

## Starting School with CF

Starting school can be an exciting and daunting time for parents, particularly when your child has CF.

Partnering with your school, especially in the early stages can help ensure your child's education and school experience is not limited by CF.

### Choosing a School for Your Child

Choosing a school is a personal decision with many factors to consider for each family. Some questions to ask may be:

- Are there any other children with CF enrolled at the school? This does not mean you cannot enrol, but it is important to consider [cross-infection](#) risks.
- Are the admin staff and teachers willing to learn about CF?
- How does the school manage hand hygiene and [infection control](#)?

### Educating the School

Develop a good relationship with a key contact person at the school that you can liaise with about your child's needs, such as the deputy, school nurse or principal.

The CFWA Education Coordinator can help educate your school about CF and the individual needs of your child. They can recommend free [eLearning modules](#) from the CFsmart program for teachers and educators and help facilitate an individual [CF Action Plan](#) detailing the



needs of your child on a day to day basis at school. They are also available to provide tailored education to the school to help resolve any issues that may come up.

Try to make contact with the school before your child starts so they have time to complete the recommended eLearning modules and prepare for your child. This is particularly important if your child is starting school for the first time or if they are starting at a new school.

Communicate regularly with the school. Be clear about your child's needs and be realistic about what the teacher can do.

### Disclosure

There is no right or wrong approach to disclosure – each family should disclose CF in a way that suits them.

How many people do you want to know about your child having CF? It is good to think about this before your child starts school.

You may choose to let the wider school community know and might ask to say a few words at the parent information evening at the start of the year. Or you could ask the classroom teacher to send a note home to other parents explaining CF and how they can help your child stay healthy.

## Getting Ready for School

Talk to your child about the daily school routine and practice what they will be doing on a school day e.g. getting up, doing physio, getting dressed, packing school bag. [My ABCF book](#) is a good resource to help your child learn more about CF.

### Other ways you can help prepare your child are to:

- Practice having recess or lunch at home with their lunch packed in a lunch box as you would for school.
- Talk about how their enzymes will be packed in their lunch box.
- Teach your child about CF, hand hygiene and infection prevention at school.
- Take your child to visit the school to see where the classroom, play and lunch areas are.
- Practice learning to swallow tablets. It is not a necessity, but it might make life easier if your child can do this by the time they go to school. We have a [pill swallowing factsheet](#) for more information, and our nurse can also assist with pill swallowing.

## More Information

For more information about how we can support your child at school please contact our Education Coordinator at [education@cfwa.org.au](mailto:education@cfwa.org.au).

## Useful Resources

- [CFSmart](#)
- [I Am Starting School This Year- Interactive Child Booklet \(CFSmart\)](#)
- [CFWA Factsheets](#)

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[www.cfwa.org.au](http://www.cfwa.org.au)

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