



Preparatory Year Implementation Update September 2004

Welcome

Welcome to the September 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 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.

Ninety-six schools will be offering a prep class in 2005. In 2006, 20 more state and up to five non-state schools will offer a preparatory year.

Evaluation of the 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 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.

The Executive Summary of the Report is available at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/etr/pdf/qutreportqldpreptrial.pdf>

Minister's Early Education Reference Group

At the reference group meeting on 16 September members received a presentation on the findings of the external evaluation report.

Members also discussed issues for small schools and distance education settings as well as culturally and linguistically diverse students.

A list of representatives can be found at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/etr/ecrefgrp.html>

Meetings of the reference group are held quarterly.

Contact with members of the reference group should be made through their organisation.

Early Years Curriculum Guidelines

The Early Years Curriculum team from the Queensland Studies Authority continues to visit trial schools to discuss their use of the curriculum and assessment tools. Valuable information has been collected to inform further development of the Early Years Curriculum Guidelines.

A detailed survey has been sent 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.

The curriculum team has developed a draft plan for professional development to support implementation of the *Early Years Curriculum Guidelines* when the Preparatory Year becomes universally available in 2007. It is anticipated that the planning and development of materials will be a collaborative activity involving all schooling systems.

Look out for the next edition of Education Views for an article on the progress of the preparatory class at Watson Road State School.

This article is based on a case study prepared by Queensland Studies Authority and is available on the QSA website at:
<http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/early/eycp/support.html>

Selection of new preparatory schools in 2005

On 1 September, Premier Beattie announced 30 more state and non-state schools to offer a preparatory class in 2005.

Each of these schools will offer one class of prep with Tullawong State School, Proserpine State School and Our Lady of Lourdes offering 2 classes of prep.

New state schools include six small rural or one-teacher schools around Gladstone, schools with a high number of indigenous students, and schools that have Special Education Units to provide prep to students with disabilities.

A list of new schools is located at the end of this update. A full list of schools can be found on the ETRF website at:
<http://education.qld.gov.au/etrf/ecsite04.html>

Communicating to school communities

Schools are encouraged to provide information about the preparatory year and year 1 through their existing communication channels to ensure their school communities are kept up to date.

Information about prep could be provided to school communities by:

- Including key groups on school communication
- distribution lists where appropriate
- Updating school brochures and newsletters with information about the preparatory year
- Including information about prep at parent information sessions.

Parents value the information they receive from schools and keeping parents informed of these important changes to their children's education is most appreciated.

It is also suggested that schools make contact with local kindergartens and childcare providers to ensure they are also aware of forthcoming changes where appropriate.

To assist the ETRF website <http://education.qld.gov.au/etrf/prep.html> contains resources that can be accessed and downloaded for this purpose, including:

Pamphlet:
<http://education.qld.gov.au/etrf/pdf/prepinfosheet1v2.pdf>
Frequently Asked Questions:
<http://education.qld.gov.au/etrf/faq-prep.html>

Curriculum:
<http://education.qld.gov.au/etrf/eccurric.html>

Capital works for prep in State Schools

A dedicated project team has been established with representation from Department of Public Works, Treasury and Education Queensland to oversee the continuing capital works program.

Two streams of teams are conducting visits to schools before the end of 2004 to ascertain facilities requirements.

The program of visits commenced on 23 August. Executive Directors (Schools), Corporate Services Unit Managers, Account Managers and Principals are informed of this visit approximately a fortnight in advance.

The teams attended training in relation to the capital works activities for the preparatory year.

For more information

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

Preparatory Year Phase-In Schools 2005

State Schools	Education Queensland School District
Tullawong SS	Murrumba
Proserpine SS	Mackay Hinterland and North District
Kelvin Grove State College	Stafford
Richlands East SS	Corinda
Mt Warren Park SS	Gold Coast North
Thornlands SS	Bayside
Regents Park SS	Coopers Plains
Mount Murchison SS (Callide Valley Cluster)	Gladstone
Prospect Creek SS (Callide Valley Cluster)	Gladstone
Goovigen SS (Callide Valley Cluster)	Gladstone
Jambin SS (Callide Valley Cluster)	Gladstone
Wowan SS (Callide Valley Cluster)	Gladstone
Thangool SS (Callide Valley Cluster)	Gladstone
Atherton SS	Tablelands-Johnstone
Woorabinda SS	Emerald
Kimberley Park SS	Logan Beaudesert
Golden Beach SS	Mooloolaba
Gayndah SS	Isis-Burnett
St George SS	Roma
Mudgeeraba Creek SS	Gold Coast South
Bundaberg South SS	Bundaberg
Highfields SS	Darling Downs
Helensvale SS	Gold Coast North
Coorparoo SS	Mount Gravatt
Forest Ridge SS	Murrumba
Independent Schools	Education Queensland School District
St Rita's Catholic School, Babinda (Catholic)	Cairns and Cape
Our Lady of Lourdes School, Ingham (Catholic)	Townville
Assissi Catholic College, Coomera (Catholic)	Gold Coast North
Bundaberg Christian College (Independent)	Bundaberg
The Rockhampton Grammar School (Independent)	Rockhampton