



A Flying Start for Queensland Children

Year 7 is joining high school

Fact Sheet

Queensland's education system is changing for the better. From 2015, Year 7 will become the first year of high school. This is a significant change which will benefit all Queensland students.

By 2015, almost half of the students in Year 7 will be turning 13 and in their eighth year of school, which is the right time for high school to begin. Educators agree that young teenagers are ready for the greater independence and depth of learning that high schools provide.

In high school, our students will have greater access to specialist teachers and resources, such as science teachers and labs, which will open up new and exciting educational opportunities. Moving Year 7 to high school will also bring Queensland into line with the majority of other states and territories, which will benefit families who may need to move interstate while their child is still in secondary school.

Preparing for the move of Year 7 to high school

The start of the school year in 2015 will be historic, as state and non-state secondary schools across Queensland welcome almost 100,000 students into Years 7 and 8. As you prepare to enrol your child in high school, you should feel confident that much work has been done since 2011 to ensure a smooth transition of Year 7 to high school in 2015. For state schools, this includes:

- rolling out an extensive capital works program to accommodate Year 7 students, which will see around 365 infrastructure projects delivered at 288 state schools across Queensland
- piloting the move of Year 7 in 20 state secondary schools, so that we can share the first-hand experience of the pilot schools before all secondary schools prepare to welcome Year 7

- encouraging all secondary schools to develop a specific program to support the wellbeing of students as they make the transition to high school
- implementing Junior Secondary for students in Years 7 to 9, which focuses on the specific academic, social and emotional wellbeing of students in the early years of high school
- recruiting up to 1,300 passionate teachers to Junior Secondary settings who have the skills and experience to effectively support the distinct learning needs of young adolescents
- supporting these new teachers in Junior Secondary with comprehensive professional development
- boosting the financial support available for families living in rural and remote parts of the state by increasing the Living Away From Home Allowance for eligible Year 7 students to the secondary student rate.

How you can help to support your child

The move from primary school to high school is a significant moment in the lives of students and their families. Early adolescence can be a time of rapid change as students become more independent, have additional educational responsibilities and start to feel influenced by their peer groups.

Our primary and secondary schools will be working closely to support students as they prepare to make the transition to high school. There are also practical things that you can do to assist your child to make a smooth and successful transition.

Checklist

You can start to:

- Research the academic program and student wellbeing support systems of your chosen high school, so you can be sure it's a good fit for your child's specific needs and personality.
- Attend parent information events at your chosen high school, so you can get to know the principal, teaching staff and structure of the school.
- Be enthusiastic about the move to high school and talk positively to your child about the transition.
- Listen to any concerns or worries and reinforce the positive things your child is excited about. High school will have a wealth of new experiences for them to enjoy.

Later this year you can:

- Check out our starting high school videos and other useful resources about the transition to high school at www.flyingstart.qld.gov.au
- Encourage your child to use a diary to plan events and activities, keeping in mind that once something is scheduled, it becomes more real to them.
- Support your child to be more independent and responsible by doing jobs at home and preparing themselves for the school day.
- Visit the high school's website. You and your child can find out lots more about the school's curriculum and activities.

Before your child starts high school:

- Speak to your chosen high school about any allergies, medical conditions or special needs your child may have. The school may have specific programs available to support your child.
- Be sure that you know how your chosen high school will communicate with parents, so you can stay informed of how your child is progressing.
- Encourage your child to participate in any orientation and transition programs offered by either their primary school, or their new high school. It will help smooth the way.
- Ensure you have school requirements such as the right uniform and books ready for the first day of school.
- If your child will be taking public transport to school, do a test run of the journey to and from school, so they are confident travelling to school.
- Make any arrangements for before or after school care and ensure your child has a range of emergency contact details.
- Ensure your child has a private and quiet space and the necessary equipment to successfully study out of school hours. Help them to develop a study plan around their other commitments and activities.
- Talk positively to your child about the change. Be realistic with them about the time it will take to settle into new routines. Identify things to look forward to e.g. making new friends, experiencing new subjects.

