

New preschool set for Deakin

CONSTRUCTION is expected to begin within weeks on new \$1.5 million preschool facilities in Deakin.

ACT Minister for Education and Training Joy Burch has unveiled design drawings for the new Deakin Preschool, due for completion later this year.

The new facility is the result of the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care, which was introduced in December 2009. This prompted the ACT government to allocate funding in the 2011-12 Budget for the expansion or upgrade of nine preschools – Red Hill, Griffith, Hackett, Downer, Reid, Ainslie, Lyneham, Watson and Deakin.

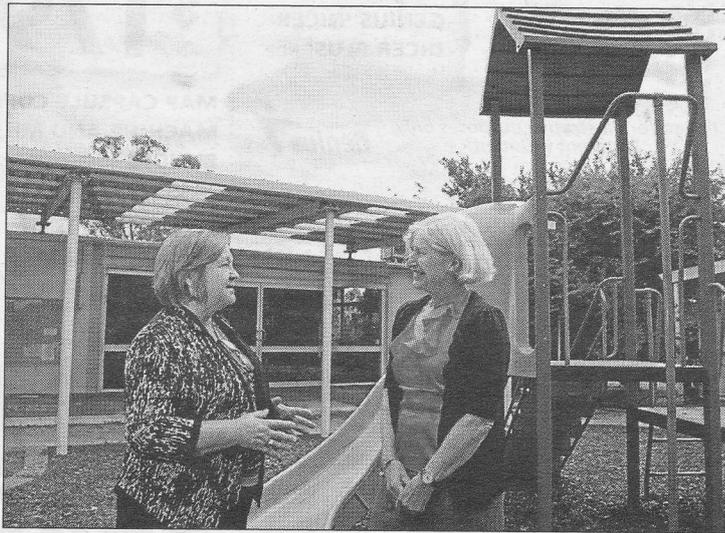
“When assessing the scope of refurbishments required to Deakin under this Framework, the ACT government formed the view that creating a brand new facility was the best outcome for families in the area, as well as the best use of funds,” Ms Burch said.

“The result is a modern facility that will serve to provide a high level of service to the community for decades to come.”

The updated Deakin Preschool will remain the preschool campus of Forrest Primary School.

Forrest Primary School principal Christine Pilgrim said it was good to see money being invested in a long-running Canberra school.

“That was very important, that it wasn't a rebuild, because it was a very old building,” she said. “It's



ACT Minister for Education and Training Joy Burch, with Forrest Primary School principal Christine Pilgrim, has unveiled the design drawings for the new preschool facilities in Deakin. **Picture: Elesa Lee**

lovely to see improvements. It allows for contemporary education.”

Ms Pilgrim said the existing building, which would soon be demolished, didn't meet the new national standards, including the requirement that every child have a minimum of 3.25sqm of unencumbered floor space.

The new facilities will allow the preschool to cater for 88 students, double the number it had accommodated. Currently preschool students enrolled at the

Deakin campus have been relocated to the kindergarten area of the Forrest Primary School.

“I am happy with it. I think it's simple but it works and it meets all the requirements,” Ms Pilgrim said.

“It will still retain a lot of that lovely grassed area as well as some play equipment.”

Work is expected to commence this month, and while the building will be completed this year, it won't open until the 2014 school year.

Joni Scanlon

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