



DRAFT

COMMUNITY
CHILD CARE
CO-OPERATIVE
LTD. (NSW)



The New South Wales Early Education and Care Sector

A quick guide



Inside

The NSW Early Education and Care Sector	3
What is the NSW Government currently primarily responsible for?	4
What is the Commonwealth Government currently primarily responsible for?	5
What changes will happen over the next few years?	5
Types of children's services	7
Sector peak organisations	11

The News South Wales Early Education and Care Sector

Children's services aim to meet the care, education and development needs of children. There are a range of different models of children's services in New South Wales and most of these services are licensed by the NSW Government.



Children's services are grouped into six broad categories:

- centre-based long day care
- family day care, occasional care
- preschools
- outside school hours care, and
- non-mainstream services such as mobile services and Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services.

The majority of these service types, except for preschools, are eligible to be Australian Government Approved Child Care Services, which means they can receive approval under family assistance law for the purposes of Child Care Benefit.

Preschools are presumed to be a State Government responsibility. Many services in NSW use the name 'kindergarten' or 'preschool' to describe their service, even if they are a long day care centre. All long day care centres in NSW offer early childhood education programs and many are required by Regulation to employ a university qualified teacher.

One method of determining if a service is a preschool or a long day care is by the number of hours it is open per day and the number of weeks per year. Long day care services are generally open between eight and eleven hours per day and must be operational 48 weeks per year. Preschools, generally, are open shorter hours (although some offer extended hours care) and are mostly closed during school holidays.



What is the NSW Government currently primarily responsible for?

- **Licensing and regulating of children's services** under the NSW Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and the Children's Services Regulation 2004. Currently all children's services except for Out of Schools Hours Care Services must be licensed. Community Services is the Department which manages this process. Monitoring of regulations and children's services compliance support is undertaken by Children's Services Officers (CSOs) employed by Community Services. There are approximately 3,500 licensed children's services in NSW.
- **Provision of preschool education**
 - Community Services funds 750+ community based preschools (centre based and mobile) and DET directly manages and operates 100 preschools; and
- **Funding for children's services** - In addition to funding community based preschools, Community Services provides some operational funding to a range of other service types such as some community based long day care services, some occasional care services, and some programs for school-aged children;

In addition the NSW Government has responsibility for:

- Family support and child welfare;
- Legislating in areas that affect such as occupational health and safety, anti-discrimination legislation, food safety, public health and privacy;
- Assessing qualifications (especially overseas qualifications) against the requirements of the Children's Services Regulation 2004;
- Child protection, including the funding of the Brighter Future Early Intervention Program; and
- Responsibilities under various National Partnerships/Bilateral Agreements entered into with the Commonwealth Government in particular:
 - National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care
 - National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education
 - Bilateral Agreement on achieving Universal Access in NSW: and
 - Closing the Gap: National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development

Children's services in New South Wales operate under legislation and funding models which are monitored and administered by all levels of government. The majority of children's services in NSW are licensed through the Department of Community Services and some services (mostly community-based services) are also funded by the Department. The majority of service types (except preschools) are responsible to the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, because of their receipt of Child Care Benefit. Local governments are involved in matters such as development and building applications that relate to children's services premises and may also directly operate children's services and have specialist children's services staff.



What is the Commonwealth Government currently primarily responsible for?

The roles and responsibilities of the Commonwealth Government for children's services include:

- Paying Child Care Benefit to families using approved children's services;
- Paying Child Care Rebate to eligible families using approved children's services;
- Funding to administer quality assurance systems for children's services;
- Funding organisations to provide information, support and training to service providers;
- Funding inclusion support programs;
- Providing operational and capital funding to some providers;
- Administering the Child Care Management System; and
- Administering corporations law.

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations holds the authority for approving children's services. This authority comes from the provisions contained in:

- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999 (the Family Assistance Administration Act);
- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999 (the Family Assistance Act).

When funding is approved, services are required to comply with the conditions and requirements in this legislation, including eligibility rules and agreements.

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations manages childcare support and:

- Administers the Child Care Benefit payment to families – this is linked to compliance with Quality Assurance systems;
- Administers financial support to approved services in areas of need;
- Administers the Child Care Support Program, which provides funding to support inclusion of children with additional needs (for example, children with a disability) into children's services and provides funding for professional support programs for approved child care services;
- Administers funding to support the viability of targeted services, particularly in rural and remote communities; and
- Manages the administration of the Quality Assurance framework and funds the National Childcare Accreditation Council.

What changes will happen over the next few years?

Under the National Quality Framework adopted by COAG in 2009, a jointly-governed, unified national Framework will apply to long day care, family day care, outside school hours care and preschools from January 2012.

Under the Framework, there will be streamlined regulatory arrangements, a new National Quality Standard, improved staff to child ratios, a more qualified early childhood workforce and a new ratings system for services.

The new Framework will replace the current licensing and accreditation processes undertaken by NSW and all other states and territories and the Commonwealth (through the National Childcare Accreditation Council). Community Services will be responsible for quality assessment under the Framework. From January 2012 new legislation will replace the NSW Children's Services regulation to underpin the nationally consistent regulation and rating of early childhood education and care and school age care services. NSW will have responsibility for administering the legislation and a new national body will be in place to ensure consistency of the system across the country.



Services Licensed by NSW Government

- Long Day Care
- Family Day Care
- Preschools (community based + DET)
- Occasional Care Services
- In Home Care Services
- Mobiles
- MACS
- Out Of School Hours Care Services (not licensed but registered)

Australian Government Approved Children's Services (AGACCS)

- Long Day Care*
- Family Day Care*
- Out Of School Hours Care Services*
- Occasional Care Services
- In Home Care Services
- Mobiles
- MACS

* Subject to Quality Assurance system

Funded by NSW Government

- Preschools (community based + DET)
- Long Day Care (some only)
- Occasional Care Services
- Mobiles



Types of children's services

Long day care centres

Long day care centres are licensed by the Department of Community Services under the Children's Services Regulation 2004 as centre based children's services. Long day care services that are approved to receive Child Care Benefit on behalf of families must also comply with accreditation requirements under the Child Care Quality Assurance system. Long day care centres are aimed primarily at zero-to-five year olds, and are provided in a non-residential environment, usually by a mix of qualified and other staff. Educational, care and recreational programs are provided and are based on the developmental needs, interests and experience of each child. Primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations.

A long day care centre is a service:

- Open for at least eight hours per day from Monday to Friday;
- Catering for children aged from six weeks to six years, although not all centres cater for the entire age range;
- Where age groups and numbers of children are specified on the centre licence;

- That must operate for a minimum of 48 weeks per year; and
- Which mostly offers early childhood education programs for three-to-five year olds.

A diverse range of long day care centres exist in New South Wales, including:

- Community-based services managed by an incorporated body known as a committee or board of management;
- Community-based employer sponsored childcare;
- Services sponsored by local government or charitable organisations; and
- For-profit operators including;
 - individual owners of single or a chain of services,
 - a group of owners of a single service,
 - a corporate group owning a large chain of services,
 - employer sponsored childcare.

Educational, care and recreational programs are provided and are based on the developmental needs, interests and experience of each child.





Preschools

Preschools are licensed by the Department of Community Services under the Children's Services Regulation 2004 as centre-based children's services. Preschools – alternatively known as kindergartens – provide an educational program in a dedicated preschool setting catering for children aged between three and five years of age. These services are primarily aimed at children in the two years before they commence full-time schooling. Children may attend a number of sessions per week, dependent on the nature of the preschool. Most services operate between 9am–3pm during school terms only. Some preschools offer extended hours care, which consists of the preschool program plus additional care before and after the program; for example, from 8am–9am or 3pm–4pm.

Occasional care services

Occasional care services are licensed by the Department of Community Services under the Children's Services Regulation 2004 as centre-based children's services.

Occasional care services are usually provided at a centre on an hourly or sessional basis for short periods or at irregular intervals for parents who need time to attend appointments, take care of personal matters, undertake casual and part-time employment, study or have temporary respite from full-time parenting. These services provide developmental activities for children and cater primarily for children aged from zero–to–five years. Permanent bookings are usually not made in occasional care, however, families usually join the service through an enrolment process and then call to advise when they wish to use the centre. For example, after enrolling in the centre, families may wish to use it for a morning, afternoon or full day, provided the centre has vacancies at the time.

Outside school hours care

Outside school hours care services must be registered with Community Services under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment (Out of School Hours Care Services) Regulation 2007.

Outside school hours care is provided for primary school children aged from five to 12 years. As the name implies, it is provided before and after school hours during school term and through vacation care programs in school holidays. Care may also be provided on student-free days. Most outside school hours care is provided on school grounds or on nearby premises outside of the school. Outside school hours care services can be managed by:

- School councils;
- Parent committees;
- Community-based organisations;
- Sponsored by local government or charitable organisations; or
- For-profit operators.

Some long day care services provide places for before and after school care, particularly for siblings of children using long day care. The number of children is limited by the Children's Services Regulation 2004, which states that the total number of out-of-school hours care children must not exceed 10 or 20 per cent of the licensed places at the service, unless separate facilities and staff are provided to care for those children. (20 per cent of the licensed places if the out-of-school hours care children are in kindergarten or Year 1, or 10 per cent of the licensed places if the children in care are older).



Types of children's services

Family day care

Family day care schemes are licensed by the Department of Community Services under the Children's Services Regulation 2004. Family day carers must register with a licensed scheme.

Family day care is a network of caregivers who provide care and developmental activities in their own homes for other people's children. Care can be provided for children aged from birth to 12 years and over a 24-hour period of time. Family day care schemes can be:

- Managed by community-based organisations;
- Sponsored by local government or charitable organisations; or
- Managed by for-profit operators.
- The care is largely aimed at children aged from birth to five years; however, primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations. Central co-ordination units organise and support a network of carers.

In-home care

In-home care schemes are licensed by the Department of Community Services under the Children's Services Regulation 2004.

In-home care is a targeted form of children's service where an approved carer provides care in the child's home. It is only available for families who do not have access to an existing children's service, or where an existing service cannot meet their needs. In-home care is aimed at providing care for children aged from birth to 12 years within the family unit but care for children older than 12 years can be provided in special or emergency situations. In-home care services can be provided by a specialised in-home care service or through a family day care service, a long day care centre or through other services.

Family day care is a network of caregivers who provide care and developmental activities in their own homes for other people's children.

Mobile children's services

Mobile children's services are licensed by the Department of Community Services under the Children's Services Regulation 2004. A mobile service, generally, operates from a van or other vehicle which travels through a particular geographic area and sets up a children's service in a local hall, school or other premises.

Mobile children's services are often located in rural and remote areas, or in new urban development areas, and may provide flexible childcare sessions, playgroup sessions, vacation care, on-farm care, parenting and social support for families, toy and video lending libraries, and parent resource library services.

Mobile children's services provide children with an opportunity to mix with other children and participate in early childhood education that would not otherwise be available to them. Some mobile services also provide regular long day care sessions in community venues and visit small communities each week. There are mobile service equivalents



for most centre-based services - so there are mobile preschools, mobile occasional care and mobile child care. There are Community Access Mobile Minder Services [CAMMS] serving the needs of CALD parents and children in inner-west Sydney to 'play session' mobiles serving the needs of families on properties west of Bourke and mobile toy library services. Many of these services are funded by Community Services.

Multiple care services

Multiple care services are approved services designed to provide flexible care to meet the needs of their communities. They offer an integrated service delivery model where more than one type of care is available. Care types can include long day care, in-home care, family day care and occasional care.

Services are accessible to the general community and focus on care for children that are not yet attending school but can also provide older children with care outside school hours and during school holidays.

Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services

Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services are not-for-profit community-based services funded to meet the social and developmental needs of children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds. Care is provided for preschool and school children and can include long day care, playgroups, outside school hours care, vacation care and cultural programs.

Families NSW

Families NSW is the NSW Government's whole-of-government prevention and early intervention strategy that aims to provide children with the best start in life. Families NSW is the responsibility of five Departments – NSW Health and the Departments of Education and Training, Housing, Community Services and Ageing, Disability and Home Care. The sorts of services funded under Families NSW include

supported playgroups, schools as community centres and parenting programs. Some of these programs are sponsored by preschools or other children's services.

Brighter Futures

Early intervention services provide targeted support to vulnerable children and families. Brighter Futures is NSW's main early intervention program designed to build the resilience of families and children that are at risk. It is funded by Community Services. Under the Brighter Futures program, one of the supports families are offered is funded access to quality children's services.

Brighter Futures is NSW's main early intervention program designed to build the resilience of families and children that are at risk.





Sector peak organisations

NAME	ACRONYM	MAIN FUNCTION	PHONE	WEBSITE	KEY CONTACT
Community Child Care Co-operative (NSW)	CCCC	Peak for LDCS and Preschools	8922 6444	www.ccccnsw.org.au	Leanne Gibbs
Children's Services Central	CSCENTRAL	Professional Support Co-ordinator (PSC)	1800 157 818	www.csccentral.org.au	Leanne Gibbs
ACCS NSW – Australian Community Children's Services NSW Branch	ACCS	Lobby group for Community based services	8922 6425	www.ausccs.org.au	Prue Warrilow
NSW Family Day Care Association	NSWFDCA	Peak for FDC services	9572 9440	www.nswfdc.org.au	Anita Jovanovski
Network of Community Activities	Network	Peak for OOSH services	9212 3244	www.netoosh.org.au	Robyn Munro-Miller
Early Childhood Australia (NSW Branch)	ECANSW	General Advocacy organisation	9557 3113	www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au	
Mobile Children's Services Association of NSW Inc	MCSA	Peak for Mobiles	4958 7888	www.mcsa.org.au	Tim Keegan
Community Connections Solutions Australia	CCSA	Employer organisation	4782 1470	www.ccsa.org.au	
Occasional Child Care Association Inc. NSW	OCCA	Peak for Occasional Care	9896 3056	www.occansw.com.au	
Ethnic Child Care Family and Community Services Co-operative	ECC	Advocacy for CALD children and services	9569 1288	www.eccfcsc.org	ViviGermanos-Koutsanadis
Indigenous Professional Support Unit NSW/ ACT	IPSUNSWACT	IPSU	1800 450 472	www.ipsunswact.com.au	
Contact Inc.	Contact	Advocacy for remote children and services	9251 4431	www.contactinc.com.au	
Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Sydney	Gowrie		8594 4259	www.gowrie-sydney.com.au	
Child Care NSW	CCNSW	Lobby group for private services			
KU Children's Services	KU	Large provider	9264 8366	www.ku.com.au	Sheridan Dudley
SDN	SDN	Large provider			Ginie Udy
Uniting Care Children's Services	Uniting Care	Large provider			Trish Brown
Children's Services Community Management	CSCM	Large provider			Leanne Gibbs
LHMU – The Australian Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union	LHMU	Union	1800 805 027	www.lhmu.org.au	
NSW/ACT Independent Education Union	IEU	Union	1800 467 943	www.ieu.asn.au	
United Services Union	USU	Union		www.usu.org.au	
NSW Children's Services Forum		Combined sector advocacy body under NCOSS			Dev Mukerjee