

NSW Department of Education



The NSW Minister for Education and Early Learning's Statement of Expectations

Prepared for the NSW Regulatory Authority for
early childhood education and care services

1 July 2023 – 30 June 2025





Context

The NSW Department of Education is the Regulatory Authority (NSW Regulatory Authority) for the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector in NSW.

It regulates, monitors and supports more than 6,000 ECEC services, including preschools, long day care, family day care, outside school hours care, mobile and occasional care services. The regulatory functions are lawfully delegated to departmental officers and carried out in accordance with the National Quality Framework (NQF).

Purpose

A Statement of Expectations (SOE) is an instrument that sets out priorities, objectives, and targets, usually by the person who is accountable. An SOE is a best practice instrument that is common for modern regulators. In the case of the NSW Regulatory Authority, reporting on set and transparent performance indicators as set out in the SOE helps assure the public that there is effective regulatory oversight of the ECEC sector.

Summary SOE outcome components and key performance indicators

1. Safe ECEC environments and quality outcomes for children

Outcomes	Key performance indicators
1.1 Effectively monitor service quality and compliance with the requirements of the National Quality Framework (NQF) using risk-based approaches.	1.1.1 100% of services will be visited at least every 18 months. ¹ 1.1.2 At least 95% of newly approved services will have an assessment and rating visit within 18 months.
1.2 Support ongoing quality uplift of the sector.	1.2.1 Provide quality support and interventions, with the aim of ensuring that at least 90% of services meet or exceed the National Quality Standard (NQS). 1.2.2 Develop a strategy (by end of 2024) to address services rated working towards. 1.2.3 All services rated 'Working Towards' as at 1 August 2022 are reassessed under the NQS by 31 July 2024.

2. Responsive risk-based regulation

Outcomes	Key performance indicators
2.1 Ensure timeliness and efficiency of regulatory decisions and quality assessments.	2.1.1 25% of all NSW ECEC services are either partially reassessed or fully assessed and rated in a 12-month period based on currency and risk. 2.1.2 Average time taken to process new service applications is 60 calendar days.
2.2 Ensure regulatory practices are applied consistently.	2.2.1 100% of regulatory staff have completed required regulatory capability training by mid-2024. 2.2.2 Undertake an annual internal audit regime to ensure consistency in decision-making.
2.3 Ensure timeliness in responding to complaints and notifications of serious incidents.	2.3.1 Notifications and complaints are risk assessed within one business day and allocated for management within the next 2 business days.

3. Culturally safe regulation

Outcomes	Key performance indicators
3.1 Ensure that Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued in our regulatory approach.	3.1.1 100% of regulatory staff have completed cultural awareness training by mid-2024. 3.1.2 Effectively implement the Aboriginal Cultural Safety Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care across the NSW sector.

¹The NSW Regulatory Authority ensures that services are visited as frequently as is required based on risk assessments and other factors.

4. Improved sector experience and engagement through effective communication

Outcomes	Key performance indicators
4.1 Engage effectively with educators, providers, sector representatives and families to raise the profile of the NSW Regulatory Authority and support quality uplift in early childhood education and care.	4.1.1 Increase sector and family reach by 10% through external communications and engagement initiatives and channels. 4.1.2 In the NSW Regulatory Authority’s annual sector feedback survey, at least 70% of survey respondents ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ that the support and guidance provided by the NSW Regulatory Authority was informative and helpful.
4.2 Commit to continuous improvement to enhance regulatory experience.	4.2.1 Implement improvements to the assessment and rating of NSW ECEC services by mid-2024. 4.2.2 Implement an online Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement Planning Portal to support ECEC services’ quality improvement journey.

The NSW Regulatory Authority will report publicly on an annual basis on its performance against the SOE.

The NSW Regulatory Authority will also review the SOE every 2 years to ensure measures are current and appropriate and are linked to emerging evidence on quality and outcomes for children.

Prue Car

Deputy Premier and Minister for Education and Early Learning

1 July 2023

