

### ***Talking Point: Care isn't a component in prep?***

A parent who wanted to be reassured that Education Queensland (EQ) has policies to manage supervision and safety of young children (especially since the environments also do not seem to come under any guidelines or licensing requirements) and to ascertain who keeps a check on the safety of environments and supervision of children in EQ rang the hotline. *Apart from being quite distressed by the handling of this call she is re-considering even sending her child to her lovely local school.*

**Parent:** I am concerned that my child who will attend prep next year will be the same age as current preschoolers, that is 4 years of age, however she doesn't seem to be afforded the same care standards in prep that was afforded to preschoolers

**EQ Hotline response:** This doesn't concern me, because preschool doesn't exist anymore. ***Care isn't a component in prep.*** There were only 2 adults in preschool due to the child care component. Your child will not be 4 next year, she will be at least 4 years 6 months. That is a lot more mature than 4.

**Parent:** I am aware that currently children aged 4-6 years who attend preschool programs with C&K or child care come under child care regulations, and have to adhere to standards such as staff: child ratios, physical building requirements, fencing and the like (and are licensed). Where might I find any policies/legislation around safety of children/ duty of care for prep children? What laws/ standards does Education Queensland have to abide by for prep?

**EQ Hotline response:** There are policies around safety, supervision, access to toilets and funding under the Education and Training Reforms for the Future, *but you have to search for them on the website.*

**Parent:** *I have looked for this information but have not been able to find it. I have some concerns as a parent as to how effective the safety and risk management would be in prep next year for my child, especially concerning the part time teacher aide issue.*

**EQ Hotline response:** This isn't an issue for parents at all. If it was they would have objected before the law was passed on the 21st April 2006. ***Parents were widely consulted.*** You are in the minority.

**Parent:** Actually a lot of parents don't seem to be aware of this issue and I was only alerted to it a month or so ago.

**EQ Hotline response:** You obviously don't watch TV or read the newspapers then.

**Parent:** I do both; however I have not read or seen anything in the media that has informed me that there are part time teacher aides in prep. I am trying to understand. What reassurance can I obtain from Education Queensland about my child's safety in prep when the teacher aide is not present?

**EQ Hotline response:** ***Prep will be afforded 1 adult to 25 children and the teacher aide hours are only supplementary.*** It's (prep) not compulsory. If you don't like it don't come. That's the nice thing about the choices in life today.

***If you want to have your say, contact Suzy Tamone, Prep Alert (38707109)  
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