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EARLY ENTRY TO SCHOOL

GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

***Early Entry** is a placement process for students who demonstrate readiness for preschool or kindergarten earlier than the usual school commencement age.*

Identification of young gifted and talented children for Early Entry is a complex issue. A comprehensive psychological assessment of the child's intellectual functioning, academic readiness and social-emotional maturity is necessary. In addition, a child will demonstrate many of the personal characteristics, learning preferences and interests outlined below.

Is processing and achieving well above age peers:

- shows readiness for reading and good mathematical reasoning, or is already reading and calculating

Is independent and motivated:

- wants to start school
- is highly motivated to learn
- is comfortable with older children
- is socially mature, emotionally stable, perceptive, confident
- is independent in action

Enjoys visual and fine motor activities:

- demonstrates consistent participation in fine motor activities and close-range visual tasks
- likes being challenged and perceives school as a place to learn

Likes academic work:

- likes reading activities
- likes mathematical activities
- demonstrates wide-ranging interests.

If possible, parents and carers should provide a portfolio of evidence to assist with any consideration of early entry into preschool or kindergarten.

A collaborative partnership between the family, the teacher and the school is important to facilitate the success of Early Entry. The teacher plays a crucial role in helping the child adjust, when a gifted and talented child enters school early. A positive attitude towards the child is essential. In addition, there should be no expectation that the child will excel at everything.

The school, the teacher and the child's family should not draw attention to the child's younger age. The child should be seen to 'belong' with intellectual age peers rather than with chronological age peers. Early Entry can be an effective and sound intervention for some young gifted and talented children, but not for others.

Applications and evidence for Early Entry into preschool and kindergarten are processed through the ACT Education and Training Directorate (the Directorate). The range of evidence provided by parents is analysed by the Directorate's Senior Psychologist. Parents are notified in writing of the outcome of the application. Where parents are considering Early Entry for their child, they should contact the school principal as soon as practical to inform them of a possible Early Entry application. Further information about Early Entry Applications can be found at www.det.act.gov.au.

Gifted and Talented (GAT) Education Early Entry Flowchart

