

Getting ready for reception



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education

In South Australia, the first year of primary school is called reception. Children who turn 5 years old:

- **before 1 May** can start school in term 1
- **between 1 May and 31 October** can start school in term 3 (mid-year intake)
- **after 31 October** can start the next year.

Children who start school at the beginning of the year will complete 4 terms of reception.

Children who start school in a mid-year intake will complete 6 terms of reception.



Scan or [click here](#) to register your interest to start reception

What to expect from reception

Reception is where students discover school practices, routines and structure.

Students will experience active learning, including play-based and inquiry-based approaches, as well as structured learning to develop literacy and numeracy skills.

This includes commencing learning in all 8 areas of the curriculum (English, maths, science, humanities and social sciences, the arts, technologies, health and physical education and languages).

All children have different interests, needs and motivations. Teachers provide learning opportunities tailored to the child and continually review progress to support their learning.

In reception, students continue to develop decision making, problem solving and thinking skills, as well as collaboration, communication and a positive sense of self. Developing independence is a focus.



Mid-year intake and 6 terms of reception

Students will have the same types of learning experiences whether they start at the beginning or middle of the year.

Students starting in a mid-year intake complete 6 terms of reception. They may enter a new reception class or join an existing class. This depends on enrolment numbers and the size of existing classes at your school.

Your child's teacher will plan, teach and assess all learners and ensure they are making progress with their learning.

Planning your child's transition to school

Preschools and schools have transition programs to support children moving from preschool into reception.

These programs help children settle into new routines, develop a sense of belonging at their new school, and build skills and concepts as they learn at their own pace.

Families play a significant role in supporting a successful transition to school. Speak to your preschool or primary school to find out more.



When can my child start school?

You can decide which intake suits your child best based on their age, maturity, social and emotional wellbeing and attitude.

Talk to your preschool or primary school to discuss your individual circumstances.



My child turns 5



5th birthday

Before 1 May

Between 1 May and 31 October

After 31 October



Starting school

Starts school in term 1
(that year)

Starts school in term 3
(that year)

Starts school in term 1
(next year)



Time in reception

Completes 4 terms of reception
(terms 1-4 the year they start)

Completes 6 terms of reception
(terms 3 and 4 the year they start, then all 4 terms the next year)

Completes 4 terms of reception
(terms 1-4 the year they start)



Starts year 1 (and each year after) in term 1