




Speech By
Ali King

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

Record of Proceedings, 24 May 2023

ADJOURNMENT

Kindergarten

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (7.09 pm): Our Pumicestone schools are absolutely amazing. I loved going along to the Bribie Island State School's brilliant under-eights day last week. Teachers, educators, parents, community groups and even the early childhood education students from Bribie High all worked together and combined forces to give our youngest Pumicestonians a wonderful experience. There was glitter galore at the craft stations, fun and games on the sports fields and a sensational sausage sizzle run by our Bribie Island Lions volunteer. The kids had a fantastic day.

I also really enjoyed catching up with Wendy and her little daughter Briarna and hearing from them their story. Wendy is a Bribie Island local with five young girls in her blended family; four of them are preschool age. When I first met Wendy last year, she told me that she knows that kindy is really important for the kids but that her family were struggling to pay the costs. She asked if there was any ways our government could help. When Wendy spotted me last week at under-eights day, she told me how delighted she is with our government's free and cheaper kindy program. Free and cheaper kindy has been life-changing for Wendy's family. It has saved them a total of \$280 week between their four kids at kindy. In fact, Wendy told me that she and her partner would not be able to afford to send their kids to kindy without the free kindy program.

Hearing the difference that our Palaszczuk Labor government's free kindy program has made to families like Wendy's made me feel really grateful to get to do this job. Our free and cheaper kindy program has invested a billion dollars to deliver free kindy for 14,000 young Queenslanders and reduces kindy fees for the parents of another 26,000. Now we are looking at expanding our kindy support even further to make kindy free for every Queensland family so that all kids can benefit from the boost that kindy gives to their school readiness. Not only will expanding free kindy give our kids the best start in life, it will also be a big support for families struggling with global cost-of-living pressures at the moment. That is why I am asking everyone in Pumicestone to have their say on what expanding free kindy could mean to them.

When it is time to start kindy, Pumicestone kids have wonderful options for their early childhood education and care. Recently I was absolutely delighted to hear that C&K Bribie Island Community Kindergarten became the only kindy in Australia to achieve five 'excellent' ratings from the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority. I congratulate kindy director Narelle Dawson and the brilliant Bribie Island educators on their outstanding achievement, and I thank them for all that they do to give our kids the very best start. From free and cheaper kindy to Kindy uplift to GPs in our schools, Pumicestone kids are getting the very best start in life thanks to our Palaszczuk Labor government.