



Speech by


Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Hansard Tuesday, 22 March 2011

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Solar Kindergartens Installation Program

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Greenslopes—ALP) (Minister for Education and Industrial Relations) (10.13 am): The Bligh government is committed to providing a world-class education system for our children. In recent years, the government has overseen significant reforms in education—including the introduction of full-time prep, the establishment of the Queensland Certificate of Education, and we have begun the rollout of universal access to kindergarten services. We are also committed to protecting our environment and making public buildings more sustainable and environmentally friendly.

These twin objectives converged yesterday at the C&K Moorooka Community Kindergarten. I visited the kindy and was joined by the Minister for Government Services, Building Industry and Information and Communication Technology and member for Yeerongpilly, Simon Finn, and the CEO of the Creche and Kindergarten Association of Queensland, Mr Barrie Elvish.

I was delighted to be able to announce that the Bligh government will retrofit 166 kindergartens with solar power units as part of our solar kindergartens installation program. These units will help create sustainable learning and play environments for our children. They will also reduce the amount of greenhouse gas produced by each kindergarten and help to reduce electricity bills by up to \$400 each year at each kindy. This is great news for parents and for kindergarten operators.

As well as providing solar power to the C&K sites, the Bligh government will also install 1.5 kilowatt solar power units at up to 240 new kindergarten services. These 240 services are part of our government's commitment to ensure every Queensland child of kindergarten age will have access to an early years program delivered by a qualified teacher. This means that within four years more than 400 kindergartens in Queensland will be powered by the sun.

These solar installations will generate enough energy to power 125 Queensland homes and save 877 tonnes of carbon emissions each year—the equivalent to taking almost 200 cars off the road. The program builds on the government's solar schools program, which has resulted in solar panels being installed in 1,164—or more than 94 per cent—of all state schools in the past three years. This initiative is further demonstration of the Bligh government's commitment to both education and the environment.