



The Honourable Rod Welford MP



Queensland
Government

12 DEC 2006

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Minister for Education and Training
Minister for the Arts

J 13/12/06

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter dated 3 November 2006 regarding the petition lodged with the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 2 November 2006 numbered 740-06 regarding teacher aide allocations for the Preparatory Year.

The Preparatory Year will be incorporated into the management and operation of the school, with more immediate access to the support and resources of the school. The safety and supervision of prep children becomes a whole-of-school priority and will be included in the school's behaviour management and risk management processes. Principals will ensure, as part of the transition to school, that school routines cater for the safety of prep children. Playground supervision and other duties will be shared, as currently happens in primary schools.

As a part of the trial and phase-in of Prep over the last three and a half years, careful consideration was given to the allocation of teacher aides and their role in supporting the teacher. The department has invested considerable time and resources to obtain the views of parents, teachers and teacher aides. A scan was also conducted of the approaches to allocating in-class support in the Prep Year in other states and territories.

The resulting prep teacher aide allocation is a good balance between the existing allocations for preschool and Year 1, and takes into account the fact that children will be generally six months older than preschool aged children.

Our Government has made a specific and dedicated allocation of teacher aide time to support prep students, while at the same time continuing to recognise the discretion of schools to deploy resources appropriately.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further you can contact Ms Jo Diessel, Regional Executive Director, Greater Brisbane Region on telephone (07) 3422 8352.

I appreciate the challenges raised in the petition about the arrangements in place for the start of Prep in 2007. However, be assured that our Government is making every effort to ensure that the Preparatory Year is successfully implemented across Queensland.

Yours sincerely

Rod Welford MP

Ref: 06/127132

Your ref: 740-06

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