

ATHERTON EARLY YEARS PLACE

FUNDING INFORMATION PAPER

Integrated Service Delivery Funding Category

Acknowledgement of Country

We pay our respects to Elders past and present who guide us with their knowledge, memories, traditions and culture, and help us to achieve the best educational, wellbeing and life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, children and students.

1. Snapshot of Initiative

Purpose	This funding supports the operations of an Early Years Place to support the early learning and development needs of children aged birth to eight and their parents/carers.
Funding category	Integrated Service Delivery
Available funding	Annual funding of \$250,940 (GST exclusive) is available for the service to deliver integrated services for an initial two year term (1 July 2027 to 30 June 2029) .
Who can apply	This is an open, competitive process for eligible: ○ non-government organisations (NGOs) ○ Local Government entities (LGEs) ○ Community Controlled Organisations (CCOs). Full eligibility requirements are detailed in Section 6 .
Locations	Based in Atherton SA2 with weekly outreach services to Herberton (Herberton SA2) and monthly outreach services to Dimbulah (Tablelands) SA2.
Use of funding	Organisations funded under the Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) Funding Category must use the funding to operate an Integrated Service Delivery model . Integrated Service Delivery brings together a range of services, programs and disciplines to create a coordinated and comprehensive service delivery system that improves outcomes for families with young children aged birth to eight.
Target Group	Families with children aged birth to eight years who are experiencing multiple and complex needs.
Opening date	18 September 2026
Closing	30 October 2026
Expected service delivery commencement date	1 July 2027

2. Purpose

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring that every child in Queensland has the opportunity to develop to their full potential, so they have a smooth transition to school and become successful lifelong learners.

Evidence shows that early childhood experiences and high-quality interactions lay the foundation for a person's long-term, success, health and wellbeing. Child-centred approaches bring together services, families and communities to collectively create a better future for our next generation of Queenslanders.

The Department of Education (the Department) is inviting organisations to apply to operate an Early Years Place (under the [Integrated Service Delivery - ISD Funding Category](#)) to support children (birth to 8 years) and their families within the Far North Queensland communities (as defined by the [Atherton](#), [Herberton](#) and [Tablelands](#) SA2s) in Queensland.

The Integrated Service Delivery Funding Category aims to achieve the following outcomes, including:

- Increased parents'/carers' awareness of and engagement with their child/children's learning, wellbeing and development;
- Increased secure attachment between children and their parent/carer;
- Increased parental capabilities and confidence in parenting and parenting self-efficacy;
- Increased number of children meeting developmental milestones;
- Increased community connection and families, parents, children accessing the right services at the right time, including kindergarten;
- Strengthened service capability, quality and reliability, with better coordination and partnerships to support more connected service delivery; and

Increased access to a range of family and early years programs that reflect the current context of Queensland families and are available in a range of formats to support differing needs and requirements.

3. Funding Details

The Department will provide grant funding to an organisation to operate an Early Years Place serving the learning and development needs of children aged birth to eight years and their families in the Atherton SA2 community with weekly outreach activities to Herberton in the Herberton SA2 and monthly outreach activities to Dimbulah within the Tablelands SA2.

Annual Funding – Early Years Place (1 July 2027 to 30 June 2029)

Recurrent funding of \$**250,940 (GST exclusive)** will be available and may be expended on:

- Staffing and operational costs for the organisation to:
 - establish and operate the new Early Years Place; for example, a Coordinator and early childhood staff;
 - support delivery of programs and activities within the local communities; and
 - develop partnerships and stakeholder engagement activities to ensure responsiveness to early childhood development and learning needs, including referral pathways within the local communities.
- Organisational costs including management fees and business planning costs. Note that this item is to be no more than 10% of the total funding amount being requested.
- Payments will be made in six monthly instalments, paid upon finalisation of the Service Agreement and completion of ongoing reporting requirements.

One off establishment funding **may be** available, through a **negotiated process** and may support the purchase of assets and equipment, furniture and resources and recruitment expenses without recurrent implications. Applicants should include an itemised establishment budget for consideration.

4. Service Delivery Model

An application to establish and deliver (including through partnerships with other key agencies) an Early Years Place in Atherton must address the following key elements:

Early Years Place Model

The Early Years Place will be located in Atherton within the Atherton SA2 and will operate as a central facility for integrated early childhood services. Centre-based supports will be provided to families in the Atherton SA2, with structured weekly outreach to Herberton within the Herberton SA2 and structured monthly outreach to Dimbulah within the Tablelands SA2.

The service delivery model will also include telephone and virtual referral support to complement face-to-face outreach. This will enable families to access information, advice and referrals between outreach visits, supporting continuity of service where distance or other barriers may limit access to in-person support.

The model is underpinned by a **universal** approach to early childhood development and learning, with services integrated across disciplines to improve access, strengthen referral pathways and respond to the needs of children and families. The combination of a centre-based facility, regular outreach and telephone/virtual support will provide more consistent and equitable access for families in outlying communities, strengthen local connections and support sustained engagement with children and families.

This approach will ensure high-quality early childhood development services are accessible across both the communities, while responding to the differing service access needs of families across the regions.

Service Delivery Activities

Integrated service delivery comprises distinct but connected elements that work together to provide coordinated, holistic supports for families with young children. Services are delivered through a combination of centre-based and outreach models to ensure equitable access for children and families across communities.

The service delivery model is underpinned by **universal** early childhood development and learning, with services integrated across disciplines to improve access, strengthen referral pathways and respond to the needs of children and families.

Funding for Integrated Service Delivery supports the delivery of evidence-based and evidence-informed services and activities across four key areas:

Early Childhood Education and Care - includes kindergarten and school transition programs and/or adjunct care.

Family Support - includes formal evidence based/informed parent support programs, home visits, music play and therapy, counselling services.

Parent/carer and Child Engagement Program - includes playgroups, Families as First Teachers, Parents as Teachers.

Access to child and maternal health - includes child health screening and checks, immunisation, advice and advocacy, allied health support such as speech therapy.

This integrated approach enables services to respond to local community needs while ensuring families receive coordinated supports that promote children's health, wellbeing, development and successful transition to kindergarten and school.

Staffing

Appointment of an appropriately qualified and experienced Coordinator or Centre Manager with responsibility for ensuring delivery of a broad range of early childhood learning and development

programs and activities. Other qualified staff are to be included but not limited to an Early Childhood Teacher and/or Educators, Community Development/Family Support Worker and administrative support.

5. Selection Criteria

An independent panel comprising of Department representatives will assess applications against the selection criteria outlined below. Applicants must address each criterion within the ISD Application Form and provide brief supporting evidence or additional information where appropriate.

Where assessment does not produce a conclusive outcome, organisations may be required to present their application and responses to selection criteria at a meeting with the assessment panel (via TEAMS or in person as appropriate).

Selection criteria	Indicators and supporting evidence
Service model is appropriate and meets the needs of the community	- Expected learning, development and wellbeing outcomes for children and their families are clearly outlined. - Demonstrated understanding of the needs of the target group/s in the identified communities and how the proposed service model will address these needs. - Clear and concise description of the proposed service model and the elements to be delivered to enhance multidisciplinary child focused and family inclusive activities, including but not limited to: - design and operationalisation of the EYP model operating across the Atherton, Herberton and Tablelands [Dimbulah] SA2 communities; - use of evidence-based practice and programs; - strategies and actions to promote service integration across the identified communities - anticipated staffing number and qualifications/skills and structure for service delivery; - community engagement strategies to support planning and delivery of the activities; - partnerships which may be required to deliver or support the delivery of the proposed Early Years Place model; - outreach and home visiting approaches; and - Demonstrated understanding of and/or experience in service coordination and early years service delivery, including the links between family and parenting support services, health, early childhood education and care and the transition to school.
Service delivery experience	Demonstrated ability to tailor service delivery to the unique needs of children aged up to eight years living in the Atherton SA2 and identified outreach SA2 communities of Herberton and Tablelands (Dimbulah).

Selection criteria	Indicators and supporting evidence
	• Demonstrated experience in collaboration for cross-disciplinary practice. • Demonstrated capacity to partner with non-government and/or government agencies (e.g. child and allied health). • Experience in/or understanding of early childhood learning and development practice, with a focus on supporting families living in vulnerable circumstances. • Current service provision in the local area, neighbouring areas or similar geographic locations. • Demonstrated cultural capability in delivering early childhood programs and services to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander families and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
Organisational capacity and experience	• Evidence of capacity to manage finances and administer funds to an auditable standard (including audited financial statements for the past three years). If a consortium approach is adopted this requirement applicable to all members of that consortium. • Clearly identified governance arrangements, including key roles, management structures, financial management and recruitment strategies to deliver the required service elements. • Detailed annual and establishment budgets for the Early Years Place. • Details of experience in performance reporting and measurement processes, evaluation systems and quality assurance processes provided. • Provide risk management policies, approaches and strategies of the organisation.
Referral pathways and processes including collaboration and ability to create partnerships	• Established referral processes or ability to establish referral processes to targeted or intensive support services, clearly identified. • Examples of existing partnerships and/or established links with other service providers within the regions. • Capacity to develop/contribute to local networks of service providers to support an effective and efficient early childhood service system.
Reflective practice, outcomes and review	• Demonstrated experience in engaging in reflective practice methods including cross-disciplinary practice. • Organisational strategy for ongoing program review and commitment to continuous improvement.

6. How to Apply

Applications close **5pm (AEST), 30 October 2026**.

Organisations may submit an individual application or, alternatively, form partnerships with other organisations and lodge a single application that reflects those arrangements. Where a partnership is established, the 'lead' organisation must submit the application and clearly outline the partnership structure. If any board or committee member is an employee of the Department of Education, they must declare and manage any potential conflict of interest with their supervisor in accordance with the Department's Conflict of Interest procedure.

To apply for funding, complete the provided **Application Form – Atherton Early Years Place, signed by an authorised person** along with any **supporting documentation** to EYS@ged.qld.gov.au by 5:00pm (AEST), **30 October 2026**.

For questions or further assistance regarding the application process, please contact the Department at EYS@ged.qld.gov.au.

7. Funding Process

Assessment of applications will be undertaken by an Assessment Panel who will consider responses to the selection criteria in Section 5. If organisations have previously been funded by the Department to deliver early years services, compliance with performance and financial reporting requirements will also be considered.

The following assessment process will be used to determine the successful organisation to operate the Atherton Early Years Place in the Atherton SA2.

Step	Activity	By What Date
Step 1	Lodge a completed Application form to EYS@ged.qld.gov.au .	18 September – 30 October 2026
Step 2	Assessment of applications	13 November 2026
Step 3	Funding decision recommended	7 December 2026
Step 4	Successful and unsuccessful organisations notified	14 December 2026
Step 5	Service agreement between the department and the successful organisation negotiated and finalised.	January – March 2027
Step 6	Service delivery commencement (phased start-up) supported by an Implementation Plan	1 July 2027
Step 7	Progress Report submitted to the department	30 September 2027

During the assessment process, organisations may be asked to provide further information to clarify information provided in the Application. These requests will be made in writing to the organisation's nominated contact officer and written responses will be required within the timeframe specified in the request.

8. Information and assistance

Funding information sessions will be held via TEAMS on the following dates:

Tuesday 22 September 2026 at 3:00pm

Tuesday 6 October 2026 at 3:00pm.

The sessions will provide an overview of the funding criteria and process your organisation will need to undertake to lodge an application. Please email EYS@ged.qld.gov.au to register your attendance.

All questions regarding the process are required to be submitted in writing. Where appropriate, responses to any questions asked will be shared with all registered organisations via email.

If you have any questions or require further assistance regarding this grant process, please send your initial email request to EYS@ged.qld.gov.au and an officer from the Department will contact you within one working day.

9. Conditions of Funding

Funding is provided under the *Community Services Act 2007*.

To receive funding, successful applicants will be required to enter into a service agreement with the Department and are legally responsible for complying with all reporting, performance and accountability requirements and conditions of the service agreement.

The Standard Terms and Conditions for Queensland Government service agreements are available at: https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0028/452782/updatedserviceagreementstandardterms.pdf.

The successful organisation will report on performance measures using the Department's outcomes framework, to ensure clear reporting about the outcomes for children and families under the Integrated Service Delivery Funding Category.

Further information on this framework, including supporting guidelines, templates and forms, is available at: <https://det.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/service-providers/early-years-services>

10. Feedback and requests for review

Unsuccessful applicants have a right to receive feedback or seek a review of the funding decision by contacting Ms Madeline Hagon, A/Director, Early Childhood Strategy, Early Childhood, Regulation and Communication at Madeline.HAGON@ged.qld.gov.au.