



Preparatory Year Update April 2004

Welcome

Welcome to the April update on the Preparatory Year a component *Queensland the Smart State Education and Training Reforms for the Future: A White Paper* released in November 2003. 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 trialing a full time, preparatory class prior to year 1. The trial will inform statewide implementation of a preparatory year in 2007.

Anne Marie Boyle
Principal Adviser
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Selection of preparatory year schools for 2005 and 2006

The process for selecting the schools for 2005 and 2006 is being finalised. Districts and schools will be informed and an update posted on the Education Queensland website.

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Principal Policy Officer
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Professional development for teachers and teacher aides

Professional development for teachers and teacher aides in phase 2 of the trial will be held on 21 May 2004. The purpose of the day is to build on the professional development offered to Phase 2 schools last year, develop networks and share strategies and resources.

Jenny Blake
Senior Policy Officer
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Review of Facilities

An independent audit has commenced, with visits to both state and non-state schools to examine the capital works solution identified for each school and to provide advice on this solution to enable final costings to be completed.

Anne Marie Boyle
Principal Adviser
Ph: (07) 3237 0765

Policy review and development

An initial scan of existing policies that relate to preschool management and operation has begun. This review of current *Department of Education Manual* (DOEM) policies will be the catalyst for drafting new policies to support the implementation of the preparatory year in state schools.

A broad statement will be developed in the coming months to inform consultations with state schools, stakeholders and Central office staff about the policy.

Mark Cooper
Principal Education Officer
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Minister's Early Education Reference Group

The Early Education Reference Group provides strategic advice to the Minister on the preparatory year and promotes interagency collaboration and networking to improve children's

educational outcomes before Year 1 and across the early schooling years.

At the first meeting of the reference group for 2004, members focused on the identification of issues in relation to Indigenous learners, children with special needs, the coordination of services for children birth - 8 years, linguistic diversity and the promotion of curriculum continuity across the early years.

A list of representatives on the reference group can be found at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/etr/ecrefgrp.html#ecrefgrp> Meetings are held quarterly. Contact with members of the reference group should be made through their organisations.

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Principal Policy Officer
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State Education Week 2004

On Sunday, 16 May State Education Week will be officially launched at the Suncorp Piazza, South Bank Parklands from 10am to 3pm.

The preparatory year expo booth will be both interactive and informative to highlight the achievements of schools in the preparatory year trial. Members from the preparatory year team and teachers from trial schools will be in attendance. Hope to see you all there!

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Visit the website at:
<http://www.education.qld.gov.au/etr> (click on the *Getting Ready for School* link)