

Submission.

Lack of availability of before and after school care places in the Inner West area of Sydney is a significant burden on families that intend to have both parents in full-time employment.

Our family has found itself in the current scenario in 2014.

- 1) One child needs to commence kindergarten in 2015
- 2) Schools in the local area have been contacted, but they have been unable to guarantee a place in before and after school care, which is a necessity if either of the parents cannot be available at school drop-off and pick-up times.
- 3) One option for the family is for one of the parents to exit the fulltime workforce. This is both a drain on the family budget, as well as detrimental to the NSW economy.
- 4) A second option is to move to another area, but this family has experienced difficulty in finding suitable guaranteed places in before/after school care. It is difficult to plan major decisions such as buying a house and moving suburbs without certainty at least 12 months in advance.

Schools should seriously consider extended opening and closing times, wherein the students are supervised in an area before and after they commence their formal class room sessions. Student safety is the key priority, so preference would be for facilities for before/after school care be on the school premises, as opposed to a situation where a third party organisation transports students to and from a different location.

Students may benefit from playing with their friends in the school ground prior to and after formal class room times. Their safety would be ensured with supervision by school staff.

Some members of the school staff may prefer to supplement their incomes by doing supervision of students in the mornings and afternoons outside of the normal class-room times.

Current school opening and closing times discriminate against families that aspire to both parents working in full-time employment. Provision of adequate and well-supervised before and after school care facilities in the school premises with sufficient number of places to account for the demographics of the area would be an important step forward.

End of submission