



## Frequently Asked Questions SCDC Transitions

### Classroom Transitions

Children are eligible for transition when certain criteria are met:

- Both parents and teachers must feel that the child is developmentally ready.
- There must be space available in a classroom and on the days requested. If space is not available in a classroom or on the days requested, the child's name will be placed on an in-center waiting list.
- Infants and toddlers are encouraged to remain in classrooms for at least 9 months before transitioning to a new classroom.

Teachers and families are given a transition plan with details about a transition schedule, which includes explanations of how both teachers and parents can support the child during this time. Parents are encouraged to stop in the child's new classroom, meet the teaching staff, and begin building the parent-teacher relationship prior to the transition start date. The length of transitions varies in each age group, and transition plans can be individualized to meet children's needs.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Does my child move as soon as they have a birthday?

Not necessarily. Throughout the school year, we do our best to maintain as much consistency as we can in our classrooms. This ultimately means that the majority of transitions occur in the fall. We believe that longer periods of time within a classroom will provide teachers and children the opportunity to build positive supportive relationships and will enable teachers to assess children's development over two main conference periods. The longer a child is in a classroom over assessment periods, the better we are able to support their individual needs. In addition, stronger bonds will be formed as children develop their interpersonal relationships and a sense of community within the classroom.

#### How do you decide when a child will transition?

Typically, transitions happen in the fall with the child's cohort. However, on some occasions, we may see a need to move a child at an irregular timeframe to better support their development. These scenarios happen when both parents and teachers feel that the child is developmentally ready and when there is space available in the next classroom. If possible, every attempt is made to move a child with a peer/peers to ease the transition.

#### What is a cohort?

At SCDC, we attempt to match children in an age group that they will be with until they go to kindergarten. This means that sometimes your child may be the oldest in the group and/or sometimes they may be the youngest. In Michigan, to enroll a child in kindergarten, they must turn five on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of any given year.

### **What if there is no space available in an older classroom? How will my child be supported in their current environment?**

If your child is showing signs of benefitting from an older age group but we do not have space available, we will note their readiness and the child's name will be placed on an in-center waiting list. As always, our teachers are planning based on the individual needs and developmental levels of children. This regularly includes adjusting small group activities to scaffold various learning levels and rotating materials within and among classrooms to enhance the learning environment. Teachers also work together to share ideas as needed and will borrow materials from older age groups to support the growing needs of children in their classroom.

### **How and when are transitions communicated to families?**

Teachers and families are given a transition plan with details about a transition schedule, which includes explanations of how both teachers and parents can support the child during this time. Parents are encouraged to stop in the child's new classroom, meet the teaching staff, and begin building the parent-teacher relationship prior to the transition start date. The length of transitions varies in each age group, and transition plans can be individualized to meet children's needs.

### **How are children's classrooms decided?**

Before transitions take place, teachers meet with the director to discuss reasons for best placement for each child. The following factors are then considered by the director: teacher recommendations, healthy relationships among peers, personalities, and learning styles.

### **If my child isn't walking, can they still transition into the toddler classroom?**

Yes, many children join the toddler classroom before they are walking. We often see a leap in physical development once a child is in a room where other children are already walking.

### **If my child isn't toilet trained before they are three years old, can my child still transition to Preschool 3?**

Yes, we support all developing needs of children and often see that children are still mastering this skill at this age, especially at the start of a new school year. However, it is important to note that our Preschool 3 classrooms are not equipped with changing tables so we are not able to perform routine diaper changes. For this reason, it is helpful if teachers and families work together to ensure consistent toileting skills are being practiced at home and at school.

### **More information about kindergarten:**

Annually, we host a School Readiness Seminar for Preschool 3 and Preschool 4 families. This seminar is a wonderful opportunity to ask questions and listen to a panel of experts explain how to prepare for kindergarten. We will also provide families with a Kindergarten Readiness packet which includes information such as when a child can enroll in kindergarten, how to register for kindergarten, what will happen in kindergarten, and ways to support this transition. For additional information about kindergarten please visit the [MDE Transition to Kindergarten Parent Guides](#).