

Showcase

Wonga Beach State School

Starting Strong (Early Years to Year 2)

At Wonga Beach State School, supporting families and their children to transition to formal schooling has changed the school into an 'early years hub'. In 2023, staff observed that many Prep students were not completely school ready. Kindergarten participation was low across the community, and the school did not know how many students would enrol in Prep each year. To address these challenges and support the transition into Prep, the school focused on early years learning programs and giving children a strong start at Wonga Beach.

Far North
Queensland



93
students



Kindy to Year 6



Action

Some of the actions that led Wonga Beach State School to be showcased in this category:

- The school established three on-site early years programs: a playgroup, KindyLinQ and a State Delivered Kindergarten (SDK).
- A weekly playgroup for families with children under three provides an entry point for families to engage with the school.
- The KindyLinQ program welcomes three-year-old children and their families, supporting language development, social interaction and emotional regulation.
- The school's SDK builds on learning from playgroup and KindyLinQ.
- The school created a multi-age classroom for SDK and Prep children. Kindy children have an opportunity to start building connections with their future Prep teacher.
- The school ensures continuity of learning by linking the programs together through the orientation and transition plan.
- Speech language pathologists and healthcare workers visit children and families in the programs. They make sure families know how to access health services.
- Staff enhanced their understanding of Prep and SDK policies to ensure safe learning environments for all ages.
- Teachers participate in a local Early Childhood Network to collaborate with colleagues from other schools and early childhood organisations.

Impact



Improved school readiness

Prep students are showing improved behaviour and readiness for school



Improved engagement of families

Trusting relationships between families and the school



Improved English achievement in Prep to Year 2

A 39% increase in As and Bs from 2023 to 2024



Improved mathematics achievement in Prep to Year 2

A 17% increase in As and Bs from 2023 to 2024

Effectiveness

Research into highly effective schools supports Wonga Beach State School's actions.

Highly effective schools:

- prioritise student wellbeing
- develop purposeful partnerships, guided by mutually beneficial goals
- partner with early childhood providers, student support services and community organisations
- embed partnerships in the life of the school
- engage families as partners to support children's transitions and learning
- ensure partners have clear roles and responsibilities.

Teachers and leaders in highly effective schools:

- build trusting relationships with students to foster their sense of belonging
- plan and facilitate positive transitions
- create safe and orderly learning environments
- use effective, evidence-based pedagogies.



'The early connections established in Playgroup and KindyLinQ create a pathway for confident transitions into Kindergarten and later into Prep.'

Mr Steven Vincent, School Supervisor