



Hon Geoff Wilson MP
Member for Ferny Grove



**Queensland
Government**

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Email: TableOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au

8 JUL 2010

Minister for Education and Training

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition 1461-10 lodged with the Legislative Assembly on 8 June 2010 by Mr Tim Mulherin MP, Member for Mackay regarding the closure of the Robin Street Kindergarten, Slade Point at the end of 2010. I understand that the service is considered a valued and important part of the community and that petitioners are concerned about the provision of child care in Slade Point.

The Office for Early Childhood Education and Care (the Office) is responsible for the administration of the *Child Care Act 2002* (the Act) and the *Child Care Regulation 2003*, which includes the licensing and monitoring of child care services. The Queensland Government does not regulate the supply of services.

The Act sets minimum standards for licensed services in Queensland including building facilities, health, hygiene, staffing and programming. These standards are in place to ensure the safety and well being of children while they are in care.

The Big Rainbow Kindergarten is a limited hours care service in Slade Point, Mackay with a licensed capacity of 21 children aged from three years to school age, not including school children. The centre is privately operated by two women who intend to retire at the end of 2010.

The Office will monitor the situation and ensure that information is provided to parents regarding child care services in the local community. There are currently 33 existing child care services within a five kilometre radius of Slade Point.

Four new services will be established in 2012 in Mackay to provide 176 kindergarten places, including one new service at Mackay Christian College, two new services at Eimeo Road State School and one new service at Emmanuel Catholic Primary School. A new kindergarten service will open at Beaconsfield State School in the second half of 2010 and at Seaforth State School in 2011, each providing 44 kindergarten places.

On 9 June 2010, I announced the accelerated delivery of 40 extra services originally scheduled for 2013 and 2014, to now open in 2012. Planning to determine the locations of these services will commence shortly. The need for further services in Mackay will be assessed as part of this future planning.

Further information regarding new kindergartens is available on the following website: www.education.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood.

If you require any further information or assistance in relation to this matter, please contact the Mackay Office for Early Childhood Education and Care on telephone (07) 4967 4412.

Yours sincerely

GEOFF WILSON MP
Minister for Education and Training

Ref: 10/137727

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