



Guideline/Procedure

Guideline/Procedure no:	
Approval date:	2016 (ELT 12/2016)
Previous review dates:	2008 (Early enrolment of students), 2014, 2015 (Prep changes)
Next review date:	2021
Author:	MGE (source documentation from Department of Education, Training and Employment)

Variation to school age entry enrolment

Purpose

This procedure outlines practices for the enrolment of children in the Prep and Year 1 levels of primary school, consistent with the requirements of Queensland legislation.

Application

This procedure will be applied in all primary schools and P-12s in the Diocese of Cairns.

Guideline or Procedure

From 2017 the Prep year is the first year of compulsory schooling. Unless certain circumstances apply, schools will not enrol a child in Year 1 until that child has completed the Prep year.

To be eligible for admission to Prep, children are required to be five years of age by June 30 in the year they commence Prep. Principals have the discretion to extend this by one month in certain circumstances (see below). From 2017 the Prep year is a compulsory year of schooling. Enrolment in, and full-time attendance at, Prep fulfills the legal obligation of enrolment where a student is of compulsory school age.

To be eligible for admission to enter Year 1 children are required to be six years of age by the 30th June in the year they commence Year 1, and have completed the Prep year. To be eligible for admission to the Prep year children are required to be five years of age by the 30 June in the year they commence Prep.

Variations involving the early or delayed entry into either Prep or Year 1 can have lasting consequences for a child's future academic, social, emotional and psychological well-being and thus require careful consideration. Early entry, if approved, should occur at natural entry points such as the start of the school year.

Note that children repeating the Prep year are not eligible for Commonwealth recurrent funding but are eligible for state recurrent funding.

Schools will encounter six separate situations:

Variations to school entry	Who for	Decision-maker	Criteria
Early entry into Prep	Child younger than the age of five by 30 June in the year they propose to enter Prep.	Executive Director (ED)	The Director School Development (DSD) Primary, in forwarding a recommendation to the ED, must be satisfied the child:

	NOTE the criteria in Column 4 – these are a legislative requirement – there are no exceptions (except the variation in the row below).		had started education in another State or country that is equivalent to Prep and ; is ready for education in Prep, having regard to the child's attributes (aptitude and ability, social and emotional competence, physical development, level of knowledge and understanding).
Variation of Prep entry age (one month)	Child turns five years between 1 and 31 July in the year they propose to enter Prep.	Principal	The Principal may enrol a child in these circumstances if the child meets the age requirements and the Principal is satisfied the child is ready for school having regard for the child's attributes (aptitude and ability, social and emotional competence, physical development, level of knowledge and understanding).
Early entry to Year 1	Child younger than the age of six by 30 June in the year they propose to enter Year 1. (Note this would be highly unlikely unless the child had completed Prep or satisfied the conditions outlined in the next row).	Executive Director	The DSD Primary, in forwarding a recommendation to the ED, must be satisfied the child meets the required criteria to be enrolled, having regard for the child's attributes, which include the child's aptitude and ability, social and emotional competence, physical development and level of knowledge and understanding.
Entry to Year 1 without completing Prep	Certain circumstances where a child has not completed the Prep year.	Principal	The Principal may enrol a child if the child has undergone education equivalent to a Prep year in another State or country, or was registered or provisionally registered for home education, or who is otherwise ready for Year 1 having regard for the child's attributes (aptitude and ability, social and emotional competence, physical development. Level of knowledge and understanding).
Repeating the Prep year	Students for whom it is considered educational and developmental benefits would be gained from participation in a second year of Preparatory education.	Principal (but having regard for the views of parents)	The Principal makes a decision based on the consideration of evidence of the child's attributes (aptitude and ability, social and emotional competence, physical development). There will be documented consultation with parents, the child's teacher/s and specialist staff.
Delayed entry to Prep (enrolment complies with compulsory schooling requirements)	Child who turns, or is already of, compulsory school age (six years six months) in Prep where: parents seek enrolment in Prep and the parents consider that this is in the best interests of the child having regard for the child's aptitude and ability, social and emotional competence and physical development prior to Year 1.	Parents	Parents are encouraged to discuss this with the Principal and have a shared consideration of evidence of the child's attributes (aptitude and ability, social and emotional competence, physical development).

In all cases consideration of early or delayed entry to school will involve:

- Ongoing consultation with parents and their written consent. Parents should be engaged in understanding the full implications of the process and the resulting decision.
- For consideration of early entry parents should be advised to seek a professional assessment by a qualified educational psychologist of the child's attributes to enter the year level early. Parents should also prepare a written application to the Principal outlining their case for early entry.
- Broad consultation with school staff and other relevant specialists. This will include the consideration of a range of additional inputs for a child with a disability, or where there are cultural or language issues.
- Full written documentation of the process.
- Verification of necessary documents including birth certificates and evidence of previous enrolments.
- A decision based on evidence, highlighting the consideration of the child's attributes and the reasons for the decision.
- Informing parents in writing of the decision and the reasons for it. This may require a follow-up face-to-face meeting.
- A review of the child's placement after 4-6 weeks of monitoring and consultation with teachers including observation in a variety of school contexts.

Enquiries

DSD Primary

Manager, Student Services

Reflection

Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) s176 (Parent's Obligations)

Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2006 (Qld) Part 4 s15 & s16.

See also (Related Policies and Guidelines)

Policy: Student enrolment at another year level