

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** PR00146

## Agnew, Mary Ann Eliza

(1857 - 1940)

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**Born** 6 November, 1857, Openshaw England

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**Died** 14 June, 1940, South Brisbane Queensland Australia

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**Occupation** Education reformer, Kindergarten teacher

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### Summary

Educated in Liverpool, England, Mary Agnew moved to Queensland in late 1890 to join the Queensland Department of Public Instruction, taking the position of Kindergarten Instructor. Agnew was given the task of raising the standard of education for young children. Applying the methods of Friedrich Froebel, Agnew introduced a syllabus based on the importance of education through activity and play, stressing that young children could not spend long periods of time each day engaged in intellectual learning. Influencing departmental policy on infant and kindergarten work, it was only in the last years of her career that her revolutionary work in pre-school education began to be implemented.

### Published resources

#### Resource Section

Agnew, Mary Ann Eliza (1857 - 1940), Grieshaber, Susan, 2006,  
<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/AS10007b.htm>

#### Book Section

Mary Agnew, McMullen, C., 1994

#### Report

34th Report of the Secretary for the Public Instruction for the Year 1909, Parliamentary Papers (Queensland), 1910

#### Journal

Links, 1982

#### Journal Article

Preschool Pioneer, Grieshaber, S., 1994

Mary Agnew, Kindergarten instructor for Queensland schools, Grieshaber, Susan, 1994

#### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### Archival resources

#### Queensland State Archives

[Correspondence](#)

[Registrar - teachers](#)

#### Author Details

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**Created** 22 June 2009  
**Last modified** 21 November 2018