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Ipswich Schools to Offer Prep from 2006

Silkstone State School and Ipswich Girls Grammar School will offer a full-time Preparatory Year in 2006, Member for Ipswich Rachel Nolan said today.

Ms Nolan congratulated the schools on being among the latest 20 state and five non-state schools to offer a full-time Preparatory Year in 2006.

These 25 schools will be joining the 96 already providing Prep to more than 1900 students across the state and non-state schooling sectors this year, bringing the total number of schools offering Prep in 2006 to 121.

Existing classrooms and facilities at Silkstone State School will be specially upgraded or refurbished to the new standards for the Prep Year and the school will also receive new purpose built classrooms, subject to anticipated enrolment numbers.

Minister for Education Anna Bligh and Ms Nolan visited Silkstone State School this afternoon to tell them the good news.

The State Government is working closely with the non-state sector to ensure the preparatory year is available to all young Queenslanders of appropriate age.

“A recent independent evaluation into the Prep Year Trial concluded there was “strong and consistent evidence” of the benefits of the Prep Year,” she said.

“By locating Prep classrooms with the rest of the primary school the children will have a much smoother transition into Year 1.

“The early phase of learning is about developing positive attitudes to learning, skills and knowledge through active, hands-on learning and problem-solving.

“A sample survey of parents of Prep children found an overwhelming majority of respondents were very satisfied with the Prep Year currently on trial across the Smart State.

“Children enrolling in the Prep Year will be required to turn five by June 30 in the year they enrol in Prep. These children may be up to six months older than what they would have been in preschool.

“The schools will notify parents in the local area about enrolments in the full-time Prep Year,” she said.