

# Department of Education

## Guide to State Schools

### How state schools work

State school education in Queensland starts with the Preparatory year – or Prep – and finishes in Year 12. Prep to Year 6 is called primary school. Year 7 to Year 12 is called secondary school.

The school year runs from around late January to mid-December each year. The school year is divided into four Terms, with holidays in between each Term.

Kindergarten (kindy) is a part-time educational program for children in the year before Prep. Kindy is a place where children can explore new environments and have fun learning with friends. Kindy helps children develop a love of learning and they are better prepared to start school. To find out more about kindy, visit [www.earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/early-years/kindergarten](http://www.earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/early-years/kindergarten).

Children in selected Queensland communities can attend a State Delivered Kindergarten (SDK) program at their local state school. To find out which schools offer SDK, visit [www.earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/early-years/kindergarten/state-delivered-kindergarten](http://www.earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/early-years/kindergarten/state-delivered-kindergarten).

For further information about the stages of schooling, visit [www.education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/stages-of-schooling](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/stages-of-schooling).

### Choosing a state school

All children are welcome at Queensland state schools. Children and young people can enrol at their local state school. Parents can also choose to enrol their child at a special school if they meet eligibility requirements.

Schools have their own websites and this is the best way to find out more about the school. You are also welcome to talk with the school to get the information you need.

Before you choose a school, visit this link for helpful information: [www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/enrolment/choosing-a-school](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/enrolment/choosing-a-school)

Once you have decided on the right school for your child, your child will need to be enrolled in that school. For information on enrolment, you can visit [www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/enrolment](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/enrolment).

When you enrol your child in a state school, you share information about yourself and your child. State schools protect this information and your right to privacy in line with government requirements.



## Curriculum

State school students from Prep to Year 10 learn the Australian Curriculum. In Years 11 and 12, students can study a wide range of senior subjects and courses that may support them in receiving a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) or Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA).

More information is available at [www.education.qld.gov.au/curriculum](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/curriculum).

To read more information on the Australian Curriculum, please visit [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au). To read more information on the QCE and QCIA, please visit [www.qcaa.qld.edu.au](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au).

## Protecting students and children from harm

In Queensland state schools, the safety and wellbeing of students is the highest priority.

The Student protection procedure requires all state school staff and visitors to respond to suspected harm to a student or child, and provides clear instructions on how to do this.

Schools can also assist families to access support services that can help with family and parenting challenges.

More information is available at [www.ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/student-protection-procedure](http://www.ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/student-protection-procedure).

## Student wellbeing and mental health support

Schools play an important role in supporting students' wellbeing and mental health. The department provides a range of staff to support students, including guidance officers, school-based youth health nurses, youth support coordinators and other wellbeing support staff.

The department (through the Student Wellbeing Package) is employing additional wellbeing professionals to strengthen the wellbeing and mental health support available to students in all Queensland state schools. This three-year Government commitment is to expand the mental health and wellbeing support available to students.

## Students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

For students and families from migrant and refugee backgrounds, settlement support agencies are available to help with settlement. Your school can help you contact these agencies.

All students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families are welcome at Queensland state schools. Supports are provided to students who may need help with English. To be a part of the school and broader community. For more information, please visit

[www.education.qld.gov.au/students/inclusive-education/cultural-and-linguistic-diversity](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/students/inclusive-education/cultural-and-linguistic-diversity).

Families may need the support of an interpreter and translator services. Your school can arrange for a qualified interpreter, at no cost to you. For more information about interpreter and translator services, please visit [www.forgov.qld.gov.au/service-delivery-and-community-support/design-and-deliver-public-services/interpreter-and-translator-services](http://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/service-delivery-and-community-support/design-and-deliver-public-services/interpreter-and-translator-services).



## English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D)

English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) means the student speaks another language other than English and needs help with learning the English language. EAL/D students can include Aboriginal students, Torres Strait Islander students or students where Auslan is used at home.

Talk to your school principal about your child's English language learning needs. More information is available at

[www.education.qld.gov.au/students/inclusive-education/english-language-support](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/students/inclusive-education/english-language-support).

## Gifted and talented education

Every school caters to gifted and talented students with special teaching and learning programs. More information is available here

[www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/school-information/life-at-school/gifted-and-talented-education](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/school-information/life-at-school/gifted-and-talented-education).

## Students with disability

All Queensland state schools make reasonable adjustments to help students with disability to access and participate in education on the same basis as their peers. These adjustments can help students to attend school safely, learn and achieve their full potential.

Schools are also able to access a advice from a range of staff including speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, advisory visiting teachers for hearing, vision or physical impairments, reading and writing coaches, Auslan support, and advisors in autism and mental health. Parents are also able to contact the Autism Hub for information and advice about supporting their children through schooling.

Contact your school principal if you have any questions about how your school can support your child.

More information about the supports available for students with disability can be found at

[www.education.qld.gov.au/students/students-with-disability](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/students/students-with-disability).

## Students with health conditions

If your child has a health condition that requires managing during school hours, talk to the school about meeting your child's health needs, including accessing the [State Schools Nursing Service](#) to assist in developing plans and training school staff to safely assist your child with their health support needs.

More information is available at [www.education.qld.gov.au/students/student-health-safety-wellbeing](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/students/student-health-safety-wellbeing).

## Supporting LGBTIQ+ students

State schools are committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) students. State schools respond to the individual needs of all students to ensure their wellbeing is nurtured and their learning maximised.

A suite of resources is available to help schools, parents, carers and students create and maintain safe, supportive and inclusive environments for LGBTIQ+ students. Department of Education staff can also access support from dedicated staff. More information is available at

[www.education.qld.gov.au/students/student-health-safety-wellbeing/students-with-diverse-needs#LGBTIQ+](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/students/student-health-safety-wellbeing/students-with-diverse-needs#LGBTIQ+).

## Student behaviour

Working together with students, parents and the broader community, our staff strive to ensure every state school is an inclusive, nurturing and disciplined environment where all students can learn, achieve and reach their full potential.

Everyone benefits when schools and parents work together to support students to learn what behaviours are expected of them.

Talk with your child's school and let them know if you have any concerns about your child's behaviour at home or at school. The school will work with you to support your child's learning and behaviour needs.

For more information on school behaviour, please visit

<https://behaviour.education.qld.gov.au/>

or contact your school principal.

## Queensland Health services offered in state schools

Queensland Health offers free health services to state school students, including eye checks for Prep students, dental (oral health) and immunisation programs. Your school will be able to tell you which health programs are available and when they will be at your school. Please visit [www.education.qld.gov.au/students/student-health-safety-wellbeing/student-health/qld-health-in-state-schools](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/students/student-health-safety-wellbeing/student-health/qld-health-in-state-schools).

## Religious instruction

Religious Instruction (RI) may be offered for up to one hour each week during school hours. RI is optional and may be available to students from Years 1 to 12. A child will participate in RI based on written approval from their parent or carer to the school.

Those students who don't take part in RI receive other supervised instruction in a separate area to where RI takes place.

More information about RI can be found on your school's website and on the link below.

[www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/school-information/school-operations/policy-statement](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/school-information/school-operations/policy-statement).

## School Sport

Queensland state schools encourage participation, enjoyment and skill development by creating sports programs that meet the needs of all students.

Health and Physical Education is provided in Prep to Year 10 as part of the Australian Curriculum. Students also have the opportunity to participate in interschool and representative school sports competitions at district, regional, state and national level.

More information is available at [www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/activities-sports/school-sports](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/activities-sports/school-sports).

## Guidance officers

Guidance officers are teachers with specialised training to help students do their best and support their growth. All Queensland state schools receive an allocation for guidance officer time to contribute to the development of a comprehensive student support and wellbeing program that responds to the needs of the school community. Support provided to students by guidance officers includes advice and counselling on educational, vocational, personal, social, family, and mental health and wellbeing issues.

## Chaplaincy and student welfare worker services

Chaplaincy and student welfare worker services are available at many schools and provide students and the school community with social and emotional support.

For more information regarding chaplaincy and student welfare worker services, please visit

[www.education.qld.gov.au/students/student-health-safety-wellbeing/student-support-services/chaplaincy-student-wellbeing-officer-services](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/students/student-health-safety-wellbeing/student-support-services/chaplaincy-student-wellbeing-officer-services)

## Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students

We work closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities to help young people with their education, training and employment.

For more information on how we can help improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students visit

[www.education.qld.gov.au/students/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-education](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/students/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-education).

## Community education counsellors

Community education counsellors work closely with guidance officers and their local communities to provide specific support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In cases where the school does not have a community education counsellor on staff, district community education counsellors are available to work with students.

Parents and carers are welcome to contact their school or local regional office for more information.

## Youth Support Coordinator Initiative

The Youth Support Coordinator Initiative (YSCI) supports students in Years 10 to 12 who may be struggling with their education or are at risk of disengaging.

The YSCI allows selected schools to employ a Youth Support Coordinator to provide individual support, group programs and make referrals to external providers to meet the needs of students.

## School Based Youth Health Nurse service

The School Based Youth Health Nurse (SBYHN) service is funded by Queensland Health to operate in state secondary schools across Queensland. SBYHNs maintain a preventative health focus rather than a treatment focus, and work in partnership with schools to promote students' health and wellbeing. More information is available at

[www.health.qld.gov.au/cq/services/school-based-youth-health-nurse](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/cq/services/school-based-youth-health-nurse).

## School Based Policing Program

The Queensland Police Service and the Department of Education work together on the School-based Policing Program. It helps to build positive relationships between police and the school community. More information is available at

[www.education.qld.gov.au/students/student-health-safety-wellbeing/student-support-services/school-based-police-officers](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/students/student-health-safety-wellbeing/student-support-services/school-based-police-officers).

## Parent and carer engagement

Parents and carers can play an active role in the education of their children. Queensland state schools value the partnership of parents and carers to help students in their school life.

There are many resources available to parents and carers to support their child's learning. These resources cover different ages and stages of development. Find some ideas by visiting [www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/community-engagement/parents](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/community-engagement/parents).

## Reporting to parents and carers

Schools provide written information on students' overall progress, achievement, effort and behaviour. Schools also have opportunities throughout the year for parents to meet with teachers.

However, at any time, parents are able to contact their child's teacher to arrange a time to discuss their learning and wellbeing.

## Parent and Community Code of Conduct

The Parent and Community Code of Conduct sets out [10 expectations](#) of parents, carers and visitors while they are on state school grounds, at school activities and interacting with others in the school community.

The code is designed to build respect and complements the Student Code of Conduct and the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service, which applies to all school staff. More information about the codes is available at [www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/community-engagement/parent-and-community-code-of-conduct](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/community-engagement/parent-and-community-code-of-conduct).

## School councils

Some schools have a school council which has a set role in guiding the future direction of the school. Parents and carers are represented on every school council and are elected for a two-year term.

## Parents and Citizens' Associations

Most state schools offer opportunities for parents and carers to join a Parents and Citizens' (P&C) Association. These associations are involved in a variety of school activities – including tuckshops, outside school hours care, fundraising and social events – to support the best possible outcomes for all students. The P&C is a positive way for parents and carers to get involved in their child's school.

## Financial help

While state schooling is free for children of Australian citizens and permanent residents, at most schools, you will need to pay for your own stationery (pens, notebooks, etc.), school uniforms, laptops and other electronic devices. Your school will tell you what your child will need. Some activities, such as camps and excursions, are also paid for by families.

If you have problems paying for anything, contact your school principal. They will explain available options to you.

The department provides financial assistance to families of students who need help. Support can be provided for different costs, such as textbooks and resources, school transport and living away from home. The Commonwealth Government of Australia can also help families through Centrelink.

You can find out more information about the department's allowance schemes by visiting the sites linked at the end of this document, or by contacting your school principal or the School Financial Resourcing Unit on 07 3034 5817.

## How to get started

- Check the Department of Education ed/Map to help you locate a state school in your suburb: [www.qgso.qld.gov.au/maps/edmap](http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/maps/edmap)
- [Visit the](#) Department of Education's Schools Directory to find out more about schools in your area: [www.schoolsdirectory.eq.edu.au](http://www.schoolsdirectory.eq.edu.au)
- Contact the school and arrange a time to visit.
- When you've chosen a school for your child, the school will help you through the enrolment process.
- If you need an interpreter, let the school know and they can arrange a service for you at no extra cost.

For more information about the full range of Department of Education services available, please visit

[www.education.qld.gov.au](http://www.education.qld.gov.au).



## Helpful links

Textbook and resource allowance:

[www.education.qld.gov.au/about-us/budgets-funding-grants/grants/parents-and-students/textbook-resource-allowance](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/about-us/budgets-funding-grants/grants/parents-and-students/textbook-resource-allowance)

Student Resource Scheme:

[www.ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/attachment/student-resource-scheme-srs-procedure.pdf](http://www.ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/attachment/student-resource-scheme-srs-procedure.pdf)

School transport assistance:

[www.qld.gov.au/transport/public/school/school-transport-assistance/apply-for-school-transport-assistance](http://www.qld.gov.au/transport/public/school/school-transport-assistance/apply-for-school-transport-assistance)

Students with disability transport assistance:

[www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/school-information/transport/disability-transport-assistance](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/school-information/transport/disability-transport-assistance)

or contact your local state school's regional office:

[www.education.qld.gov.au/contact-us/state-schools-regional-contacts](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/contact-us/state-schools-regional-contacts).

Commonwealth Government assistance:

[www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/centrelink](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/centrelink)

Information on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS):

[www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au)