

See the Future

Education and Training
Reforms for the Future

PREPARING FOR SCHOOL



Preparatory Year Update July 2004

Welcome

Welcome to the July update on the Preparatory Year, a component of *Queensland the Smart State Education and Training Reforms for the Future: A White Paper* released in November 2002.

These updates will provide information on the preparatory year trial and progress towards full implementation in 2007.

Changes to early education in Queensland

The Queensland Government has announced that it will:

- Implement a non-compulsory, full-time preparatory year before Year 1 in 2007; and
- Raise the school starting age for Year 1 in 2008.

This means that:

- All children born on or after January 2002 will be eligible for the new non-compulsory preparatory year before enrolling in Year 1.
- Children must turn five by 30 June in the year they begin their preparatory year.
- The current part time, state preschool program will not be provided in state schools from 2007.

In 2004, 52 state and 14 non-state schools across Queensland are trialling a full time preparatory class prior to year 1. In each of 2005 and 2006 a further 20 state and 5 non-state schools will provide prep resulting in 116 schools

with a preparatory year by 2006.

More information on these changes can be found at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/etrf/pdf/prepinfosheet1v2.pdf>

Trial school support

During Term 3 Phase Two schools will receive visits from Education Officers (Prep Support) to provide prep teachers and principals with professional support with curriculum and other prep implementation issues. Phase One teachers and teacher aides will participate in a teleconference to discuss strategies for effectively completing portfolios and *Early Learning Records*.

External Evaluation of 2003 *Preparing for School* trial

The final evaluation report of the 2003 *Preparing for School* trial has been received from the Queensland Early Childhood Consortium.

The findings are very supportive of the preparatory year as implemented in the 2003 trial and lend support to the Government's decision to implement the preparatory year state-wide in 2007.

The evaluators conclude that the preparatory year was highly successful in promoting children's social-emotional development and their communication, numeracy, literacy and motor skills.

Findings of the report will inform future planning in the lead up to in 2007.

A full copy of the Ministerial Media Statement can be found at: <http://statements.cabinet.qld.gov.au/cgi-bin/display-statement.pl?id=2240&db=media>

Early Years Curriculum Guidelines

The Early Years Curriculum team from the Queensland Studies Authority is continuing to visit trial schools to observe the ways in which teachers are using the curriculum materials and to discuss perspectives with teachers, administrators, parents and children.

During Term 3, the team will be sending a detailed survey to all trial schools to gather feedback and suggestions to inform the refinement of the draft *Early Years Curriculum Guidelines*. This information will ensure that the Guidelines are reader-friendly and useful for curriculum decision-making.

Selection process for schools in 2005/06

The selection process is currently underway for schools nominated to conduct a preparatory year of schooling in 2005/06.

Recommendations from the state and non-state school sectors will be forwarded to the Minister for approval and will be announced at the end

of August. An update will be provided on this website.

Preparatory Year website updated

The Preparatory Year website has now been updated. On this site is a pamphlet announcing

the introduction of the preparatory year and change to the school starting age, answers to frequently asked questions for parents and information on the *Early Years Curriculum Guidelines*. This information can be

downloaded and circulated through school newsletters, P&C meetings, staff meetings and other information sessions.

For more information

- Email etrimplementation@qed.qld.gov.au
- Phone 1300 650 220
- Visit the website at:
<http://www.education.qld.gov.au/etr>
(click on the Preparing for School link) or
- Subscribe to Education Queensland's email updates at:
<http://education.qld.gov.au/community/service/news/>