

PREPARING FOR SCHOOL



A Preparatory Year for Queensland

Every parent wants their child to be happy and successful — at school, in work and in life. We know that children who get a good start in school have more success throughout their learning and their lives. We also know that early problems that are not addressed can be compounded over time.

The Queensland Government has a vision for an education and training system that helps all young people achieve the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to succeed in the 21st century. This vision is detailed in *Education and Training Reforms for the Future: A White Paper*, a Smart State initiative.

The vision starts with better preparation of children even before they begin Year 1.

That is why the Queensland Government is introducing a full-time preparatory year of education before Year 1 from 2007, and raising the compulsory school starting age for Year 1 in 2008.

Anna Bligh MP
Minister for Education and
Minister for the Arts

What will happen in 2007?

From 2007, all Queensland children will have access to a full-time preparatory year of education before starting Year 1.

The non-compulsory, preparatory year will be offered in all state primary schools. It will replace the part-time state preschool system that is not available in all schools. There will be no waiting list for the preparatory year because it will be available to all children attending state primary schools.

It is anticipated that the preparatory year will also be offered in all non-state primary schools. Parents intending to enrol their child in a non-state school should make enquiries directly to the school.

The Government has provided \$395 million for refurbishing existing classrooms and building new classrooms, where needed, in state and non-state schools so all Queensland schools are ready for the new preparatory year.

Kindergartens and other childcare providers will continue to offer programs for children prior to the preparatory year. The Government provides funding to the Crèche and Kindergarten Association and this support will continue.

We will work with this sector to ensure their services complement the new preparatory year.

What will happen in 2008?

The compulsory school starting age will increase by six months. Children must be six by 30 June in the year they enrol in Year 1. Now, they can start Year 1 if they turn six any time during that year.

This means that Queensland children will be starting school at about the same age as children in other states.

With these changes, when will children start the preparatory year and Year 1?

Children born on or after 1 January 2002 will be eligible for the new preparatory year of schooling before enrolling in Year 1. They will need to be five by 30 June in the year they start prep.

Children born between 1 January and 31 December 2001, including those who complete preschool in 2006 will enrol in Year 1 in 2007.

The following chart will show when children will start the preparatory year and Year 1.

Birthdate:	Eligible for prep year in:	Eligible for Year 1 in:
Child born 1 Jan 2002 to 30 June 2002	2007	2008
Child born 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003	2008	2009
Child born 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004	2009	2010
Child born 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005	2010	2011

What is happening now?

Since the start of 2003, more than 1200 children from 66 state and non-state schools have taken part in a trial of the prep year using the play-based curriculum. The trial is helping to determine the best way to implement the preparatory year in Queensland schools.

What will happen until the preparatory year begins in 2007?

Preschool will continue until the end of 2006. During this time the current age requirement for preschool will stay the same — that is, children must be five by 31 December in the year they start preschool.

In 2005 and 2006, a further 40 state schools and up to 10 non-state schools, will introduce a preparatory year, bringing the total number of schools with a preparatory year to 116 by 2006.

So all Queensland children can benefit from the new preparatory year, extra teachers will be employed and all preparatory year teachers will be trained in the new curriculum.

Find out more

Contact the ETRF hotline on 1300 650 220 or email etrimplementation@qed.qld.gov.au

or visit the website:

<http://education.qld.gov.au/etrp/prep.html>.

Subscribe to Education Queensland's email updates at:

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