

LONGREACH



Fact Sheet

A Flying Start for Queensland Children

Ensuring students in rural and remote locations are ready for high school



Students in Queensland's rural and remote communities deserve the very best educational opportunities we can provide.

When Year 7 becomes part of high school in 2015 we will ensure all our students are supported as we make this important change. The government is committed to addressing the particular needs of students living in geographically isolated areas.

Moving Year 7 into high school follows the successful introduction of a Prep year in 2007. In 2008 the Year 1 entry age was raised by six months, bringing Queensland in line with other states.

By 2015 more than half the students in Year 7 will be turning 13. Educators agree that young teenagers are ready for greater independence and the depth of learning that high schools provide.

We recognise the changes which come into effect in 2015 will have an impact on rural and remote families. Parents will need to consider what is best for their student's high school education in Year 7, as opposed to Year 8.

“Moving Year 7 into secondary makes sense as it brings us into line with the rest of the nation. We are therefore focussed on continuing to provide the pastoral support and care needed for our young students when they arrive.”

Daryl Hanly, Principal, St Joseph's Nudgee College

Where there is no local school close by, geographically isolated families may opt for their students to attend boarding school, live with a relative closer to a school, live in a student hostel, or use distance education.

The readiness of students for a move away from home, family circumstances and the costs associated with boarding fees and travel, are all important considerations.

What we will do:

- Increase the Living Away From Home Allowance for eligible Year 7 students to the secondary student rate.
- The government will establish a reference group to investigate the funding needs for boarding schools in the light of demand for boarding school places.
- By 2015, offer Year 7 as the first year of high school for all state schools providing distance education.
- Provide increased e-learning options for state schools to offer students whose parents decide to send them to schools closer to home.
- Review the educational needs of geographically isolated families and the services available to them.

Visit www.qld.gov.au/flyingstart to find out more.