

**Question on Notice**

**No. 503**

**Asked on 4 June 2015**

**MS LINARD** asked the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games (Hon K Jones) —

**QUESTION:**

Will the Minister advise (a) the statewide kindergarten participation figure in 2008 and what it is in 2015, and (b) how many eligible children are this year enrolled in a quality education program in the Nudgee Electorate?

**ANSWER:**

I thank the Member for her question.

As Minister for Education, I am proud to say that Queensland has now exceeded the target of 95% participation for children for two years in a row (that is for 2013 and 2014). There is more work to do however to lift participation by vulnerable, disadvantaged and Indigenous children.

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring that all children participate in a kindergarten program in the year before Prep. It is well known that a kindergarten program delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher best prepares children not only for school but also for their journey in life.

I have been advised by the Department of Education and Training that in 2008 only 29%, or some 16,700 kindergarten-age children, were enrolled in a kindergarten program.

In 2009, the Queensland Government, in partnership with the Australian Government through various national partnership agreements, implemented a range of strategies to increase participation in a kindergarten program. The goal was to ensure 95% of kindergarten-age children were enrolled and attending a kindergarten program delivered by a qualified teacher.

I am advised that data for 2015 kindergarten participation will be published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in April 2016. The data is based on an annual census collection conducted by the Department of Education and Training and is supplemented by Australian Government childcare data.

I can advise the Member for Nudgee that the Department's Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme is supporting the enrolment of 468 kindergarten-age children in 16 approved kindergarten program provider services in the Nudgee electorate.

However, the future of early childhood education is at risk, as the Commonwealth Government is yet to provide ongoing certainty for kindergarten funding beyond 2017. Ensuring we have secure funding is critical to provide certainty for Queensland families and to continue to improve access to universal kindergarten programs.

