



# primary school

NSW Department of Education

## Getting ready for primary school

[education.nsw.gov.au](http://education.nsw.gov.au)



Starting school is a big milestone for children and their families. The transition between learning environments can be both challenging and exciting. This guide is packed with information to help you and your family get your child ready for primary school.

Help your child through the transition by:



encouraging them to explore their feelings



helping them connect to their school



supporting them in building friendships and relationships



empowering them to build their confidence and independence.

# Get ready for Kindergarten



Tick off the tasks that apply to you




If your child attends an early childhood education service, talk to staff about their transition to school.

If your child takes medication or has an allergy, a medical condition, disability or additional learning and support needs, inform the school as early as possible and make an appointment to speak with school staff.

Attend a school orientation or transition to school program and make sure you have the school's phone number.

If you need help with English, ask for an interpreter to be present at the orientation meeting. The school will arrange one if available.

Practise safely walking or travelling to and from school.

Contact the school for an enrolment pack.

Apply for a school Opal card if needed. Phone 131 500 or go to

[transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts](https://transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts)

Take your child to your local community health nurse or doctor for a health check and make sure their immunisations are up to date before school starts. For more details visit

[health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation](https://health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation)

Organise outside of school hours care, if needed.

Talk about the plan for after school pickup.

# Before you start

## Enrolment

Schools can help with enrolment questions throughout the year. You may need to attend an interview with the principal. There you can discuss any disability or additional learning and support needs, medical conditions, or other special circumstances before your child starts school. The school may work with you to develop a personalised learning and support plan, health care plan or a behaviour support plan to best support your child.

[education.nsw.gov.au/primary-school-enrolment](http://education.nsw.gov.au/primary-school-enrolment)

## Voluntary school contributions

All NSW public schools can request contributions to enhance educational and sporting programs. School contributions are voluntary and payment is a matter for decision by parents and carers.

## Financial assistance for extra-curricular activities

Schools may charge for extra-curricular activities that go beyond the minimum requirements of the curriculum. Parents who are unable to pay for extra-curricular activities because of financial hardship may be eligible for assistance from the school.

## Telephone Interpreter Service

- Phone 131 450 to call the Telephone Interpreter Service.
- Ask for an interpreter in your language.
- Tell the operator the phone number of the school you would like to call. They will get an interpreter on the phone to assist you.

You will not be charged for this service.

## Budgeting for new costs

Schools usually provide most things Kindergarten students will use in the classroom, but starting school may require new items such as uniforms and school shoes. It may be helpful to check with your child's school so you can budget for the items your child will need.

## Uniforms

Your child's school will tell you about the school uniform items and where to buy them. There is usually a summer, a winter and a sports uniform. The school can tell you which shops supply the uniform or the material to make it, and many schools run a clothing pool where uniform items are donated after children have outgrown them.

## Transition to School Statement

Your early childhood education service may give you a Transition to School Statement you can share with your child's school before they start. The Transition to School Statement gives a snapshot of your child's strengths, interests and preferred ways of learning.

# Useful tips in the lead-up to starting Kindergarten

## Don't forget

- Write down the date your child will start school.
- Support your child to develop independence using the bathroom – including urinals for boys – and practise good hand-washing techniques.
- Write your child's name on all their school things and involve your child in organising them and recognising their name. Make sure your child's name is not visible on the outside of anything they'll be wearing to and from school.
- Practise the daily routine of travelling to and from school, whether it is by car, walking, or public transport.

## Try this

- Set up a play date for your child to play with a friend.
- Check out the local library and let your child choose books to borrow.
- Take a ball to a park to throw, catch and kick together.
- Organise a picnic with a packed lunch and encourage your child to open it and eat the food by themselves.

## Help your child practise

- Putting on their school shoes and walking in them.
- Dressing in their school uniform.
- Packing and unpacking their school bag.
- Drinking from bubblers.
- Opening and closing their lunch box and identifying food that is for lunch and food that is for recess.

## More Daisy resources are available on our website

- Download the picture book version of Daisy's First Day or watch the animated video.
- Print the Daisy colouring sheets and puzzle.



Scan the QR code or visit

[education.nsw.gov.au/daisy](http://education.nsw.gov.au/daisy)



## Meet Daisy the koala on her first day of school

Explore the Daisy's First Day activity poster.

- Read the comic, Daisy's First Day, with your child.
- Help your child complete fun activities on the poster as they get to know the characters and learn about the school environment.

# The big day

The first day of Kindergarten is a big event in your child's life – and that of your entire family. To help you make the most of the day and enjoy the experience, here are some helpful tips.

## The night before

- Lay out your child's clothes, shoes and socks.
- Make your child's morning tea and lunch and put it in the fridge.
- Help your child pack their school bag.
- Pack a spare pair of underpants, socks and a change of clothes. Let your child know these are there in case they have any toilet accidents at school.

## On the day

- Have confidence in your child and let them dress themselves.
- Apply sunscreen and get your child to wear their hat on the way to school.
- Don't forget to take photos!
- Make sure you pick your child up on time.

# School routines

## Getting to and from school safely

Getting your child to and from school is your responsibility – however your child's school wants this to happen safely every day.

Pick the safest way to school and practise travelling the route with your child, talking about and showing them how to be a safe road user.

Keep your school community safe by always:

- role model safe and responsible road user behaviour
- holding your child's hand when walking on the footpath, in the car park and when crossing the road
- using the safest place to cross the road. Walk further to use pedestrian crossings, refuges and traffic lights
- keeping hold of your child's hand in the carpark, and when entering and exiting the car, abiding by signage in and around your school
- meeting and dropping your child on the school side of the road (never call your child from across the road)
- getting your child in and out of the car via the 'safety door' (the rear left door closest to the footpath)
- buckling your child up correctly in an approved child restraint or booster seat this is right for their age and size, even if you're in a hurry
- driving and parking legally, even if it means parking further away and walking the rest of the way to school.

## Saying goodbye

Let your child know who will pick them up from school at the end of the day and where they will meet. During the first few weeks of school, the meeting place is usually your child's classroom or a central spot.

Check with your child's teacher to find out when and where to pick them up and let them know who will be picking them up.

## Picking children up at the end of the day

During the first few weeks of the term when school finishes each day, your child's teacher will wait with the class at a central spot until all children are picked up. If you're running late, notify your child's teacher by calling the school office. Children can get upset if the person picking them up isn't on time.

Share this information with your child's carers such as grandparents, nannies and friends who may be taking your child to or from school.

[education.nsw.gov.au/safe-travel](http://education.nsw.gov.au/safe-travel)

## Out of school hours care (OSHC)

OSHC includes before and after school care (BASC) and vacation care services. OSHC services provide education and care for primary school-age children outside school hours and during school vacations. Services are often open on pupil-free days as well.

OSHC services:

- support children's learning achievement, engagement and wellbeing
- provide developmental play opportunities in a multi-age environment
- support families to work or study outside school hours.

Your school can give you information about local services, or visit the BASC finder to find your closest.

[service.nsw.gov.au/find-a-basc-provider](http://service.nsw.gov.au/find-a-basc-provider)

The Child Care Subsidy helps eligible families with the cost of childcare for out of school hours.

[servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy](http://servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy)



# Every day counts



A day away from school here or there doesn't seem like much but absences add up.

Student attendance at school has a dramatic impact on academic achievement and social and emotional wellbeing for individual students. Quality student attendance results are most likely to be achieved when schools and families work in partnership to support every student.

## Attending school

Going to school every day is important and Kindergarten sets children up for the rest of their schooling.

What your child learns each day builds on what they learned the day before. If your child misses school, their learning routine is broken, so they can lose confidence and miss out on building their friendships.

You have a legal responsibility to send your children to school every school day.

If your child misses school due to illness, religious reasons or family circumstances, you are required to explain the reason for their absence to the school. This is usually done by a signed note. However, talk to your child's teacher about how the school manages this process.

If your child arrives at school late or needs to leave early, you will need to go to the office to sign your child in or out, and provide a reason for the absence.

If you're having difficulty getting your child to school every day and on time, talk to the teacher or principal.

If you need help with English, ask for an interpreter. The school will arrange one if available.

If your child misses as little as

**1** day per fortnight

they will miss

**4** weeks of school per year

which adds up to nearly

**3** full terms by the end of primary school

# Learning and activities



Most time in Kindergarten is spent developing children's literacy and numeracy skills.

There are 6 key learning areas studied throughout primary school:

- Creative arts
- English
- Human Society and its Environment (History and Geography)
- Mathematics
- Personal development, health and physical education (PDHPE)
- Science and technology.

## Best Start Kindergarten Assessment

The Best Start Kindergarten Assessment is a state-wide assessment that helps teachers identify the literacy and numeracy skills your child brings with them at the beginning of kindergarten.

Children start school with a range of experiences, skills and abilities. The assessment provides teachers with the opportunity to sit with each child one-on-one, focusing on what that child can do in literacy and numeracy, so they can plan effective teaching and learning programs. The assessment does not require students to prepare or study.

Your school will provide more information about the assessment and ways you can support your child to develop literacy and numeracy skills at home.

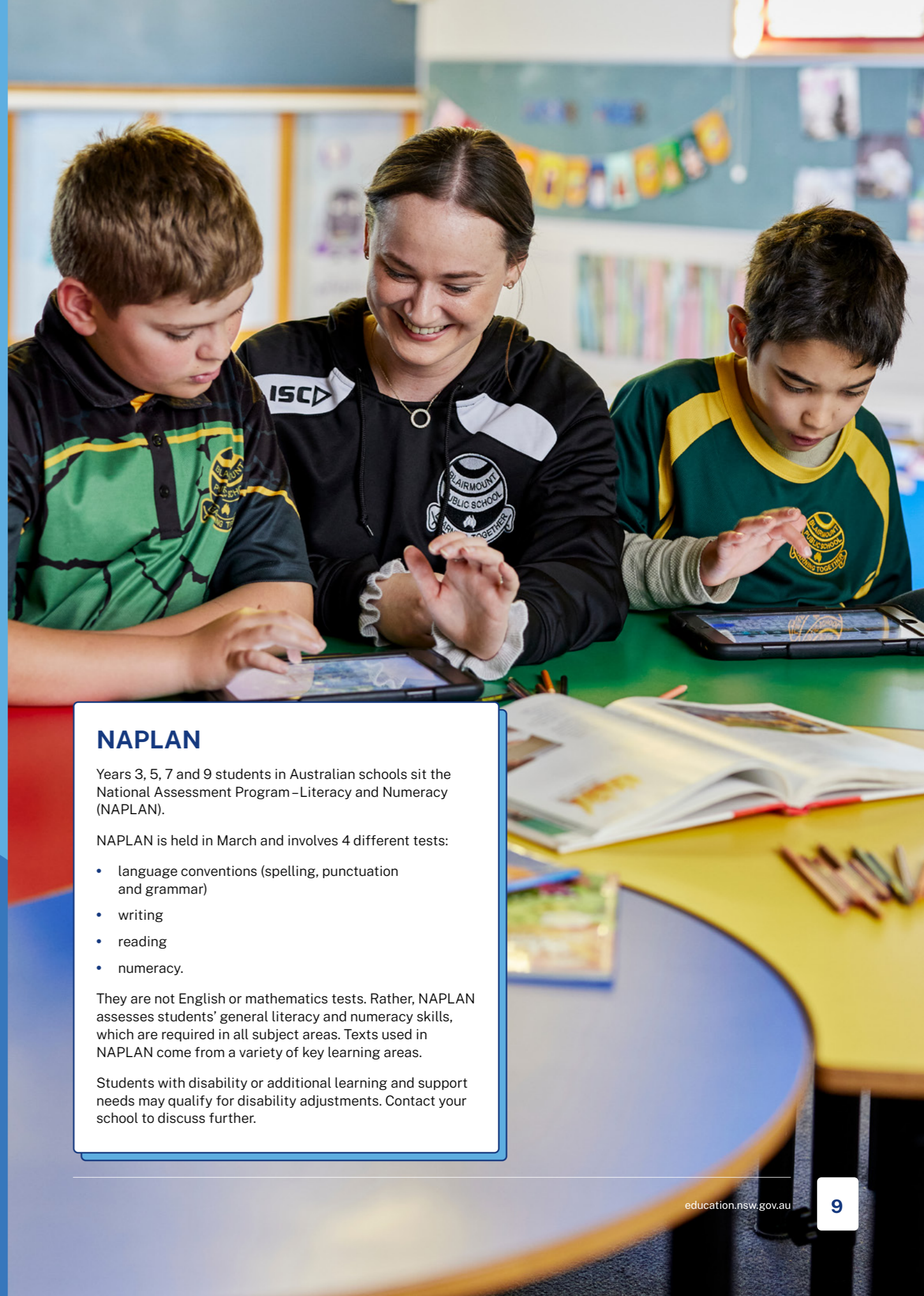
Resources are also available on our website.

[education.nsw.gov.au/best-start](https://education.nsw.gov.au/best-start)



## Did you know?

Your child will have access to Adobe, Microsoft and Google software with free, filtered internet, email and unlimited secure cloud storage in the classroom.



## NAPLAN

Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students in Australian schools sit the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

NAPLAN is held in March and involves 4 different tests:

- language conventions (spelling, punctuation and grammar)
- writing
- reading
- numeracy.

They are not English or mathematics tests. Rather, NAPLAN assesses students' general literacy and numeracy skills, which are required in all subject areas. Texts used in NAPLAN come from a variety of key learning areas.

Students with disability or additional learning and support needs may qualify for disability adjustments. Contact your school to discuss further.

# Getting your child ready for literacy learning



Literacy involves speaking and listening, reading and writing. Engaging with your child in play-based literacy activities every day will support their development of early literacy skills.

Talk and interact with your child. Through talk, children learn about communicating with others. They also learn how to take turns, ask questions and develop a knowledge of words. These skills help children develop a strong foundation for reading and writing.

## Try some of the following activities with your child:

### Speaking and listening

Developing speaking and listening skills are important for children to socialise, make friends and to actively participate in school activities.

- Make conversations fun. For example, make up funny or nonsense rhymes.
- Use everyday words that are part of your child's culture, experience and interests.
- Have fun with the sound of letters. Make up silly sentences using words that start with the same sound such as, "Sam sat on 6 socks."

### Reading

Read to and with your child daily. Encourage your child to explore books by themselves or with a family member. This will support your child to understand how books work and build a love of reading.

- Play word games with rhyming words.
- Read books with rhymes and riddles that your child enjoys.
- Sing songs. Make up a song about an everyday activity such as getting dressed.

### Drawing and writing

Encourage your child to draw or write about topics that interest them. This will help your child explore how messages can be communicated in different ways.

- Ask your child to draw or write about things they like to do, make or play. Talk with your child about their drawing or writing.
- Encourage them to create a card for a friend, or an invitation to a special event or celebration.
- Support your child to draw or write something special for a friend or a family member.

Always encourage your child and use activities and topics they are interested in. If you speak a language other than English it is important that you support your child to use their home language when talking, reading and writing.

Most importantly, have fun with your child and make use of the literacy opportunities in everyday activities. The early years are critical to developing a lifelong love of learning.

**Helping your child with literacy and numeracy at home** - Scan QR code to access 35 languages.



# Eating at school



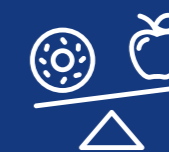
Eating at school will be a different experience for your child compared to eating at home or at preschool. There are no places to keep food hot or cold. Children often sit on the grass or on benches and balance their food on their knees. They will also need to be able to open everything their food is wrapped in and they won't want to spend so much time eating that they miss out on playing.

## Tips to help your child

- Encourage your child to practise eating from the lunch box at home.
- Pack food that is easy to open, easy to eat and not messy.
- If your child needs utensils like chopsticks or cutlery make sure these are packed with their lunch.
- Write your child's name on their lunch box, water bottle and any other containers.
- Include a frozen drink bottle to keep food cold. Wrap it in a tea towel in case it leaks.
- Use insulated lunch boxes or cooler bags.
- Avoid using plastic wrap as children find it hard to pull apart. Paper bags are better for the environment too.
- Pack tissues or paper around fruit so it won't bruise.
- Remind your child to wash their hands before eating and to use the toilet at recess and lunch.
- Pack a water bottle for your child each day and remind them that they can also get water from the taps or bubblers throughout the day.
- If your child can order food from their school canteen, help them identify healthy food and drink choices.

## Recess and lunch ideas

- Cut fruit into pieces and put them in a small container. Squeeze some lemon juice on apples or pears to stop them going brown.
- Cut up vegetables such as carrots, celery and cucumber. Put dips or yoghurt in a separate container.
- Make wholemeal muffins and freeze them.
- Try different breads, such as rolls, roti, pita, wholegrain or tortilla wraps.
- If using tomato in a sandwich, slice it thinly and place the slices between other fillings to stop the sandwich from going soggy.
- Cook a little extra dinner and save some for lunch the next day. You could make fried rice, noodles, curry, quiche, homemade pizza slices, salmon patties, roast vegetables, noodle salads or sausages. A freezer brick, frozen drink or insulated container can help keep this food fresh.





# Health and wellbeing

You can help support your child's health and wellbeing as they start Kindergarten and move through primary school.



## Talk with your child

Check in with your child before, and particularly after, school.

How was your day? What did you learn? What was the highlight?

Communicate with comfort and connection. Be relaxed in your facial expression and body. Get down to your child's level and offer gentle touch or affection. For example:

"I know Kindy is different from preschool. We have to go to school. Let's sit together and figure out how to make this easier."

Validate and relate to your child's feelings. Consider how they're experiencing the situation from their point of view.

Discuss and set limits. Wishes and feelings are acceptable but some behaviours are not. It is important to remain calm, clear and assertive. For example:

"I hear you want to play more. It is important that you get a good night's sleep before school. It is bedtime."

"I can see you are frustrated but it is not okay to yell or hit."

Notice and address any physical, behavioural or emotional changes. Some reactions to stress include tiredness, struggling to fall asleep, boredom, feeling irritable or acting out, being withdrawn or avoiding school and homework, complaints of an upset stomach or headache, excessively asking questions, or seeking reassurance. Always share any concerns with your child's teacher.

## Create routines at home



Make sure your child is getting a good night's sleep and at least 30 minutes of daily exercise.



Cook nutritious meals including breakfast, lunch and dinner and make sure your child is eating regularly.



Encourage your child to stay hydrated, even in the colder months.



Read to your child as part of your daily routine.

Kindergarten children can get very tired at night because they are doing so many new and exciting things. For this reason, it helps to keep before and after school routines – like bath time, meals and reading – as regular as possible. It's also important to leave time for your child to play and get a good night's sleep each night.

[education.nsw.gov.au/parents-and-carers/wellbeing](http://education.nsw.gov.au/parents-and-carers/wellbeing)

## Connect with your child's learning

- Get to know their teachers, school staff, other parents or carers and your child's friends.
- Attend school events, for example, parent and teacher nights, presentation nights, award ceremonies, performances or showcases.
- If you can, provide your child with out-of-school opportunities to bond with their friends and the community such as volunteering, sports and supervised play dates.

## Dealing with challenges

The past few years have brought a lot of change and disruption for everyone, including children. Whether your child has attended preschool or is starting primary school for the first time, they may experience difficulty settling into school routines.

Your child may be feeling:

- excited or happy about starting school
- nervous or anxious due to new routines
- frustrated and annoyed about all the changes.

## How to support your child during the pandemic

- Monitor the media your child is watching.
- Talk to your child about their understanding of the situation and correct misunderstandings or confusion.
- Include your child in making plans for the future.
- Support your child to stay connected to friends.
- Keep to your regular routines and activities as much as possible.



# A safe and supportive environment

## Anti-bullying environment

All NSW public schools actively prevent student bullying and encourage appropriate behaviour by helping students build social skills and respect for others.

Schools develop their own anti-bullying plan which include strategies to reduce bullying behaviour, cyberbullying or harassment, and school staff are trained to respond to these situations. Contact the school for a copy of your school's anti-bullying plan or to report a concern.

The anti-bullying section on our website includes evidence-based research to support educators, parents and carers, and students to identify, prevent, and respond effectively to student bullying behaviours.

[education.nsw.gov.au/anti-bullying](https://education.nsw.gov.au/anti-bullying)

## Support services and school counselling

All NSW public schools have access to psychological expertise through the school counselling service. School counselling staff can help students who are having difficulties at school or home. They can connect families with services outside of school if needed. You may make an appointment to access the school counselling service by contacting the school.





# Supporting your child

Your child's teacher is your partner in supporting their education. They will let you know the best way to keep in touch with them and find out about your child's progress. Keep your child's teacher informed of any changes in your child's life that may affect their learning or enjoyment of school.

## Additional support

Public schools provide a range of other staff who contribute to personalised learning and support for students where needed.

These positions include:

- learning and support teachers and school learning support officers (SLSO)
- specialist vision and hearing itinerant teachers
- English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) teachers
- community information and liaison officers
- home school liaison officers
- Aboriginal education officers and teams.

Contact your school office if you think your child would benefit from these support services or you would like to know more.

## How to find the right person if you have questions or concerns

The best education happens when families and schools work together.

If you have questions about your child starting Kindergarten, aim to contact your local school before term starts. You can find information about the enrolment process and find your local school on our website.

[schoolfinder.education.nsw.gov.au](http://schoolfinder.education.nsw.gov.au)

Once your child has started school, you may have questions or concerns. Your child's teacher is often the best place to start if you would like to talk about your child's progress. If you aren't sure who to talk to, your child's teacher or school office staff can give you the right contact details.

[education.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback](http://education.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback)

## Engaging with your child's education

Relationship building is the most important part of transitioning to school. Your school is committed to working with you to ensure you have all the information and support you need to help your child get the most out of school. In addition, you have the right to feel welcome at school, be treated fairly and be able to actively participate in your child's schooling.

In return, we ask that you interact with the school community in a positive way. This includes your child's teacher, school staff, other children and their parents and carers. We are all partners in our children's education.

School staff have the right to feel safe in their workplace without experiencing intimidating actions, language, or inappropriate and unhelpful communications.

All of our interactions and communications – including those about difficult or complex issues – should be timely, respectful, transparent and focused on solutions.

All public schools in NSW have a School Community Charter which provides the framework for school-based behaviour and interactions. This charter lists clear expectations for the school community. If you think a communication or interaction has not been handled in line with the charter, please raise this with your school or the department.

[education.nsw.gov.au/school-community-charter](http://education.nsw.gov.au/school-community-charter)

## High potential and gifted

High potential and gifted children are those whose potential is more advanced compared to their same-age peers in one or more domains: intellectual, creative, social-emotional or physical. Opportunities exist in all NSW public schools for high potential and gifted children. Contact your school to talk with the principal.

## Support for students who are learning English as an additional language or dialect

Schools provide support for students learning English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) to assist their full participation in schooling.

High school age students in the early phases of learning English may be eligible to receive intensive English language tuition in an Intensive English Centre or Intensive English Class.

Contact your school to discuss how the needs of EAL/D learners are met.

## Aboriginal students

In some communities, there are tailored transition programs working to enhance the educational outcomes for Aboriginal students. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and carers are encouraged to participate in the development of their child's personalised learning pathway (PLP). For more information about tailored transition programs and PLPs, contact your school.

## Kids helpline

If your child is having a tough time and needs someone to talk to, let them know they can call or chat to someone at Kids Helpline.

Kids Helpline gives young people aged 5 to 25 free phone and online counselling support.

Phone 1800 55 1800 (24 hours a day)  
Chat online at

[kidshelpline.com.au](http://kidshelpline.com.au) (24 hours a day)

# Students with disability and additional learning and support needs

The NSW Department of Education is committed to building a more inclusive education system; where every student feels welcome and can learn to their fullest capability, and that meets the needs of students with disability, their families and their community. The Disability Strategy sets out our plan for meeting these commitments.

NSW public schools provide a range of specialist services to support students with additional learning and support needs. This includes support for students' diverse needs in learning or behaviour, students with disability, students with additional health and wellbeing needs.

Every mainstream NSW public school has a learning and support teacher who works in the school to support students with disability.

If your child has a disability or additional needs, start by talking to your local public school. The school will have a meeting with you to find out more and talk about how they can help.

A school can make reasonable adjustments for your child – for example, changes to lessons, or to the classroom, or even big changes like putting in ramps or doing building work. You know your child best, so it is important to have early conversations so that you and the school can work together to come up with a plan.

Your child might do well in a mainstream classroom with a bit of extra support or the school might suggest applying for a placement in a support class. These are classes for children with much higher levels of need. They can be at a local public school, or at a School for Specific Purposes. If that happens, the school will discuss it with you and you will help with the application process.

[education.nsw.gov.au/starting-school-with-additional-needs](https://education.nsw.gov.au/starting-school-with-additional-needs)



# Sickness and allergies

## If your child is sick at school

If your child gets sick or injured at school, the school will contact you. If your child is ill, they will go to an area where they can lie down and be monitored. You will be called to come and collect your child if they are too sick to go back to the classroom. For this reason, it is important to keep your contact details up to date with the school, including an alternative contact – such as a relative or neighbour – who the school can call if you are unavailable.

## If your child is sick at home

From time to time your child may get sick. If they display any of the following symptoms, they should stay at home and see a doctor:

- a fever of 38°C or above
- vomiting or diarrhoea
- cough or respiratory symptoms
- cold or flu symptoms
- rashes of an unknown origin.

## Head lice

Head lice spread when children are in close contact. They are easily treated and are not harmful to your child. Having head lice is not a reflection on the level of your child's personal hygiene.

### Preventing head lice

- Check your child's hair regularly.
- Keep long hair tied back, plaited or braided.
- Keep a fine-toothed comb in the bathroom and encourage your family to use it when they wash their hair.

### Treating head lice

Daily combing with a white hair conditioner (to help see) using a fine-toothed comb will help get rid of head lice and their eggs (nits). If your child has head lice, let the school know so they can ask other families to check their children's hair. Your child does not have to be identified.

[health.nsw.gov.au/environment/headlice](http://health.nsw.gov.au/environment/headlice)

## Sun safety

Schools promote sun-smart behaviour by encouraging students and staff to Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek and Slide. Sun-safe uniform items – including hats that protect the head, neck and ears – are included in school uniforms. School staff encourage students to play in covered areas around the school. Most schools have a 'no hat, no play' policy, so your child will need their hat to play outdoors with their friends at recess and lunch.

You can protect your child from the damaging effects of UV radiation by applying sunscreen each morning before they leave for school and ensuring they are wearing a sun-safe hat. Children can also wear sunglasses at school to protect their eyes from sun damage.

[cancercouncil.com.au/sun-protection](http://cancercouncil.com.au/sun-protection)

## Remember

**It's important to keep the school informed of any changes to your child's health.**

## Allergies and asthma

It is important for you to inform the principal and the school if your child has asthma or allergies – not just those diagnosed as severe or food allergies. Anaphylaxis is a severe and sudden allergic reaction to allergens such as nuts or shellfish, or insect bites. If your child is diagnosed with asthma or at risk of an anaphylactic reaction, you must provide the school with information from your child's doctor, including an Action Plan for Anaphylaxis in accordance with the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA).

The school will develop an individual health care plan to describe your child's needs and how the school plans to meet these needs during the school day, on excursions and in other school activities such as sport.

Schools and parents work together to put arrangements in place for health care support. Information from the child's doctor that you provide will inform the planning process.

[allergyfacts.org.au](http://allergyfacts.org.au)

# Ways to get involved with your school community



If your family is new to the school, consider connecting with other families in the community. You could get in touch with your children's friends, or get involved in school activities.

## Get connected

Ask the school if there are any school-specific apps or social media groups to connect you with other parents and carers, or get updates on school activities. Check out your school's website and find out if they have a Facebook page or newsletter that promotes opportunities to get involved.

## Parents and Citizens Association

The Parents and Citizens (P&C) Association is a formal organisation for parents and members of the community to support their school. The P&C might source equipment for the school, organise fundraisers, help with public events (such as fetes and concerts) or encourage parents and citizens to work closely with teachers. As the principal attends P&C meetings, there is an opportunity for families and community members to be involved in school education matters. The P&C usually has a budget which can come from voluntary donations and sources such as uniform shops, canteens or public fetes and carnivals.

Joining the P&C is a great way to actively help the school and be involved in the community.

[pandc.org.au](http://pandc.org.au)

## Help out in the classroom

Parents and carers may have opportunities to assist in the classroom. Each school is unique so your school can best advise ways you could help out. Classroom volunteers might help by assisting the teacher and working with children in small groups. They could assist with maths, reading or comprehension activities that the teacher has organised. Mentoring volunteers generally work with a single student each week, offering one-to-one support to increase their academic confidence.

## Help out with school activities

Parents and carers can also help out beyond the classroom. There could be opportunities to volunteer time at the canteen or library, or assist at a school sports carnival, excursion or after school activity. Each school will be slightly different.

## Initiate something you're passionate about

You may have your own ideas for improving the school and its community. For example, you could offer to help start a new club (like chess or debating) or support an extracurricular activity (such as learning a language or sport). Perhaps you know of a community partnership opportunity, or a great guest speaker that could visit. Share your ideas with the school or the P&C.

The most important part of volunteering is that you're able to commit your time and energy. Choose a school activity that you'll truly enjoy taking part in and get involved.



# Self-care tips for parents and carers

Self-care is incredibly important and can help strengthen your family. If you're happy and healthy, you can be more attentive and engaged as a parent or carer.



When developing your own self-care routines and rituals, keep in mind that the more often you manage your wellbeing, the longer you will be able to sustain a happy and positive household.

Here are some ways you can look after your physical and mental wellbeing to ensure you have enough energy to continue to successfully parent and care for your children.

## Practise gratitude



When you start to feel overwhelmed, try to think about the good things in your life. Even if it's just little things. This helps you change your mindset and focus on the present instead of potential future anxieties. A great strategy is to notice new things you're thankful for every day.

## Listen to music or a podcast



Music has the power to influence mood and energise. If you're feeling anxious, listen to calming music. If you're feeling low, listen to uplifting music. The best part is you can listen to music while doing other tasks! You can even involve your family in an impromptu dance party if you feel everyone needs it. Podcasts are also a great way to learn new things and get new perspectives while on the go or relaxing.

## Colour in with the kids



The reason adult colouring books are popular is simple; it's both fun and affordable. Just like it does for children, colouring clears the mind and channels focus into the task at hand, helping you to de-stress from other worries. It's a great way to have a digital detox too. So get the coloured pencils out and have fun colouring together!

## Create a schedule



Set aside some 'you' time in the schedule, whether it's going for a run, video-chatting with friends or sitting down to read. Make a firm date with yourself and not just say you'll do it 'sometime later'. If you have a partner, coordinate with them so you both get regular, scheduled alone time.

## Be kind to yourself



Keep in mind that you and others may be under a lot more stress than normal. You may not have the same level of resilience, patience and mental fortitude that you normally have, and that's okay. Give yourself a break, and manage as best you can. Offer yourself encouragement and support, and speak to yourself gently.

# Connection to Country in schools

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were the first people to live on this Country. They have been here for tens of thousands of years. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are made up of many different and unique groups and each group has its own culture, language and lores.

During their time at school, your child will learn about the history, culture, and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as how they can work towards reconciliation.

Learning about the history and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can help students understand cultural differences and show respect for diversity.

## What is Country?

Country is the relationship formed with a person's physical environment that is deeply spiritual and connects Aboriginal people to their land and their ancestors. Connection to Country is important to Aboriginal people and creates a sense of belonging and identity.

Your child can learn about Aboriginal histories and cultures and how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the traditional custodians of our land by:

- finding out who's country their home is on
- finding out who's country their school is on
- writing down an Acknowledgement of Country
- learning some words of the local Aboriginal language by consulting with the local Aboriginal community.

## What is an Acknowledgement of Country?

Acknowledging Country is a way for us to remind ourselves that we live and go to school on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands and take the time to pay our respects to Aboriginal people of generations past and present for continuing to take care of our land, earth, skies and seas.

### Activity

Help your child complete their Acknowledgement of Country for their school's land. Use the map of Aboriginal Australia by scanning the QR Code.



Today we are playing and learning on

Country and pay our respects to Elders past and present.





# A day in the life of a Principal

## To say being a principal in our schools is a tough job would be an understatement

Our principals have wide-ranging responsibilities. On any given day they could be:

- Supporting teaching staff to get the most out of class time
- Providing advice on curriculum-based learning
- Getting face-to-face time with students
- Recruiting new staff
- Planning and managing school events
- Providing wellbeing support for staff and students
- Finding resolutions for parent inquiries
- Managing student behaviour
- Budgeting and planning for capital works on the school grounds
- And many more activities to improve your child's learning experience.

## The principal's role is unique

The principal of your school is deeply interested in the learning and wellbeing of your child.

The role of the principal is complex, diverse and time consuming. Principals' responsibilities include teaching, learning and assessment within the school, and the wellbeing of both students and staff. They also manage the school property and all aspects of the finances, staffing and community engagement. Principals also contribute to educational leadership across their network and sometimes across the state.

This complex and diverse workload may mean that the principal is not always immediately available to you.

Principals try to know each child in their school on an individual basis, but it is not always possible for them to know all aspects of their progress on a day to day basis.

If you need to discuss aspects of your child's progress or concerns that you may have, it is often best to begin with a conversation with your child's teacher. Your child's teacher knows them best, observing and monitoring their progress and interactions with others on a daily basis. They can provide details and insights that are not immediately available to the executive and the principal.

In larger schools there is often an assistant or deputy principal who can provide additional support to either the class teacher or the principal in your meetings.

If you do need to talk directly with the principal it is advisable that you make an appointment and provide an outline of the issue that you wish to discuss. This will allow the principal to gather the information that they need to bring to the meeting, and to allocate enough time so that the conversation is rich and provides you with the best resolution.

From time to time there may be serious situations that need the immediate engagement of the principal and their executive. You can be confident that in these rare cases a timely response and support will be available to you.

It is important to note that at all times, the principal, their executive and staff will seek to act in the best interests of your child. When principals seek solutions they must consider both the interests of individual children as well as the interests of all of the children within the policies and procedures of the department.

# Download the NSW Education Parent App

Keep connected with your school community! Stay up-to-date with safety alerts, news, events, newsletters and much more!



## Calendars & events

When's the swimming carnival, fete or excursion day? Get notifications for events and view calendars to plan ahead.

## Instant alerts

Be instantly notified of important changes to your school's operational status, latest news, and upcoming school events.

## News for you

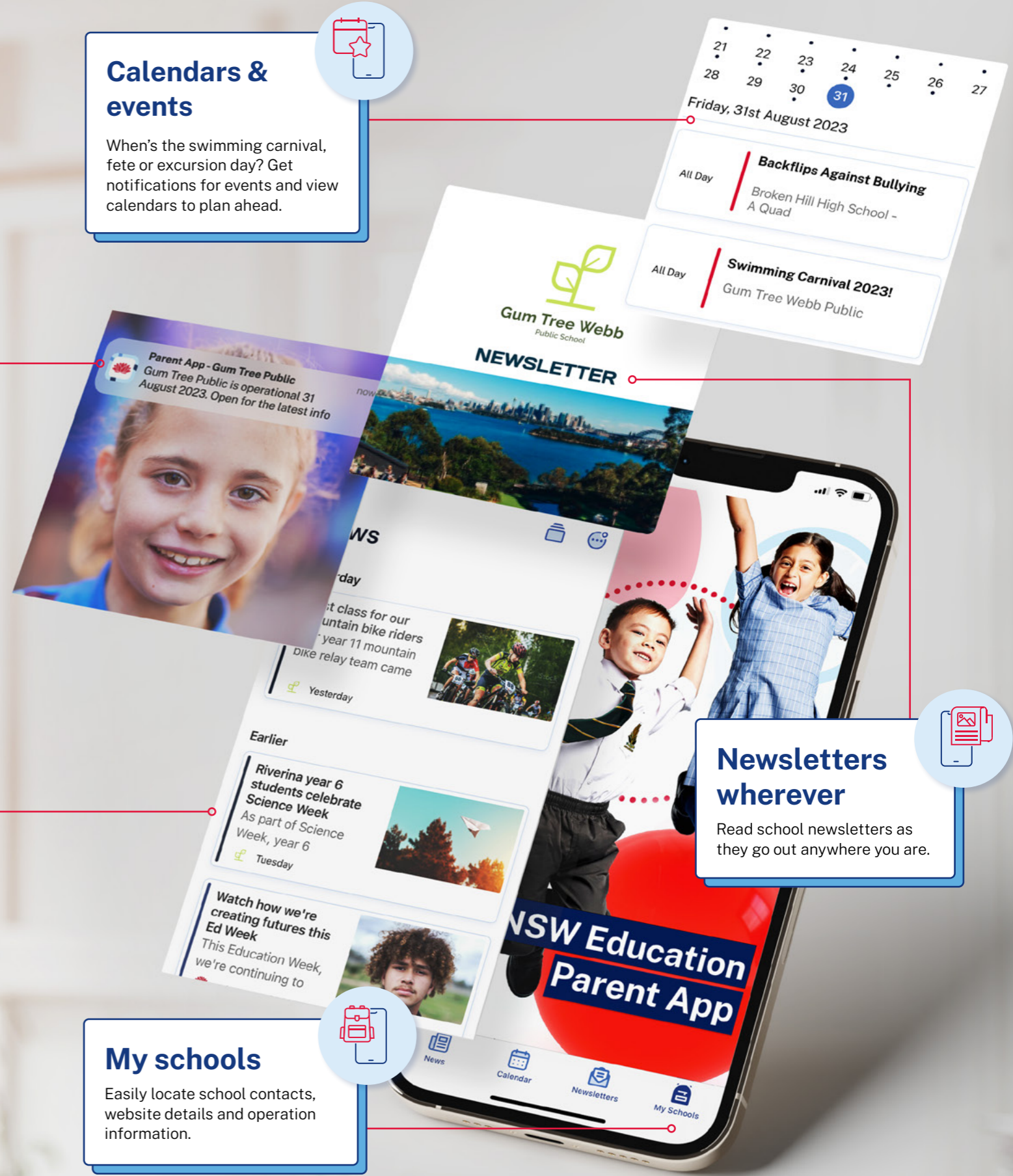
Personalise your school news feeds by year group and get just the scoops you need.

## My schools

Easily locate school contacts, website details and operation information.

## Newsletters wherever

Read school newsletters as they go out anywhere you are.





# Useful websites

[education.nsw.gov.au/useful-websites](https://education.nsw.gov.au/useful-websites)

## Translated school information

[education.nsw.gov.au/translated-documents](https://education.nsw.gov.au/translated-documents)

## A strong start to school

[education.nsw.gov.au/early-learner-animations](https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-learner-animations)

## A-Z quick guide for parents

[education.nsw.gov.au/parent-guide](https://education.nsw.gov.au/parent-guide)

## Enrolment

[education.nsw.gov.au/enrolment](https://education.nsw.gov.au/enrolment)

## Parents and carers resources

[education.nsw.gov.au/parents-and-carers](https://education.nsw.gov.au/parents-and-carers)

## Complaints, compliments and suggestions

[education.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback](https://education.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback)

## Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships

[education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/aec](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/aec)

## Aboriginal Education Consultative Group

[aecg.nsw.edu.au](https://aecg.nsw.edu.au)

## Disability, learning and support

[education.nsw.gov.au/starting-school-with-additional-needs](https://education.nsw.gov.au/starting-school-with-additional-needs)

## High potential and gifted education

[education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education)

## NSW Health

[health.nsw.gov.au](https://health.nsw.gov.au)

## Road safety

[education.nsw.gov.au/safe-travel](https://education.nsw.gov.au/safe-travel)

We acknowledge the homelands of all Aboriginal people and pay our respect to Country.

### Say hello

 @NSWDepartmentofEducation  
 @NSWEducation  
 @NSWEducation  
[education.nsw.gov.au](https://education.nsw.gov.au)

© 2023 NSW Department of Education  
GPO Box 33, Sydney NSW 2001  
Australia  
Phone: 1300 679 332

