

SCHOOL PROGRAMS FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING CHILDREN

996. Mr C.J. Tallentire to the Minister for Education

Given the increase identified by teachers in the number of children from non-English-speaking backgrounds entering the Western Australian education system with little or no English, what additional resources and facilities are planned by the Government to accelerate these children's skills in English?

Dr E. CONSTABLE replied:

The Department of Education and Training provides English as a Second Language (ESL) support for students from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (CaLD) who speak limited or no English.

Currently there are in excess of 100 ESL specialist programs across primary and secondary public schools, including ESL Support, Cell or Intensive English Centre programs. The Department also has ESL Consultants and ESL Visiting Teachers, based in metropolitan District Education Offices, who provide specialist support to ESL students and teachers in schools. The district teams provide extensive professional learning for mainstream teachers to assist them to cater for ESL students' linguistic, educational, social and emotional needs.

Funding is provided to schools in regional and remote areas which have significant numbers of ESL students. This funding is used to support teachers to develop appropriate learning and teaching programs to suit the needs of their students.

The Department has an extensive range of ESL resources that teachers from across the State can borrow from the ESL Resource Centre and an ESL/ESD Progress Map that enables teachers to monitor and assess ESL students' language development.

Over the past few months, the Department has provided schools with additional funding and learning and teaching resources, in excess of \$1 500 000, to support the learning needs of eligible and non eligible visa holder students, including 457 visa holders.