



Redland Bay wins Wakakiri 5



Art and Literacy in ESL program 8



AGQTP 2006 10



Practical science at Merrimac 16



Prepped and ready at Stretton

PREP teachers Karen Jeffrey, left, and Fiona Melville prepare to open the doors to two classes of eager young prep children at Stretton State College on Brisbane's southside.

The new college is one of 122 schools throughout Queensland offering Prep as part of the phase-in. The school has four new purpose-built Prep classrooms as well as a dedicated outdoor play area.

Demand for Prep has been strong and the school should have few problems filling all four classrooms when Prep is introduced fully next year.

2006 will prove to be a big year for primary schools throughout Queensland as they prepare for the statewide introduction of Prep in 2007.

Turn to the regular Education and Training Reforms for the Future page (page 13) for the full story.

New year heralds major reform

QUEENSLAND'S new learning or earning laws came into effect on January 1 2006 ushering in some of the most significant changes to senior schooling in Queensland in recent history.

Under the new laws, it is compulsory for young people to stay at school until they turn 16 or finish Year 10, whichever comes first.

After that, unless they are working a minimum of 25 hours per week, young people must stay in education or training for a further two years, or until they gain a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE), or Certificate III vocational qualification, or turn 17. This is called the compulsory participation phase.

Previously, young people could leave school when they turned 15 without any requirement to undertake further education or training.

Education Minister Rod Welford said the new laws would ensure young people were given the breadth and depth of study, training and work experience to succeed in their career and achieve their goals.

"It is widely recognised that a young person's employment opportunities are closely linked to education and training achievement.

"These changes are helping young people secure their future," he said.

"It's a new approach that gives every student a better opportunity to make the most of their talents and abilities.

"We want to help keep young people learning, or to help them return to learning, so they can gain the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in life."

Deputy Director-General, Education Queensland, Jenny Cranston said that state schools strived to provide a relevant and engaging curriculum to meet the diverse needs of students in the senior phase of learning.

"Teachers work closely with Year 10 students to develop their Senior Education and Training Plans; plans that map out where they want to go and the many ways they can get there," Ms Cranston said.

Department of Education and the Arts' Strategic Implementation Branch director Steve Armitage said the greater focus on choice and flexibility in the senior phase of learning was especially important for young people who are at risk of leaving school prematurely or those whose interests lie beyond the traditional offerings of senior.

"It's been well documented that completing 12 years of schooling, or its equivalent, opens up greater possibilities for young people to access further education and gain employment.

"Through these reforms we are redefining the senior phase of learning to give every young person the chance to complete 12 years of schooling and achieve a QCE or Certificate III vocational qualification.

"The changes are also redefining Year 10 as a transition year to the senior phase of learning so that young people can plan a course of study that will help them achieve their goals.

"Students starting Year 10 this year will be the first to fully benefit from these changes. They will be the first to be registered with the Queensland Studies Authority and have individual student accounts opened.

"They will also be the first group of students eligible for the new QCE when it replaces the current Senior Certificate in 2008," he said.

• Continued page 3.

Education Office Gazette page 16