

Oceanview College has high expectations.

Oceanview College is a community based integrated learning centre with DECD pre-school and long day care service. We are licensed for 75 children ranging from 6 weeks to school age. We are a diverse socio-economic centre.

Oceanview College has a mix of years of experience from over 25 years to 1 year. We have a mixed age group from 20 years to late 50's and a mix of cultures. From this we have a very diverse curriculum, different values to enhance our centre. We work long hours with children with such diverse needs. It is hard work both physically and mentally.

Quality is lower ratios, recognition for instilling positive values for the future of Australia, staff retention, staff enjoyment of the job, children forming positive relationships with their peers and educators.

Professional wages would ensure the retention of staff which would help with the instilling of positive values and positive relationships with families. Parents would feel more comfortable knowing their child is cared for by a regular educator. Staff would feel more valued by increased wages because of the amount of work and study being done. Also childcare being a profession rather than a labour intensive job with no recognition.

Staff turnover has a high impact on the children and families. Families are more comfortable leaving their children with a regular educator who knows their child's individual needs, rather than feeling anxious about leaving an upset child with an educator they don't know.

NQF has brought positive expectations to all centres and staff. There is no excuse for low expectations of a centre. There is paper work that goes with the NQF but it is achievable, professional wages would improve this area.

Early Childhood Education and care can be improved by ensuring the educators are given professional wages to support the work that they are doing. If the wages support the educators then they will be happy to stay in their job which will be beneficial to the families and more so the children at the centres. Centres need relief staff but having highly trained and motivated educators is what our sector needs.

Childcare is a very important job as it enables parents/care givers the opportunity to work without the anxious feeling they are leaving their children in a facility where they are unhappy and unsettled.

Without these high quality centres with professional educators, families would be forced to rely on older children supervising younger children while they are working or having grandparents or other family members look after their children. This puts pressure on families.

As much as educators have been given the title of "Professionals" the government is yet to support this title with professional wages to support this. Educators are leaving the sector because they are struggling to make ends meet. A certificate III educator getting a little over \$19 an hour for doing a job they love but imagine how they would feel with professional wages and the recognition they deserve. Children learn so much in the first 5 years of their lives, so isn't it important they get the best start from the highly educated professionals in the sector.

Our Centre has had 7 staff leave the sector due to low wages, work pressure and long hours working with children.

There is a real crisis in our sector and until it is addressed it will not improve. All educators want is a fair days pay for a fair days work.

We would like to see all our energy spend working and educating our children instead of having to spend time explaining the needs of our children with relief workers who don't know our children.