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French “Passerelles” (transitional preschool) Classes: Outcomes of a specific program for Early Childhood Education

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This study examines sample classrooms in order to evaluate the cognitive and social dimensions of the transition of students from preschool to primary school, with a special focus on "passerelle" classes, which are a special type of transitional preschool program that exist in France. A main interest of the study is children's transition from home and community life to "class life" (developmental success in a formal education setting). Grounded in evidence-based practices, the present empirical and in-depth approach takes place at École Maternelle (ÉM) Perrault in Pézenas (Hérault). As of January 2021, the study was composed of 102 pupils divided into four multi-level classes (from 25 to 73 months), and the "passerelle" class itself (from 21 to 42 months). The "passerelle" program in this town has existed since 2000, to welcome children to school alongside their parents, with the aim of working collaboratively with the other social stakeholders involved in early childhood development.