing the relationships with other kids and I think wow, that's so cool that they're learning so much and he's having those positive relationships."

Jenny

Working in partnership

Special education is about your child and the people who are close to your child jointly making decisions about how to best support their learning needs. This means having strong relationships between you and your family/whānau, your child's school and teachers, and other people supporting your child, so you can decide together on the best approaches and learning programmes.

The partnership with your school will work best when everybody:

- creates a supportive environment
- accepts responsibility for meeting the special education needs of your child
- has a view on how these needs should be met and works together to find answers
- works with others in ways that concentrate on your child's needs

- presents their views openly, sensitively and honestly
- respects culture
- respects the knowledge and views of others
- understands the cultural needs of your child
- shares information
- deals with problems as they arise
- keeps in regular contact.

Other ideas include setting up a regular 10 – 15 minute meeting or phone call each fortnight or month with the school's special education needs coordinator (SENCO), teacher or principal to discuss progress. Talk to school staff and work out something that suits you both.

It's important that everybody in the partnership is fully aware of their roles and responsibilities.



think I worried about all these things and they didn't even happen. It's been better than we hoped for and that's down to a really good school and a really good teacher. Maybe he was just ready for school."

Anthea

It's a good idea to have a notebook that travels between school and home with your child. Issues and day-to-day events can be recorded to let everyone know what's happening in your child's life.

This could include family events, things that are coming up at school, meeting dates, food likes and dislikes, how your child slept last night and medication details.

The role of the school is to:

- welcome and enrol your child as they would all other students
- provide a safe place for learning
- have a special education policy with clear priorities
- provide programmes and teaching resources for your child
- provide teachers and other staff with professional development in areas such as assessing and evaluating progress

- tell you about the special education support available and how this may apply to your child
- work with you, specialists and other agencies to assess your child's learning needs
- develop, where appropriate, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for your child, and review it regularly in a meeting with you, your child, your child's teacher and specialists as needed
- oversee the work of staff teaching your child each day (your child should not be sent home because a staff member, such as a teacher's aide, is absent)
- keep you informed about your child's progress
- regularly check that your child's learning programme is working as it should
- ensure staff are appropriately trained and work professionally at all times.

to success. One big meeting has its place and it's helpful, but smaller, regular, relationshipbuilding meetings are really important. It steps up trust of the communication pathways which are best for your child."

Support worker



Meeting instead of just an IEP because there were a few issues towards the end of last year and I felt if we had a team meeting and sat down and talked in a less formal way, there was a lot of information that we picked up as to where he was at home and school. I think that keeps everyone on the same page and suggestions come quite freely because it's not such a rigid environment."

Anthea



UI was anxious that James would be bullied, and I was anxious because he soiled himself still, that he would be teased about that."

Annabel

Your role as a parent or caregiver is to:

- ensure your child is enrolled and regularly attends school at least until they turn 16
- let the school know if your child will not be attending school on a particular day
- let the school know ahead of time if you need to take your child out of school for a special reason, such as a medical appointment
- work with your school to identify your child's needs, develop appropriate programmes and to monitor their progress
- provide the school with essential information, such as particular medical, dietary, exercise or personal care requirements for your child and where to reach you in an emergency
- talk to the school about any problems as soon as they appear and to share ideas about what's working well
- take part in developing the Individual Education Plan's (IEP's), goal-setting, specific learning programmes and follow-up activities at home.

How special education works at school

Except for a small number of children with high needs (about three per cent) funding goes directly to schools to provide services for children with special education needs. All funding for special education services comes from the Government and all services are provided free.

Support for children with moderate needs

Support available through the school includes:

- a Special Education Grant that goes to all schools that they can use to help children with special education needs. They can spend this in a range of ways, including on resources, teacher training and teacher's aide time, and on individual students or groups of students
- specially trained teachers who might work with your child if they have moderate learning and/or behaviour difficulties, for example, Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLBs) and Learning Support Teachers (LSTs)
- specially trained teachers who might work with your child if they have a vision impairment that affects their ability to learn (called Resource Teachers: Vision)
- specially trained teachers who might work with your child if they are deaf or have a hearing

impairment that affects their ability to learn (called Resource Teachers: Deaf).

The Physical Disability Service

Funded through Special Education, physiotherapists and occupational therapists might provide support for your child if they have a physical disability. They work out ways to support your child to participate in school activities such as physical education, technology, caring for themselves, and using classroom implements and materials. They will work out whether your child needs special equipment to help them walk, write and to use their hands for small, detailed tasks.

Support for children with high needs

If your child is recognised as having high needs, school staff will organise and coordinate extra services from Special Education or another agency that receives Government funding for this purpose.

In this case, your child's Early Intervention key worker will be working with you and the school to organise the most suitable support for your child.

This support might include the:

- Communication Service: provides support if your child has high communication needs
- Severe Behaviour Service: provides advice and support for your child, the school and your family/whānau if your child has severe behaviour difficulties
- Ongoing and Reviewable Resourcing Schemes (ORRS): provides extra teaching, specialist programmes, therapy and education support if your child has high or very high needs and meets certain criteria
- School High Health Needs Fund (SHHNF): provides a teacher's aide for your child's teacher so that your child can attend school safely, if they meet certain criteria.



When Patrick went to school I was most worried about his physical safety, because the school was a small country school, next to a creek and it had no fencing that was appropriate for him. I'd sit at home dying to go down there and check he was alright."

Jenny

See our booklet Services and support in special education for children at school for more details.

The specialists who might work with your child

Support services will be provided by people such as:

> speech-language therapists:
can help if your child has
difficulties talking, listening,
and understanding and using
language. They will assess your
child's abilities in order to
work out what kind of support
they need. Speech-language
therapists might work directly
with your child as well as offer
advice to both you and your
child's teachers. They might
also provide a programme
of activities for each of you
to work on with your child.

Their help comes through the Communication Service.

occupational therapists and physiotherapists:

can help your child if they have a physical disability. They're also able to provide advice to your child's teachers and your family/whānau. This help is usually part of ORRS support.

psychologists or special education advisors:

can help work out what might be contributing to your child's difficulty and what support they'll need. They can help you and your child's teachers develop strategies to improve their social skills and ability to manage their emotions to help improve their learning. This is usually part of the Behaviour Service or ORRS support.

advisers on deaf children:

can help if your child is deaf or hearing impaired and needs to use hearing aids or special equipment. They can provide information about the full range of options for developing language and communication, including New Zealand Sign Language. They might work with you and your child and give your child's teacher advice on learning programmes and equipment. Assembly - I was really worried about. I thought it would really freak James out and I told him he wasn't to go in. Of course he loves it now, he proved me wrong. We worked towards that.

Playtime was another worry. He started off with his own small playtime, just him and a couple of other children at a separate time of day, so he wasn't there in the thick of it. But of course now he loves playtime. But we just gradually worked towards that."

Annabel

teachers' aides:

can support your child, helping them with their learning programme under the direction of classroom teachers. Teachers' aides are usually employed as part of your child's ORRS or the Severe Behaviour Service or they might be employed to help with your child's high health needs.

support workers:

can provide one-on-one support under the direction of therapists, psychologists or advisors. Support workers are usually employed as part of your child's communication or behaviour needs support.

Other support available

In some situations the following additional support might be available:

- a subsidy or allowance for transport assistance so your child can travel between home and the nearest school
- a wide range of resources and equipment, such as computers or other technology, to help your child learn.

The school can also use support and funding from the Ministry to adapt school buildings to cater for physical needs. They will contact a Special Education occupational therapist and/or physiotherapist to help plan what changes are needed so that everything will be ready by the time your child starts school. You will need to work closely with them.



When things go wrong or Jon't feel right

There may be times when you're concerned your child's needs are not being met or you're worried about something that's happening with your child at school. Talk things through with the key people who work with your child, starting with their classroom teacher. It's important that you talk to school staff as soon as any problem arises.

Before you talk to your child's teacher, you might feel better talking to your family/whānau, a friend, a community or support organisation, a kaumatua or iwi representative or a Special Education staff member or kaitakawaenga you're comfortable with.

If you've discussed the problem with the staff who work closest to your child and you're still worried, find out through the school who to talk to – a senior staff member, SENCO, deputy principal or principal. You can also contact a district manager at your local Special Education office. See our information sheet *Resolving problems at school* for more details.

What if my child is being bullied?

Bullying is a form of abuse – it is harmful and it is not okay. All schools should have a policy on how they will deal with bullying. The school's charter, which is the agreement between the school's trustees and the Minister of Education, requires the school to "provide a safe physical and emotional environment".

If you suspect your child is being bullied you need to raise this with your child's teacher or another relevant member of staff, such as a school counsellor or the principal.

What if the school is sending my child home?

If the school wants to send your child home early, for example,

when a teacher's aide is not around, or has told you that your child can only attend for certain hours, and this differs from their classmates, then they may be breaching the Education Act 1989. Discuss this with the school principal. If this is unsuccessful, you can contact a district manager at your local Special Education office.

Special Education needs to know if schools are not meeting their legal obligations. Your child has the right to be at school full time.

Some children might find it a struggle to be at school full time. You, the school, and any specialists must all agree to your child initially attending school for fewer hours each week. This must be the right thing for your child.

The main thing that surprised me when I started primary school was that most of the teachers were just cool with the fact that I've got a disability and I just got treated like any of the other students. One of the kids who showed me around my very first day of primary school, I'm still quite good friends with to this very day."

Zane, student previously receiving ORRS

Changing schools

If your child is changing schools you'll need to plan ahead to make sure the change goes as smoothly as possible. It's important to tell the new school about your child's needs well ahead of time so that the right support is in place when your child starts.

It's also important that you realise that resources might change from school to school.

If your child is part of the Ongoing and Reviewable Resourcing Schemes (ORRS) the funding, specialist and teacher time will go with them to the new school. The level of teacher's aide time will need to be worked out with the new school and the support agencies that are paid to provide services for your child.

- Ask the people currently supporting your child and those who will support your child at your new school to develop a plan to help your child prepare for the change and adjust to the new school.
- Talk about the transfer of your child's records to the new school. Your current school will need your consent before passing on any information other than general enrolment records.
- If your child is changing schools this should be incorporated into their Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- Remember to prepare your child for this change. Talk about it with them, always remaining positive. Tell them what to expect and focus on the things you know they like about school and what you know they might look forward to doing at their new school.

Much as we had a good transition and all through school we've had a great time. I know when Mitch went to school I really felt quite lost. I felt like I'd lost control of my own child. You put a lot of trust in the school and in the teacher aide and hope that they've got it right because you lose a lot of contact. Once they're at school you don't get involved with the speech-language therapist

and you don't get that one-on-one like you do in early intervention when you feel totally involved and have a

finger on what's happening."

Jenny



Preparing for secondary school

Moving to secondary school is your child's next big step towards independence. They will need lots of love and support at this time – just becoming a hormone-happy teenager is tough enough!

Starting secondary school usually means moving to a larger school with more people. Instead of being taught by a few familiar teachers, there is a range of specialist teachers. Your child will have to get to know these new teachers, whose classrooms they'll move between throughout the day, as well as become familiar with the other new students in their home classes.

Talk to your child about the changes they should expect. They'll have an exciting choice of subjects, they'll travel to a new location, and maybe they'll be wearing a uniform for the first time. As well as getting the chance to make new friends, it's quite likely they'll be moving to their new school with some of their friends from their current school who may be feeling just as nervous and excited as they are.

You'll need to plan ahead for the move to secondary school in much the same way as you did when moving from your child's early childhood education centre to

primary school. The people currently supporting your child and those who will support your child at their secondary school will need to work together to develop a plan to ensure the right support is in place by the time your child starts. You should start thinking about this 12 – 18 months before moving.

Some of the support your child receives at primary school will change when they reach secondary school.



Information for refugee and migrant families

If you are in New Zealand and your child has special education needs and is already in a New Zealand school, there might be funding or support available for your child through their school or Special Education. Talk to your school about this and see our information

sheet Information for refugees who have children with special education needs.

If you are planning to come to New Zealand and you have a child with special education needs, see our information sheet *Information for families wanting to live in* New Zealand who have a child with special needs for information about what support and services might be available. Services will depend on your child's level of need, whether you are already a New Zealand citizen and where you are migrating from.

I think the main thing I was excited about when I started primary school was just that I was going to go to big boy school as I saw it back then. I was going to start learning big boy stuff and making friends."

Zane, student previously receiving ORRS





Patrick are the same as for my other children – that he reaches his full potential and he's happy and well balanced. I don't ever want to limit him to what I think he might be able to do. I want to keep dreaming big."

Jenny

NGĀ MŌHIOHIO E WĀTEA ANA KI NGĀ KAIAKO

Information available to teachers

In the same way that there's support for you and your child, there's a wealth of information, training and support available for teachers. Knowing what's available can help you work in partnership with your child's teacher as you share ideas and learn about new approaches.

The educators' section of the Ministry of Education's website provides access to research, resources and information on processes, training opportunities, guidelines and more. Find out more by visiting the special education sub-section of the educator pages – www.minedu.govt.nz.

Te Kete Ipurangi (TKI – the learning basket) is a bilingual portal and web community that provides educational material for New Zealand teachers, school managers, and the wider education community – www.tki.org.nz.

ĒTAHI ATU ĀWHINA KA HIAHIA PEA KOE

Other support you might need

It's important to form a circle of supporters/friends around your child who are focused and committed to them. The combined energies of a group of people can become a powerful force in your child's life. They can also give you as parents energy, and help you remain connected and supported within your whānau and community. Check out our information sheet *Support organisations and useful contacts* to connect with other organisations in your community.

How to contact us

If you have questions about support for your child, the best people to ask first are your child's teacher or school principal. You can also talk with staff at your local Special Education office.

Below are the contact details for Special Education offices around New Zealand. For special education information or advice you can also call the free Special Education information line on 0800 622 222, or email us at special.education@minedu.govt.nz.

If you're deaf or have a hearing impairment, you can also contact us through the New Zealand Relay Service on 0800 4 711 711 or go to www.nzrelay.co.nz.

Select the area that's closest to you:

Tai Tokerau District Office

10 Awaroa River Road PO Box 911 Whangarei 0140 Ph: 09 436 8900 Fax: 09 436 8901

Northwest District Office

Level 1, 102 Rosedale Road Albany, North Shore City PO Box 305160 Triton Plaza North Shore City 0757 Ph: 09 487 1100 Fax: 09 487 1187

Manukau District Office

Unit I, 16 Bishop Dunn Place Botany South PO Box 217046 Botany Junction Manukau 2164 Ph: 09 265 3000 Fax: 09 265 3199

Auckland City District Office

Level 3, Eden 5 Building 12–18 Normanby Road Mt Eden Private Bag 92 644 Symonds St Auckland 1150 Ph: 09 632 9400 Fax: 09 632 9401

Waikato District Office

Ken Browne Drive P O Box 774 Hamilton 3240 Ph: 07 850 8880 Fax: 07 850 8998

Bay of Plenty East District Office

Level 3, Regency House 1 Elizabeth Street Tauranga 3110 Ph: 07 571 7800 Fax: 07 571 7864

Bay of Plenty West District Office

Level 3, 1144 Pukaki Street PO Box 701 Rotorua 3040 Ph: 07 343 1371 Fax: 07 349 2560

Gisborne District Office

2nd Floor Rockforte Tower Building Cnr Gladstone Rd & Grey St PO Box 658 Gisborne 4040 Ph: 06 869 1520 Fax: 06 869 1521 Free ph: 0508 656 565

Hawke's Bay District Office

8 A Lever Street, Ahuriri PO Box 147 Napier 4110 Ph: 06 833 6730 Fax: 06 833 6731

Taranaki District Office

Level 4, PWC Centre 54 Gill Street PO Box 8158 New Plymouth 4342 Ph: 06 758 7858 Fax: 06 758 4135

Central District Office

1–3 Oxford Street (cnr of Ferguson and Oxford Street) PO Box 1154, Palmerston North 4440 Ph: 06 357 9245 Fax: 06 355 0503

Greater Wellington District Office

Level 2, 19 Market Grove PO Box 30 177, Lower Hutt 5040 Ph: 04 439 4600 Fax: 04 570 3667

Marlborough/Nelson/West Coast District Office

19 Haven Road PO Box 282, Nelson 7040 Ph: 03 546 3470 Fax: 03 539 1501

Canterbury District Office

39 Princess Street PO Box 2522, Christchurch 8140 Ph: 03 378 7300 Fax: 03 378 7302

Otago District Office

414 Moray Place Private Bag 1971, Dunedin 9054 Ph: 03 471 5200 Fax: 03 479 0541

Southland District Office

190 Forth Street, PO Box 887 Invercargill 9840 Ph: 03 218 2442 Fax: 03 211 8001

