

Guideline/Procedure

Guideline/Procedure no:	
Approval date:	2019 (SLT 10/19)
Previous review dates:	2008 (Early enrolment of students), 2014, 2015 (Prep changes), 2016, 2019, 2024
Next review date:	2029
Author:	Director Engagement, Wellbeing & Learning

Early and delayed enrolment into Prep

Reflection

"But Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.'" Matthew 19:14

Purpose

The timing of a child's entry into Prep is a critical decision that should be made in the best educational interests of the child to ensure a positive and successful commencement of their schooling journey, consistent with the requirements of Queensland legislation.

Application

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

Procedure

Prep Eligibility

A child is eligible for Prep if they turn 5 years of age by 30 June of the school year in which they are enrolling. All children in Queensland are mandated to complete Prep before advancing to Year 1.

Early Entry to Prep

Early entry to Prep may be considered under specific circumstances, provided it is deemed to be in the child's best educational interest and meets legislative criteria.

Eligibility for Early Entry

According to Part 4, Section 17 of the Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017, a child younger than the prescribed age for Prep may only be admitted early if:

- The child turns 5 years of age by 31 July in the year they intend to start Prep, and the school principal is satisfied that the child is adequately prepared for Prep.
- Alternatively, if the child has completed an education program equivalent to Prep in another state or country, and the school principal is satisfied that the child is ready for Prep.

An equivalent program is defined as a full-time, school-based educational program with a structured curriculum preceding Year 1.

Application Process

Parents interested in pursuing early entry to Prep should contact the school they wish to enrol their child in to discuss eligibility and requirements with the school principal or a member of the senior management team.

Parents may choose to delay their child's entry to Prep (and subsequently Year 1) by one year if they believe the child is not yet ready to start school, such as needing additional time to develop social or emotional skills. The child may then commence Prep at the beginning of the school year in which they turn 6 years and 6 months.

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Principal (or delegate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess application for early entry into Prep • consider eligibility criteria including attributes of the child • consults with relevant personnel as necessary in assessment of application • confirms decision to the parent/legal guardian in writing regarding eligibility for early entry into Prep.
School Counsellor, Leader of Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support Principal (as required) with data gathering to assess application for early entry into Prep.
Engagement Wellbeing & Learning staff (i.e. Consultants Inclusive Education, Psychologists, Consultants Learning & Teaching – Primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support Principal (as required) to assess application for early entry into Prep. • provide professional support and advice to the Principal related to the child's attributes and eligibility for early entry into Prep.
Director Engagement Wellbeing & Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain currency of information and alignment with Queensland Department of Education process

Requirements for Delayed Entry

No formal documentation, assessment, or approval is required for delayed entry to Prep.

It is not necessary for parents to seek the principal's approval to delay entry. While some parents may choose to discuss their decision with the principal, it is not a requirement.

By following these guidelines, we ensure that each child's entry into Prep is handled with careful consideration of their individual readiness and developmental needs.

Enquiries

Directors of School Effectiveness (DSE) Primary

Director Engagement, Wellbeing & Learning

See also (Related Policies and Guidelines)

[Policy: Enrolment of students in Catholic schools.](#)

[Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\) s9 \(Compulsory school age\) s176 \(Parent's Obligations\)](#)

[Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\) Part 4 s15 & s16.](#)