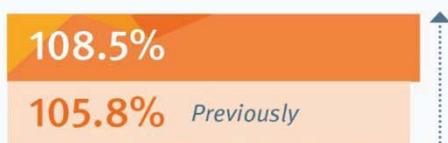


Early years

Kindy participation 2016

All Queensland children



Children in **disadvantaged communities**



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children



High quality services



Our key performance indicators

Service standards	Notes	2016–17 Target/Est.	2016–17 Actual
Effectiveness measures			
Proportion of Queensland children enrolled in an early childhood education program	1,2,3,4	95%	>100%
Proportion of enrolments in an early childhood education program:	1,2,3,5,6,7		
Indigenous children		95%	93.1%
Children who reside in disadvantaged areas		95%	94.2%
Proportion of children developmentally on track on four or more (of five) Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) domains	8	65%	64.9%
Efficiency measures			
	9		

Notes:

1. The *National Early Childhood Education and Care* census is conducted in the first week of August each year. Data is published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in the *Preschool Education, Australia* publication catalogue 4240.0.
2. The nationally agreed benchmark established under the *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* is 95 per cent. Under the *National Partnership Agreement for Universal Access to Early Childhood Education*, Queensland is committed to achieving and maintaining access to an early childhood education program for all children in the year before full-time school.
3. Early childhood education program: A quality play-based program in accordance with the *Early Years Learning Framework* and the *National Quality Standard*, delivered by a degree-qualified early childhood teacher to children in the year before full-time school.
4. Results of over 100 per cent are possible as the nationally agreed measure is the number of children enrolled (aged four or five) divided by the estimated resident population of four-year-olds.
5. The measures represent the proportion of children enrolled from each cohort group as a proportion of the estimated total population for that cohort group in Queensland.
6. Indigenous: a person who identifies at enrolment to be of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.
7. Disadvantaged: a person who resides in statistical areas classified by the ABS in the bottom quintile using the *Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage*.
8. The AEDC is a population measure of how children have developed by the time they start school. Data is captured on five domains of early childhood development: physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, and communication skills and general knowledge. It is a national census conducted every three years with the last census conducted in 2015.
9. The department will develop an appropriate efficiency measure for inclusion in a future Service Delivery Statement.

Children engaged in quality early years programs and making positive transitions into school

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring every child has access to high quality, affordable and inclusive early childhood education and care services across the state. These services and the support given in the early years of a child's life are critical to providing the building blocks for their future learning and life outcomes.

Schools and early childhood services are working in partnership with families to support positive transitions to school, and to ensure all children have access to high quality early learning experiences that support them to develop the knowledge, skills and qualities they need for the future.

For more information about our early years performance indicators, please refer to Appendix A.

Strengthening connections between home, early childhood services and school

Collaborative, networked approaches across schools and early childhood services, in partnership with families, strongly contribute to a positive start to learning for children.

Key achievements in 2016–17:

- supported more than 71,000 children in 2016 to access and participate in a quality kindergarten program; exceeding the 95 per cent performance target for the fourth year in a row
- provided a holistic, community-focused approach to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the transition from home to early childhood services and school through the *Ready Together: Remote Early Years Transitions* project—a partnership with the Australian Government
- increased engagement across sectors, and in partnership with families, to ensure every child has a positive start to school
- supported schools to establish networks with their transition partners to identify, plan and implement strategies and practices that meet the unique needs of their communities
- developed resources for schools, early childhood services and families to foster a culture that prioritises transition and continuity of learning

- embedded effective age-appropriate pedagogies in state schools through dedicated early years coaches.

Engaging parents and carers in their child's learning and development

Families play a critical role in children's learning and development. Engaged parents and carers boost children's motivation and confidence as learners, and foster positive attitudes towards education.

Key achievements in 2016–17:

- funded more than 140 early years services to deliver family support, playgroups, integrated services, and early childhood education and care, that build the capacity and confidence of children and their families
- partnered with Playgroup Queensland to support the learning and development of more than 3900 young children through the *Play Stars* initiative
- connected with more than 30,300 families through *The Early Years Count* social media channels which provide parents with information to support children's early learning and development
- invested in Queensland's 10 Children and Family Centres to support increased access to child and maternal health, family support and early years services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families
- supported programs that build the capacity of families to enhance their children's early learning and development, and help prepare them for kindergarten and school.

Increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's participation in kindy

Relationships and partnerships are key to ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have access to, and participate fully in, high quality kindergarten programs which sets the foundation for a positive start to their schooling.

Key achievements in 2016–17:

- launched the *Foundation for Success* website to support educators to deliver strengths-based programs that position Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, their families and communities at the core of teaching and learning
- expanded delivery of the *Deadly Kindies* campaign (a partnership with the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health) which promotes the importance of early childhood education to 20 Aboriginal medical services across South East Queensland
- completed a \$3.3 million capital works program to reinvigorate learning environments for children attending kindergarten programs in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- continued to support the delivery of quality kindergarten programs across 35 discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, through 28 state schools and five non-government organisations
- piloted the *Learning through Culture* program to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators from peak long-day care and kindergarten services to become Cultural Mentors
- worked in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and their communities to improve awareness of the importance and availability of quality early childhood programs through the statewide *Elders as Storytellers* marketing campaign.

Increasing vulnerable children's participation in kindy

More than one in five children is starting school with vulnerabilities that can present challenges for their future learning and development. Overcoming participation barriers to quality early education programs for every child is essential to positively

shape children's long-term outcomes and reduce developmental vulnerability.

Key achievements in 2016–17:

- supported 785 children with disability to actively participate in kindergarten through the *Disability Inclusion Support for Queensland Kindergartens* funding program
- invested \$500,000 in funding for *Inclusion Works!* to provide kindergarten services with free, statewide access to specialised equipment and professional resources
- produced four new series of *Sally and Possum* for deaf and hard-of-hearing children
- supported 61 priority early years services through \$1.4 million in small assistance grants to strengthen learning, development and wellbeing outcomes for children and families
- assisted 18 non-government organisations to deliver prevention and early intervention activities to children who have been exposed to domestic and family violence.

Spotlight—Supporting children with disability

The Department of Education and Training recently worked closely with a service to provide intensive support for a child with complex multiple disabilities. The child required a range of supports including supervision to ensure safety during play, communication using Auslan, and cueing to vocalise when their speaking valve was in place.

The service also collaborated with *Inclusion Works!* to access specific Auslan resources to help teach all children attending the kindergarten how to communicate with their new friend.

Funding provided under the *Disability Inclusion Support for Queensland Kindergartens* program and support provided by *Inclusion Works!* has enabled the service to support the child to learn and participate, make new friends and gain the essential foundations they need to successfully transition to school.

Providing innovative options for quality early childhood programs in rural and remote communities

More than 20 per cent of Queensland children aged zero to eight years live, grow and thrive in rural and remote locations. Access to quality early childhood programs for every child, regardless of where they live, requires: strong partnerships between families, community and government; use of innovative technologies; and creative and flexible approaches to early learning that respond to local needs.

Key achievements in 2016–17:

- expanded the *Remote Kindergarten Pilot* to 38 state schools, enabling 100 children living in select remote communities to access quality early childhood education
- supported over 170 children to maximise their learning and access a quality kindergarten experience through the *eKindy* program
- funded a range of early years services across Cape York, Northern Peninsula Area and the Torres Strait Islands including long-day care, playgroups, family support, holiday programs and access to outside school hours care programs
- facilitated the *Strength to Strength—Weaving Quality Through Strong Foundations* workshop in Cairns for more than 100 delegates from across 35 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- delivered pedagogical, mentoring and leadership support to 160 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators across Queensland, the Northern Territory and South Australia through the *Remote Indigenous Professional Development Project*—a partnership with the Australian Government.

Delivering continuous quality improvement through effective regulatory practice

Key to providing strong foundations for continuous quality improvement is supporting a highly skilled and qualified workforce, and ensuring regulated early childhood services operate in a way that safeguards children's health, safety and wellbeing.

Key achievements in 2016–17:

- regulated more than 2800 approved centre-based services and over 125 family day care schemes
- increased the proportion of education and care services with a quality rating under the *National Quality Framework* to 93 per cent, of which 78 per cent were rated as meeting or exceeding the *National Quality Standard*
- improved regulatory practice through the development of the *Regulating for Quality* initiative, which embeds risk-based decision-making across all regulatory activities
- conducted targeted monitoring of family day care services most at risk of non-compliance through the *Family Day Care Taskforce*
- supported early childhood education and care services to prepare for changes to mandatory reporting laws from 1 July 2017
- implemented place-based pilot leadership projects across Queensland to support local networks and communities of practice for early childhood education and care services, and the early years of school
- broadened access to the *Early Childhood Teacher Bridging Program*, with 14 registered training organisations (RTOs) approved to deliver the program
- delivered an intensive residential initiative as part of the *Indigenous Remote Support Coordination Program* to support educators in priority-identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to progress through their early childhood studies.

Integrating early childhood services across community and government agencies

Families today face unique challenges which require holistic responses that cannot always be found in a single organisation. Integrated early years services provide locally driven strategies to improve outcomes for children and families through better service coordination.

Key achievements in 2016–17:

- raised awareness of the integrated early years services operating across 53 locations by introducing the *Early Years Place: supporting children's development* common identity

- built a cohesive network of leaders and educators in integrated early years services through focusing on common approaches to integrated practice, and enhancing workforce capacity
- increased access and participation to early childhood education for children and families through the establishment of new, integrated early years services in Inala and Tara
- collaborated with communities, government agencies at all levels and non-government organisations to plan and develop new integrated programs and services
- invested over \$20 million to support children and families to access integrated services which meet their needs and circumstances.

Investing in evidence-based programs to support early learning and development

Effectively using and applying information, data and evidence underpins strategies and programs to support early learning and development. This practice is contributing to a strategic evidence base and embedding research into practice to drive better outcomes for children and families.

Key achievements in 2016–17:

- developed supported playgroup resources in partnership with the Queensland University of Technology (QUT)
- worked collaboratively with the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services to finalise the evaluation of the *Intensive Early Childhood Development* pilot program
- collaborated with the Queensland Government Statistician's Office on a spatial model that uses early childhood development data from across government to inform planning and investment in new early years services
- published the first Queensland Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) report to encourage schools, communities, early childhood services and government to use the findings to enhance early childhood development outcomes
- implemented a new outcomes reporting framework across funded early years services.

Spotlight—Intensive Early Childhood Development program

Through cross-government collaboration, the *Intensive Early Childhood Development* pilot supported some of Queensland's most vulnerable and disadvantaged families to access support to enhance their child's early learning and development outcomes.

An evaluation of the model, which integrates early childhood educators alongside family support workers, showed impressive results. This included increased participation in early childhood education and care services, better school readiness behaviours, improved parental capability and confidence, and greater awareness of specialist supports.

At the conclusion of the pilot in December 2016, almost all children (85 per cent) were considered to have an 'adequate or better' level of readiness for school due to improvements in their confidence and social skills.